

Children and Youth with Special Health Needs News

April 2026

CYSHN updates

MEDSS "Workflow Details" update

Local public health staff have shared it can be difficult to track the status of follow-up from the “Workflow Details” page in MEDSS. The “Workflow Details” page now includes columns for “Date of first contact attempt” and “LPH Additional Case Notes,” populating from the nursing assessment. As a reminder, please use the “LPH Additional Case Notes” field to help keep track of attempts to follow up. Nursing assessment data should be entered into the “Problem Areas.” Please reach out to dana.janowiak@state.mn.us with questions.

Upcoming CYSHN local public health workshops

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has opened registration for the next two in-person [2026 Children and Youth with Special Health Needs Local Public Health Workshops](#). The deadline to register is Sunday, May 10. The purpose of these workshops is to bring together local public health professionals to connect, share best practices, and explore solutions to today’s public health challenges and our theme is “Equipped for the Future: Tools and Resources for CYSHN Outreach.”

The northwest workshop will take place on Tuesday, June 9 at the Bemidji Emergency Operations Center and the west central workshop will take place on Wednesday, June 10 at the Department of Natural Resources in Fergus Falls.

The dates for the workshops in northeast and southwest Minnesota will be announced in the coming months, but we expect that the last two sessions will take place in October. Registration for those workshops will occur when we have more event details confirmed.



Program-specific updates

Condition follow-up referrals for children born out of state

Have you ever wondered whether or not a child born in another state is referred to local public health for follow-up? The answer depends on which program referred the child:

- *Birth defects*: Children who were born outside of Minnesota who live in Minnesota are referred to local public health for nursing outreach. Children who seek specialized treatment at facilities far outside Minnesota and neighboring areas are often reported to MDH once they return and receive follow up care at their local clinics. These families will be referred to local public health for nursing outreach, too.
- *Congenital CMV (cCMV)*: Children born outside of Minnesota who live in Minnesota and are not identified through Minnesota Newborn Screening are not typically referred to local public health for nursing outreach unless the family self-identifies to the MDH children and youth with special health needs section or the cCMV case is reported to MDH by a health care provider.
- *Hearing loss*: Children who live in Minnesota but who are diagnosed with hearing loss in facilities outside of Minnesota are referred to local public health for nursing outreach.
- *Heritable conditions*: Children born outside of Minnesota who live in Minnesota, if identified through Minnesota Newborn Screening, are

typically referred to local public health for nursing outreach. Children born outside of Minnesota who live in Minnesota and are not identified through Minnesota Newborn Screening are not typically referred to local public health for nursing outreach, unless the family self-identifies to the MDH children and youth with special health needs section.

Follow Along Program ASQ® Online onboarding

Thank you for completing the Follow Along Program electronic screening survey to assist in identifying readiness to implement ASQ® Online. MDH used the survey results to organize local public health agencies into five cohorts for onboarding in ASQ® Online. The first cohort will begin in May and the last cohort will end in November. Local public health contacts named in the survey will receive an email invitation to participate in their assigned cohort.

The [Follow Along Program Update: FAQ for Local Public Health](#) (PDF) includes answers to questions identified by local public health as onboarding begins. If you have any concerns, please contact health.cyshn@state.mn.us.

Upcoming webinars, trainings, and events

Pediatric Care Coordination community of practice webinars



The care coordination community of practice is hosting virtual webinars this April focused on strengthening support for children with autism and disabilities across Minnesota. Each webinar will take place at noon and CEUs will be offered for care coordinators and other professionals for each webinar.

To join these webinars, complete the [pediatric care coordination: community of practice registration](#) form and register for these learning opportunities on Basecamp. For questions or more information, contact Community of Practice Coordinator, J.P. Mahoehney, at health.cyshn@state.mn.us

April 13 – Finding a Path: Equipping Care Coordinators with Practical Tools to Support Families with Autistic Children

Presented by Nicole Bering, LBA, autism clinical lead for Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention at the Minnesota Department of Human Services. This session will provide practical guidance on navigating developmental and behavioral pathways, evaluating provider fit and quality, and supporting families through common challenges.

April 20 – From Conflict to Collaboration: Serving Families of Children with Disabilities in Multicultural Communities

Hosted by the Multicultural Autism Action Network, this webinar will feature a panel of the network's leaders: Fatima Molas; Delia Samuel, PhD; Rufo Jiru; and Maren Christenson Hofer. This session will explore the lived experiences of multicultural families, the role of stigma, and strategies for building collaborative partnerships.

April 16 – Prepare for rare: newborn screening and genetic testing Project ECHO

The Minnesota Rare Disease Advisory Council will host a monthly Project ECHO series followed by a case study discussion titled [Prepare for Rare: Newborn Screening and Genetic Testing](#). On Thursday, April 16 at noon, Dr. Art Beisang, a pediatrician at Gillette, and Dr. David Tilstra, a medical geneticist at CentraCare, will share considerations for ordering genetic testing. Remaining sessions will take place on May 21 and June 18.

April 22 – Family Support Organization Collaborative

The MDH [Family Support Organization Collaborative](#) brings together family support organizations from across Minnesota to build connections, learn from one another, and strengthen how we show up for children and youth with special health needs and disabilities, as well as the families and caregivers who support them.

The next virtual [Family Support Organization Collaborative Gathering](#) is on Wednesday, April 22 from noon - 1 p.m. Alec Wendelbow from the Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance, will share an overview of free services available through the Brain Injury Alliance and Minnesota Stroke Association, along with some

helpful context on brain injury and stroke and how risk can vary across communities. It's a great opportunity to learn together and think about how these resources can support families.

May 13 – CYSHN condition follow-up community of practice

The next virtual CYSHN condition follow-up community of practice is Wednesday, May 13 from 10:30 a.m. - noon. The purpose of these meetings is to provide routine opportunities for local public health nurses who provide follow-up for children referred by CYSHN programs (birth defects, hearing loss, heritable conditions, congenital CMV) to learn condition-specific information and discuss nursing practice.

May's [LPH Community of Practice – EHDI Panel](#) will include a presentation about free, statewide services to families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing. One contact hour of continuing education will be offered for attending. All current CYSHN condition follow-up local public health nurses are welcome to attend. If you have any questions you would like to submit in advance, email them to health.cyshn@state.mn.us with “local public health” in the subject line.

May 14 and 15 – 4th Annual Proof Alliance Caregiver Conference

Join [Proof Alliance](#) at the [Plymouth Community Center](#) to learn, connect, and turn knowledge into action alongside fellow fetal alcohol spectrum disorder caregivers, professionals and advocates. The agenda will feature dynamic national and international speakers, special influencer and celebrity guest appearances, and book signings with renowned voices in the field. Register by May 1 to attend [The 4th Annual Proof Alliance Caregiver Conference](#).

Resource corner

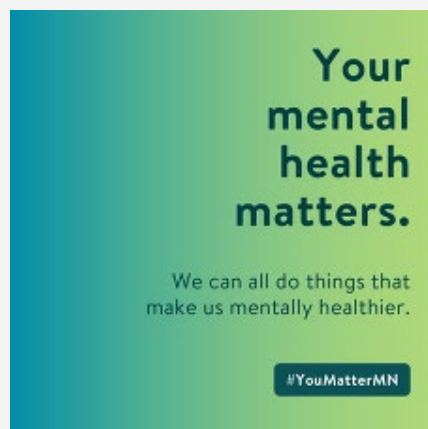
Mental Health Awareness Month toolkit now available

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. While mental health is important to address year-round, Mental Health Awareness Month provides a dedicated time for people, organizations, and communities to join their voices to broadcast the message that mental health matters.

This year's Mental Health Awareness Month theme is "You matter." The theme is intended to remind you that no matter who you are, where you are from, or what you are going through, you belong here and matter to the people in your life and community.

MDH developed a toolkit designed for people, organizations, and communities to use to support Mental Health Awareness Month communications, with key messages, social media content, resources, and shareable graphics.

Download the [Mental Health Awareness Month Toolkit 2026](#) from the MDH website.



New webpage: resources for children's environmental health

Children are especially vulnerable to environmental hazards because their bodies and brains are still developing. The new [Resources for Children's Environmental Health](#) webpage brings together practical information to help parents, caregivers, and communities keep kids healthy. The page includes topics such as asthma; food preparation and storage; heat exposure; lead; mercury; and other environmental health risks.

Invoicing

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Jan. 1 - March 31	April 1 - June 30	July 1 - Sept. 30	Oct. 1 - Dec. 31

Condition Follow-up

Complete nursing follow-up documentation in MEDSS by the end of the quarter after the one in which the referral was made. For example, if the date the event was sent to local public health is July 15 (in quarter 3), the follow-up documentation should be submitted by Dec. 31 (the end of quarter 4).

Invoice letters are sent to local public health by MDH in the month following the end of the quarter in which documentation was submitted, or training was completed. So, in the example, the invoice letter would be sent to local public health some time before Jan. 31 (the month following the end of quarter 4).

Follow Along Program

Follow Along Program semi-annual data reports are due every 6 months. Data for quarters 1 and 2 are due annually on July 31. Data for quarters 3 and 4 are due annually on January 31. Invoices for quarters 1 and 2 are due each year on August 20. Invoices for quarters 3 and 4 are due each year on February 20. Semi-annual data reports must be received prior to the invoice being paid.

About the CYSHN newsletter

Children and Youth with Special Health Needs (CYSHN) section staff at MDH work together to champion the health and well-being of people living in Minnesota with special health needs and disabilities, from the earliest states of life through transition to adulthood.

As the Child and Family Health Division works to coordinate and collaborate on communication, this newsletter may evolve to include a broader focus, but the following CYSHN programs are the primary focus: Birth Defects; Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI); Heritable Conditions (HC); Congenital Cytomegalovirus (cCMV); Critical Congenital Heart Disease (CCHD); Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS); and the Follow Along Program (FAP).