

Texas Health Steps for Children of Traveling Farmworkers

Connecting with and educating traveling farmworker families on the services covered by Texas Medicaid is crucial in making sure these families receive the quality care and support they need to stay healthy. Special attention should be paid to educating traveling farmworker families on the importance of their children receiving timely or accelerated Texas Health Steps (THSteps) medical and dental checkups prior to the family traveling for work. Many of these children need additional assistance and personalized attention due to their unusual living circumstances, migratory work patterns, working conditions and eating habits – all which can contribute to poor health.

Identifying Children of Migrant Farmworkers

As providers, you may come in contact with Medicaid patients who may be children of traveling farmworkers. Molina relies on you to identify these patients and determine if there is a need to accelerate any THSteps medical or dental checkups. Please notify Molina by calling Member Services at (866) 449-6849 when you identify a child of traveling farmworkers, and if you have provided accelerated checkups for these patients.

THSteps Documentation – Essential to Medical Records

Being a THSteps provider can be very rewarding. It can also be very challenging, especially when it comes to medical checkup documentation. Independent studies of Texas Health Steps medical checkups indicate that records were most commonly missing documentation of appropriate laboratory tests and immunizations.

THSteps checkups are made up of six primary components, many including individual components. These are outline on the Texas Health Steps Periodicity Schedule based on age and include:

1. **Comprehensive health and developmental history** which includes nutrition screening, developmental and mental health screening and TB screening;
2. **Comprehensive unclothed physical examination** which includes measurements; height or length, weight, fronto-occipital circumference, BMI, blood pressure, and vision and hearing screening;

3. **Appropriate immunizations**, as established by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, according to age and health history; including influenza, pneumococcal and HPV;
4. **Appropriate laboratory test** which include newborn screening blood level assessment appropriate for age and risk factors, and anemia;
5. **Health education** (including anticipatory guidance); and
6. **Dental referral** every 6 months until the parent or caregiver reports a dental home is established.

For you to be reimbursed for THSteps checkups, each of the six components and their individual elements must be completed and documented in the medical record. Any component or element not completed must be noted in the medical record, along with the reason it was not completed and the plan to complete the component or element. The medical record must contain documentation on all screening tools used for TB, growth and development, autism, and mental health screenings. The results of these screenings and any necessary referrals must be documented in the medical record. THSteps checkups are subject to retrospective review and recoupment if the medical record does not include all required documentation.

In support of successful checkup documentation and to assist in documenting of each of the components and elements of the checkups, the THSteps program recommends use of the THSteps Child Health Record Forms, which are available for download on the THSteps provider information webpage. Each checkup form is age-specific and can assist you with documenting all required checkup components and elements. The components and elements outlined in the forms can be integrated into electronic health records.

To stay current on THSteps policy and available resources, visit the THSteps website for information and policy updates. Information on checkup documentation is also available within THSteps Online Education modules. The modules are free and offer continuing education for healthcare professions. They are available at www.txhealthsteps.com.

If you have questions about identifying children of Migrant Farmworkers or Texas Health Steps, please call Provider Services at (855) 322-4080, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5p.m., central time. Thank you for your commitment to providing your patients with the highest quality healthcare possible.