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City of Milwaukee Health Department & Molina Healthcare Announce Lead-Safe Milwaukee Partnership
Joint effort to support continued reduction of childhood lead poisoning by providing testing, resources at special events

MILWAUKEE – Mayor Tom Barrett and the City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) have announced a partnership with Molina Healthcare of Wisconsin to expand the reach of the citywide Lead-Safe Milwaukee public awareness campaign.

“The City of Milwaukee has aggressively worked to reduce children’s exposure to lead hazards, and can report that we have recorded significant declines in lead poisoning,” said Mayor Tom Barrett. “As we continue our work to drive down rates even further, we welcome Molina Healthcare as a committed partner in our efforts.”

The MHD reports that the prevalence of blood lead levels of 10 µg/dL (micrograms per deciliter) in children under 6 has decreased by 90 percent since 1997, while testing of children has increased by 66 percent during the same time period. At a lower level of exposure, the prevalence of elevated blood lead levels of 5 µg/dL has decreased by 64 percent since 2003.* As of 2015, 3 percent of Milwaukee children under age 6 have blood lead tests at 10 µg/dL and 11.6 percent of children have blood lead tests at a lower level of 5 µg/dL.

“Preventing lead exposure is a top health priority,” said Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker. “By expanding our existing outreach efforts through a partnership with Molina Healthcare, we can help more families in our targeted areas become aware of the various sources of lead, the steps they can take to prevent exposure, and the resources available for information and support.”

The Lead-Safe Milwaukee campaign was launched as part of a comprehensive effort to increase awareness of lead hazards and the primary steps that help to reduce children’s exposure to lead. The most common source of high blood lead levels in children remains lead-based paint hazards, while additional sources of exposure can include drinking water, soil, and even imported products or folk remedies.

As part of this new partnership, MHD and Molina Healthcare will be providing Lead-Safe Milwaukee information and resources, free blood lead testing for children, and take-home prevention kits at a series of events. These kits will include disposable wet wipes to help families safely clean up lead-based paint hazards, drinking water filters for those who live in homes with lead service lines, and information on additional prevention steps and resources, including the [MHD’s Primary Prevention Program](#), which provides subsidized window replacement in targeted zip codes in Milwaukee.

Molina has also supported the purchase of two additional blood lead testing machines for the MHD.

“Molina Healthcare is proud to be teaming up with Mayor Barrett and the City of Milwaukee Health Department on the Lead-Safe Milwaukee campaign,” said Scott Johnson, Plan President of Molina Healthcare of Wisconsin. “Our company’s mission to help those in need extends beyond quality health coverage. We believe that a healthy environment, free from exposure to lead hazards from paint, water, and soil, is vital to the success of every child, family and community.”

For more information on Lead-Safe Milwaukee, visit leadsafemke.com.

*The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lowered the reference level for elevated blood lead levels from 10 ug/dL to 5 ug/dL in 2012.

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