



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
State Laboratory of Public Health

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Governor

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Secretary

Scott J. Zimmerman, DrPH, MPH, HCLD (ABB)
Laboratory Director

Memo

To: North Carolina Local Health Departments

From: Scott J. Zimmerman, DrPH, MPH, HCLD (ABB), Director

CC: Kate Mason, William Parks, Ed Norman, Belinda Pettiford, Dr. Sarah Conte

Date: 19 July 2016

Re: Announcing Prenatal Lead Testing

The North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health (NCSLPH) is pleased to announce that it has established a Prenatal Lead Testing Program in partnership with local public health departments (LHDs) in North Carolina. Your local health department has been authorized to submit samples the NCSLPH for lead level determination from Prenatal Care patients seen in your clinics that meet the required criteria assessed using the Lead Risk Assessment Questionnaire. Please be advised that the specimen of choice for this testing is a venipuncture specimen (rather than fingerstick) collected in a lavender-top blood collection tube. The specimen must be accompanied by a completed Form DHHS 3707 and assure that the Prenatal box is checked appropriately.

Since the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) does not recommend blood lead testing of all pregnant women in the United States, state or local public health departments should identify populations at increased risk for lead exposure and provide community specific risk factors to guide clinicians in determining the need for population-based blood lead testing. Routine blood lead testing of pregnant women is only recommended in clinical settings that serve populations with specific risk factors for lead exposure. Health care providers serving lower risk communities should consider the possibility of lead exposure in individual pregnant women by evaluating risk factors for exposure as part of a comprehensive occupational, environmental, and lifestyle health risk assessment of the pregnant woman, and perform blood lead testing if a single risk factor is identified.

Patient results for the Prenatal Lead Testing will be accompanied by Reference Value Ranges provided by the CDC. Please note that the Provider of record and the North Carolina Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program will be immediately notified (i.e., via telephone) of abnormally high results (≥ 30 $\mu\text{g/dL}$) and a hardcopy final report will be issued; all other results will be reported via hardcopy to the Provider of record.

We look forward to partnering with your local health department as we collaboratively establish a Prenatal Lead Testing laboratory program at NCSLPH. If you have any questions about testing, specimen collection, and/or reporting please contact Kate Mason, Hemachemistry Supervisor at (919) 807-8878.

