# RPCI Quality Metric Tips: Fluoride Varnish

Dental caries are the most common chronic disease in US children, affecting 23% of children 2-5 years old, and 45% of all children. Fluoride varnish helps prevent cavities, but can also help remineralize very early cavities thereby either reversing them or arresting their progression. Overall, fluoride varnish helps reduce cavities by about 40% in both baby teeth and permanent teeth.

## RPCI Best Practice Workflow Recommendation

- American Academy of Pediatrics and Bright Futures recommend primary care providers apply fluoride varnish **every 180 days from first tooth eruption until the child turns 6**
- Gap closure requirements: one application before second birthday AND one application before third birthday; metric credit is based on billing data
  - **Billing code 99188** closes metric in PowerBI dashboard, provider must manually enter this charge if applied, it does not automatically drop when procedure is ordered
- Fluoride varnish can be applied even if it was recently done in a dentist's office. Dentists and medical providers use different billing codes for fluoride varnish. Also, there is no harm or risk of fluorosis even if patient has two fluoride varnish applications in the same week.

## Insurance Coverage for Fluoride Varnish

- **On average, fluoride varnish is reimbursed $15 by payors, Medicaid included.**
- Can be billed by primary care every 180 days until the child turns 6
- Medicaid documentation requirements:
  - Oral assessment for the identification of obvious oral health problems and risk factors, which may be omitted if an oral assessment is conducted or has been conducted during an early and periodic screening, diagnostic, and treatment (EPSDT) visit (oral assessment must be done once per year).
  - Communication with the parent or guardian about the fluoride varnish procedure and proper oral health care for the child; and
  - If the child has obvious oral health problems and does not have a dental provider, referral to a dentist or county department of job and family services.
- Through the Affordable Care Act, fluoride varnish application by a primary care provider should be covered by private insurance plans
- Please refer to the insurance coverage crosswalk for more details.

## Who can Apply Fluoride Varnish?

- In general, MDs, DOs, Mid-level providers can apply the fluoride varnish. **Some insurers allow RNs and Medical Assistants to also apply.**
- Please refer to the insurance coverage crosswalk for more details.

Refer to the incentive guide for metric definition, target, and incentive information.

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## There are multiple ways to order and document fluoride varnish:

- **Order the procedure:**
  - Order Fluoride Varnish procedure in Epic using the workflow "How to document an order and administration of Fluoride Varnish" on the following page

- **Bill for the service:**
  - Enter billing code 99188

- **Document using a SmartPhrase (also called dot phrase):**
  - Create a SmartPhrase with the following language to document Fluoride Varnish application:
    - "Teeth inspected with no obvious cavities unless otherwise documented in physical exam, discussion about appropriate teeth hygiene and the fluoride application discussed with guardian, patient referred to dentist &/or reminded guardian to continue seeing the dentist as appropriate. Fluoride applied to teeth during visit."
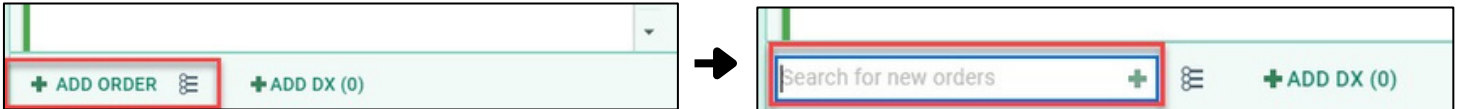
### SmartPhrase Tips

- SmartPhrases can be copied and made your own from any Epic user within UH
  - Epic drop down menu > Tools> Smart Tools Editors>Smart Phrase Manager
  - Search the user you are wanting to copy the SmartPhrase from (in this case user: Dr. Eva Johnson), search for Fluoride Varnish, open the SmartPhrase to review/edit, on the bottom right click "Create Copy" and name the SmartPhrase to use.
- You can also create your own SmartPhrase by choosing "Create a new SmartPhrase" when you enter into Smart Phrase Manager

Refer to the [Ambulatory Provider Personalization Guide](#) for further instructions

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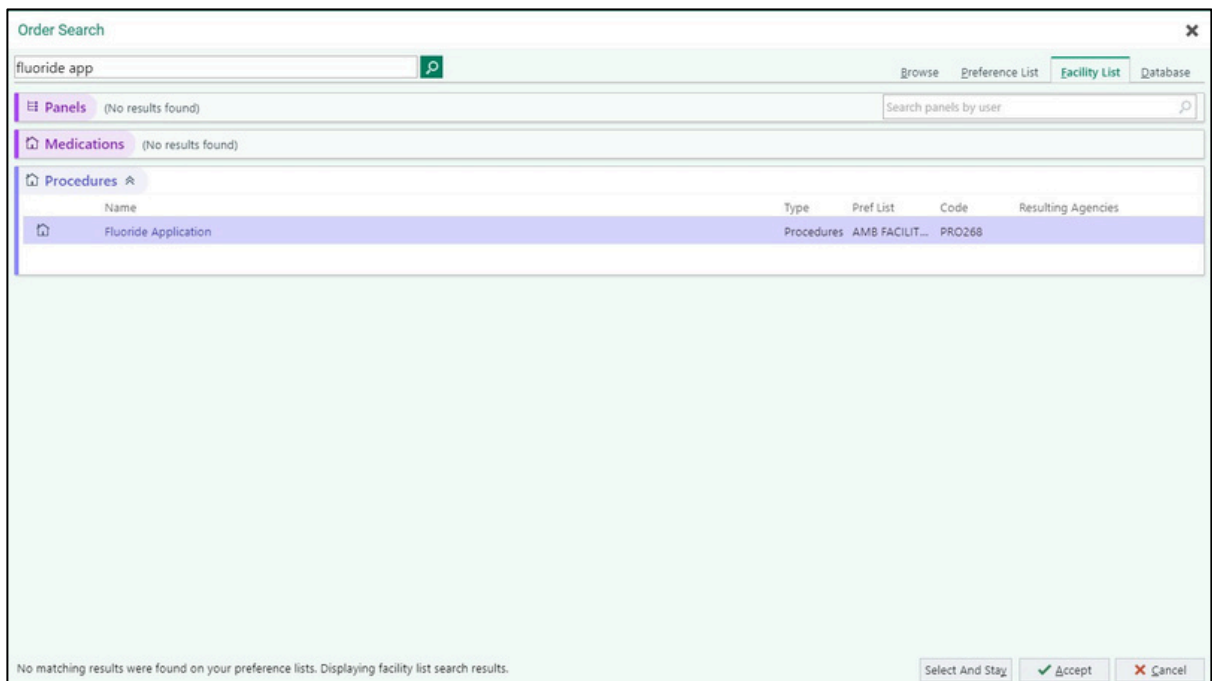Last updated: 02/2024

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<u>How to document an order and administration of Fluoride Varnish:</u>

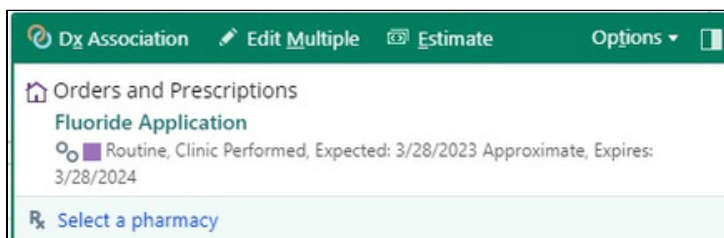1. In the <u>Visit Taskbar</u>, click <u>+ Add Order</u>.



2. In the search field, enter <u>fluoride app</u> and tap <u>Enter</u>.



3. Click the <u>Fluoride Application</u>. Click <u>Accept</u>.
   - The order appears in your Orders Cart.



TIP: Save the order as a Favorite and update the details of the order for easy, consistent orders in the future.

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How to document an order and administration of Fluoride Varnish, Continued:

4. In the Status field, click Normal.

5. In the Class field, confirm that the Clinic Performed button is highlighted.



6. Click the Accept button.

7. In the Replace Order window, click Yes.



8. Sign the order.

for the Epic Tip Sheet with further directions.

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