COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DIVISION OF INSURANCE

470 Atlantic Avenue • Boston, MA 02210-2223
(617) 521-7794 • FAX (617) 521-7770
TTY/TDD (617) 521-7490
http://www.state.ma.us/doi

ARGEO PAUL CELLUCCI
GOVERNOR

LINDA RUTHARDT
COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE

DANIEL A. GRABAUSKAS
DIRECTOR, CONSUMER AFFAIRS
AND BUSINESS REGULATION

Bulletin 98-13

To: **Commercial Health Insurers, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA), Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs)**

From: **Linda Ruthardt, Commissioner**

Re: **Mandated Benefit for Newborn Hearing Screening Tests**

Date: **October 2, 1998**

The purpose of this Bulletin is to inform commercial carriers, BCBSMA and HMOs of the enactment of St. 1998, c. 243 (Chapter 243) which mandates coverage for newborn hearing screening tests. Chapter 243 amends the General Laws to require such tests at G.L. c. 175, § 47C, G.L. c. 176A, § 8B, G.L. c. 176B, § 4C, G.L. c. 176G, § 4K. It also amends the General Laws by adding new language in G.L. c. 111, § 67F (relating to the Department of Public Health), G.L. c. 32A, § 17F (relating to the Group Insurance Commission) and G.L. c. 118E, § 10B (relating to the Division of Medical Assistance). Chapter 243 is effective for all policies which are issued or renewed on or after November 5, 1998.

Chapter 243 requires coverage to be provided for the cost of a newborn hearing screening test performed before an infant is discharged from a hospital or birthing center in accordance with G.L. c. 111, § 67F or as provided by regulations of the Department of Public Health. Chapter 243 also indicates that the law shall not be construed to abrogate any obligation to provide coverage for hearing screenings tests or audiological diagnostic procedures pursuant to any other law or under the terms of any policy, contract or certificate.

This Bulletin summarizes the new mandates. Please refer to the laws cited above for a complete description of the requirements. All policies, certificates, evidences of coverage and contracts which are required to cover this benefit must be amended to conform to Chapter 243. Policyholders, subscribers and members must be notified of this new benefit.

Any questions regarding this Bulletin may be directed to the Health Unit of the State Rating Bureau at (617) 521-7349.