The Newborn Screening Family Education Program hosted a webinar series convening key newborn screening (NBS) stakeholders including providers, NBS program representatives, parents, and advocates, to learn how state newborn screening laboratories supported families during the COVID-19 pandemic. This resource reflects the perspectives of webinar attendees and shares strategies to support families through future health emergencies.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- The need to support families without interruption to services, support, and available resources is paramount.
- Timely communication and connection in a digital world, including virtual and online groups are essential to meet the needs of parents’ informational and emotional support.

**CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES**

- Lack of information for parents during the newborn screening process pre- and post-screening
  - Provide contact, scheduling, and information to equip parents to feel confident to address any concerns about how baby will be kept safe at visit
- Hesitation to bring newborns to appointments due to fear of exposure to COVID-19
  - Ensure parents understand the importance of timely follow-up after initial screening
- Geographic distance from health services affected access to in-person care and available resources
  - Support telemedicine services for non-urgent NBS cases to reduce exposure to COVID-19 and alleviate childcare challenges
- Interruptions in essential laboratory services for follow-up testing
  - Advocate for continuation of essential services during emergencies including prioritization of older babies

**BEST PRACTICES IN SUPPORTING FAMILIES**

- Minimize delays in communication to families regarding follow-up and next steps
- Identify barriers and reasonable solutions
- Develop tools to guide decision and triage points
- Increase communication of follow-up steps to parents
- Utilize telemedicine to maintain access to services
- Track trends on the impact to long-term follow-up and implement strategies

*This data represents individual data from 111 webinar registrants and does not represent all webinar attendees.

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