



## WASHINGTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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To: Washington County pediatric practitioners

Re: Change in CDC recommendations regarding blood lead level of action

### **KIDS UNLEADED NEWSLETTER ARTICLE: JULY 2012 FEDERAL POLICY UPDATE**

**CDC lowers intervention level from 10 to 5.** Since 1991, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considered a level of lead in a child's blood sample of 10 micrograms per deciliter (mcg/dL) as being in need of action. In May, CDC accepted the recommendation from its advisory committee to lower that level to 5 mcg/dL. The advisory committee also recommended that CDC change their guidelines so that the actions previously identified for a blood lead level (BLL) of 10 mcg/dL or greater go into effect at the new action level of 5 mcg/dL. CDC will announce any changes to their guidelines in the next few months.

**Why?** Overwhelming evidence demonstrates that there are significant adverse health effects of BLLs below 10 mcg/dL in children. The damage extends beyond impaired cognitive function to include damage on the cardiovascular, immunological and endocrine systems. In Wis. in 2010, this means that approximately 10,000 additional children were at-risk of these adverse cognitive and health effects.

**Action at 5 mcg/dL.** Wisconsin recommends that when a child's BLL is 5 mcg/dL or greater: (1) the child's capillary test be confirmed by a venous test within 1 to 3 months, (2) the child's health care provider give education to parents and monitor the child's BLLs as well as growth and development, and (3) public health officials provide early intervention services to the family, as local resources allow.

**Statutory changes.** Wisconsin statute (DHS Ch. 254) requires lead hazard reduction in the home of a child with an elevated BLL (i.e., one venous of 20 mcg/dL or greater or two venous BLLs of 15 mcg/dL or greater, 90 days apart). If CDC changes the recommendations for environmental intervention for children with elevated BLLs, we will keep you informed of the process and of opportunities to provide input on potential changes to Wisconsin statute.

**The policy solution.** Preventing children from being exposed to lead is the best way to limit the negative effects. More resources are needed to fix the lead hazards in Wisconsin's old housing.

**Please contact Washington County Health Department with referrals and concerns.**

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