



RICHMOND CITY  
HEALTH DISTRICT

April 19, 2021

RE: Invitation to Respond to a Lead Poisoning Prevention Survey

Dear Community Clinical Pediatric Partner:

Thank you for the work you do to keep the children in our communities healthy. As you are aware, blood lead testing is the only way to definitively identify lead poisoning and is a critical prevention tool in children. We are concerned as our lead poisoning surveillance data show a continuous decrease in blood lead testing in children aged six and under, from 4,444 in 2015 to 3,116 in 2019; of note, the concentration of old housing stock that may contain lead-based paint hazards is estimated to still be about 80%. Based on preliminary data, only 2,610 blood lead tests were performed in 2020 in young children living in the City.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated inequities in health and housing. We have received an increasing number of reports of poor housing conditions giving rise to health issues due to sheltering-in-place and delayed or no repair/maintenance, especially for low-income families and those living in rental units. Homes that are older and/or in disrepair, in combination with increased time spent in the home due to the pandemic, are seeing more wear and tear; this potentially leads to more exposure to environmental hazards inside the home, such as lead paint debris, lead dust, mold from moisture accumulation, and pest harborage.

The Lead Safe and Healthy Homes Initiative program in the Richmond City Health District wants to learn about your lead screening/testing practices and experiences among providers, and how we can help facilitate increasing blood lead testing/screening by providers as a critical step in addressing barriers to equity in health and housing. Enclosed please find a Clinician Lead Poisoning Prevention Survey; an electronic copy is available from [www.HealthyHomesRCHD.com](http://www.HealthyHomesRCHD.com). We would appreciate hearing from you by **May 3, 2020**.

This survey should take no more than 15 minutes of your time and I want to thank you in advance for your assistance. If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact Robert Becker, Lead Safe and Healthy Homes Human Service/Outreach Coordinator at 205-3727 (Robert.DBecker@vdh.virginia.gov) or Dona Huang, Lead Safe and Healthy Homes Program Manager at 205-3726 (Dona.Huang@vdh.virginia.gov).

Sincerely,

Melissa Viray, MD  
Deputy District Director  
Richmond City and Henrico County Health Districts