

## Environmental Medicine Referrals in 2021

### *Attention: Clinicians!*

#### **Boston Children's Health Physicians' Environmental Medicine Service**

can help you evaluate and manage possible toxic exposures, unusual clusters of symptoms, or frank environmental triggers of illness in your patients and their families.

**Commonly encountered issues** are contaminants in drinking water, outdoor settings, foods, indoor air and “sick” building syndrome. Some families also worry about unusual symptoms or potentially harmful exposures to lead, mercury, solvents, toxic plants, mold, pesticides, and household cleansers, that may cause clinical toxicity.

**Your practice typically has very limited time** to pursue and quantify environmental and social factors,<sup>1</sup> let alone track down inspection reports, regulations, and product safety data, and link it all to your patient's clinical presentation.<sup>2</sup> *That's where we can help!*

**Our specialized, multidisciplinary approach** augments your ability to help your patient through a comprehensive, evidence-based approach<sup>3</sup>

- Unraveling a confusing array of disparate symptoms and pinpointing an environmental hazard in the home, school, or other setting.
- Uncovering a “toxidrome” or cluster of related signs that identify likely toxicants.
- Avoiding wasted lab tests and ineffective collection methods by specifying the appropriate specimens, analytes, and labs.
- Recommending specific interventions to mitigate exposure and adverse outcomes, based on the latest peer-reviewed evidence.
- Communicating with patients and their families about risks and remedial steps

**We search for, confirm, and help manage** a variety of pollutants, exposure pathways, and scenarios including:

- House dust and mold
- House paint
- Drinking water
- Indoor and outdoor air
- “Sick” building syndromes
- Climate change and weather
- Industrial and vehicular emissions
- Processed and prepared foods
- Nutritional issues
- Furnishings and window treatments
- Garden and backyard soil
- Home- and locally-grown produce

## Referral Process

Referrals can be made by telephone or through NextGen (BCHP providers). Most assessments begin promptly using telehealth visits, chart review and direct callbacks. Some cases may warrant in-person evaluation or virtual home visit. In many instances, precious time and money can be saved by selecting only the most relevant lab tests and ensuring the most reliable methods of collection and shipment of any needed specimens.

Most insurance plans are accepted.

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**The Environmental Medicine Service** is housed in the Division of Pediatric Pulmonology, Allergy, Immunology, and Sleep Medicine, and Children's Environmental Health Center of the Hudson Valley. [www.childrensenvironment.org](http://www.childrensenvironment.org)

**Allen J. Dozor, MD** Interim vice president, Boston Children's Health Physicians; chief, Division of Pediatric Pulmonology, Allergy, Immunology, and Sleep Medicine, one of the largest such divisions in the nation; founding director, Children's Environmental Health Center of the Hudson Valley; associate physician-in-chief, Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester Medical Center; director, CF Foundations Therapeutic Development Center, Armond V. Mascia, MD Cystic Fibrosis Center; professor of pediatrics and clinical public health, New York Medical College. Previously appointed, Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**Robert W. Amler, MD, MBA** Vice president for government affairs, dean, School of Health Sciences and Practice and Institute of Public Health, professor of public health, pediatrics, environmental health science, New York Medical College; cofounder, Children's Environmental Health Center Hudson Valley. Previously committee chair, President's Task Force on Children's Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks; founder, Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units (PEHSU).

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**Boston Children's Health Physicians** is a large multi-specialty group with nearly 300 clinicians providing comprehensive care for newborns, children, and adolescents. BCHP offers a full range of care to families in over 60 locations throughout New York's metropolitan area, the Hudson Valley, and Connecticut.

<sup>1</sup> Dozor AJ, Amler RW. Children's environmental health. *J Pediatr* 2013;162(1):6-7.e2.

<sup>2</sup> Amler RW, Gitterman BA. Pediatricians can turn to specialty units for advice on environmental health. *AAP News* January 2002;20(1):1-8.

<sup>3</sup> Paulson JA, Karr CJ, Seltzer JM, Cherry DC, Sheffield PE, Cifuentes E, Buka I, Amler RW. Development of the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit network in North America. *Am J Public Health*. 2009 November; 99(Suppl 3): S511-S516.