

# Genetic Services for Families

The Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) and the Greenwood Genetic Center work together to provide genetic services for individuals and families who are dealing with issues such as developmental delay, intellectual disability, autism, or birth defects. The purpose of this evaluation is to find the cause of an individual's disability in order to provide appropriate guidance to all who participate in their care.



## What is a genetic evaluation?

A genetic evaluation is a type of doctor visit. Appointments usually take 30 minutes to one hour. We will talk about your child's/relative's birth, developmental, medical and family history. A genetic service coordinator may contact you before the visit to gather some of this information so that we are prepared for your appointment. On the day of your visit, your child/relative will have a physical examination by a Greenwood Genetic Center physician.

The doctor may want to do some testing to look for the cause of your child's/relative's disability. A blood and/or urine sample might be taken at the appointment. If this testing shows the cause of your child's/relative's disability, the genetics team will contact you to explain this diagnosis.

If a diagnosis is made, regular genetic follow-up is needed in order to provide up-to-date information about the condition and health care guidelines.

Sometimes the reason for a person's disability cannot be identified during the first visit. It is helpful for these individuals and their families to follow-up with the genetics team because new tests often become available and treatments are being developed for certain conditions. The genetics team will keep up with the return appointment dates and contact you when it is time to schedule a follow-up evaluation.

## Why is a genetic evaluation helpful?

Knowing the reason a person has a disability can be helpful for many reasons. Some disabilities can affect a person's health as well as their learning. A diagnosis may help doctors take care of your child or relative. There may be certain treatments that may benefit your child or relative because of his/her diagnosis. Referrals can be made to doctors who specialize in particular problems related to the diagnosis.

A genetic evaluation can help families understand and deal with emotional issues related to the disability. It can also help the family to receive the support services they may need by connecting them with other families/groups dealing with similar issues.

A diagnosis may also be helpful to the rest of the family. Many times learning problems and disabilities can be passed from parent to child. A genetic evaluation can help to explain the chances for a certain disability to be passed on and what testing is available for other family members.



## What is the cost of a genetic evaluation?

There is no direct charge to you for this evaluation. Private insurance, Medicaid, or Medicare will be billed, so please bring all insurance cards to your visit.

## How do I schedule a genetic evaluation for my child/relative?

Any person who receives DDSN services can be seen for a genetic evaluation. These visits are usually held in one of the five Greenwood Genetic Center regional offices. In addition, clinics may be held periodically at certain county DDSN Boards throughout the state. Your Service Coordinator or Early Interventionist can help you set up an appointment or you may contact the GGC Service Coordinator in your area.

# Genetic Service Coordination

## Charleston Office

Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton,  
Dorchester, Hampton, Jasper & Coastal Center

Allie Merrihew

3520 West Montague Avenue, Suite 104,  
North Charleston, SC 29418

Phone #: 843-746-1001 Toll free: 866-588-4363

FAX #: 843-746-1002

## Columbia Office

Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun,  
Chester, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lexington,  
Newberry, Orangeburg, Richland & York

Amy Dobson, MS

1911 Thurmond Mall, Columbia, SC 29201

Phone #: 803-799-5390 Toll free: 800-679-5390

FAX #: 803-799-5391

## Florence Office

Chesterfield, Clarendon, Darlington, Dillon,  
Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Lee, Marion,  
Marlboro, Sumter, Pee Dee Center, Saleeby Center  
& Williamsburg

Shannon Bell and Jennifer Lynch, MPA

McLeod Medical Park West

101 South Ravenel Street, Suite 370,  
Florence, SC 29506

Phone #: 843-664-2983 FAX #: 843-468-2099

## Greenville Office

Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens,  
Spartanburg & Union

Jessica Worthington

14 Edgewood Drive, Greenville, SC 29605

Phone #: 864-250-7944 Toll free: 866-478-4363

FAX #: 864-250-9582

## Greenwood Office

Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens,  
McCormick, Saluda & Whitten Center

106 Gregor Mendel Circle, Greenwood, SC 29646

Phone #: 864-941-8100 Toll free: 888-442-4363

FAX #: 864-941-8114

# How can I get more information?

Please call the offices of the Greenwood Genetic Center if you have any questions or would like more information about our genetic services. You may also call our Charleston office toll free and ask to speak to Dr. Michael Lyons.

Our toll free number is:

1-866-588-GENE

(1-866-588-4363)

You may also find more information at  
our website:  
[www.ggc.org](http://www.ggc.org)



This brochure is published by the Greenwood Genetic Center and South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs.



Greenwood  
Genetic Center



[www.GGC.org](http://www.GGC.org)