



9/18/23

Dear Community Partner:

Over the last year, the Division of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics (DDBP) has seen a significant increase in referrals across all ages. We receive >1,100 referrals per month for patients in our eight-county local area. Although we have hired an additional physician and nurse practitioners to help meet the need, other staffing changes, retirement, and medical leaves have caused our new visit wait times to increase to more than 7 months for children aged 3-5 years and 6-12 years. Since provider schedulers are not open greater than 7 months out, **our schedulers are currently unable to schedule any new visits for preschool (3-5 years old) or school age (6+ years old) patients.**

As a system, our goal is to identify developmental disability at younger ages. We seek to prioritize our youngest patients (5 years old and under), allocating more new visits for younger versus older children. Since in practice we are currently unable to schedule new visit evaluations for patients 6-12 years old, we are **formally closing referrals for the 6-12 year age group, effective 9/20/23**. Here are some important things to know about this closure:

- This closure is being made in part so that we can devote more provider supply to seeing new visit evaluations for 3-5 year olds, thereby enabling us to begin scheduling appointments for this age group.
- Referrals for 6-12 year old new visit evaluations received prior to 9/20/23 will still be honored (pending appointment availability).
- We will still accept referrals for 6-12 year old children who were seen and **diagnosed** with global developmental delay, intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), or a neurogenetic disorder in DDBP more than 3 years ago and are simply seeking to re-establish care for the management of coexisting conditions (e.g., co-occurring ADHD, anxiety, aggression, self-injurious behaviors).

NOTE: At this time, referrals will not be accepted for 6-12 year old patients who are seeking re-evaluation for ASD and had a negative evaluation for ASD through DDBP in the past.

- We intend for the closure of referrals to 6-12 year olds to be **temporary**. We expect our access situation to improve over the coming months as providers return from medical leave, we on-board a new provider, and we adjust models of care to increase efficiency.

At this time, **for children 6-12 years old** with developmental concerns, **please consider alternate paths for evaluation:**

- For children with complex ADHD, consider referrals to Behavioral Medicine Clinical Psychology for evaluation and behavioral treatment or Psychiatry within CCHMC for medication management, or to a psychologist or psychiatrist in the community.
- Patients with concerns for intellectual disability can be evaluated and receive educational supports through their school system (families should request this in writing).



- Patients with concerns for learning disabilities can be evaluated through their school system (families should request this in writing), community learning programs, or the CCHMC Reading Literacy Discovery Center (evaluates reading and writing skills).
- Consider referral to psychologists in the community for evaluation of possible autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability, or learning disability.

This electronic resource may be of help in determining alternate paths for evaluation:

DDBP social work has created an [interactive map](#) of mental health providers in our region. It is searchable by type of provider (therapist versus psychiatric provider) and by insurance (private, Medicaid, or self-pay). It is updated on a regular basis.

If you experience trouble accessing the link to the interactive map, above, please use the alternate path below:

<https://www.ucucedd.org/resource/>

*Scroll down to access *Interactive Maps of Service Providers in the Cincinnati, OH Region*

We understand changes in our access for children 6-12 years old may create hardship for some families. Thank you for your understanding.

Respectfully,

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