Midwest Participant-Centered Training Video Discussion Guide

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The Minnesota, Illinois and Wisconsin WIC programs created the Midwest Participant-Centered Training video to show how participant centered services (PCS) skills can be used in an actual WIC clinic setting. This guide provides group discussion questions and activities for reviewing the different sections of the video.

The video has two components: Individual Sections and State Specific Sections. The individual sections demonstrate specific PCS skills using segments of actual certifications, WIC staff interviews and participant interviews.

The Individual Sections are:

1. Clinic Environment
2. Greeting
3. Intake/Eligibility
4. Anthropometric/Bloodwork
5. Nutrition Assessment
6. Nutrition Education
7. Mid Certification (Additional Education in Minnesota)
8. Assigning Food Packages
9. Scheduling
10. Issuing Food Benefits
11. Why I work for WIC

The State Specific Section includes a section for each state. The Minnesota Section shows a complete certification from start to finish. You will notice it has been edited for time.

How to use this Discussion Guide:

- Show a section of the video.
  - PCS Themes: Watch for the PCS themes listed for each section.
  - Discussion Questions: As a group, discuss the corresponding questions for the section. The questions are designed to stimulate conversation about the PCS skills highlighted in the section. This guide could be used by an individual and questions discussed with the supervisor upon completion of each section.
  - Activity: Complete the activity for the section.
Section 1: Clinic Environment

PCS Themes:
- Welcoming and inviting
- Kid-friendly
- Adequate signage, easy to find

Discussion Questions:
- What makes a WIC clinic welcoming?
- What makes a WIC clinic family-friendly?
- Does the WIC clinic have clear and visible signage?

Activity: Go outside; walk back into the building and into the clinic area. Pretend you are a brand-new WIC participant. What are your impressions of the clinic environment?

Section 2: Greeting/Checking in

PCS Themes:
- Polite greeting before asking about appointment
- Welcoming smile, eye contact, body language
- Offering choices
- Explaining the process
- Dealing with resistance

Discussion Questions:
- Are participants greeted and welcomed as they enter WIC clinic?
- What makes you feel welcomed when you enter an office for an appointment?
- What might make you feel defensive when you go to an appointment?
- What approaches have you found effective for working with a resistant participant?

Activity: Share your techniques or ideas for establishing rapport with a participant. For ideas, see Connecting with Participants
Section 3: Intake/Eligibility

PCS Themes:
- Explaining the purpose and process
- Using open-ended questions

Discussion Questions:
- How do you explain the WIC program and the appointment process?
- What are some ways to explain why the information is needed?
- What could be done differently to make the intake process more efficient?
- How do you make WIC “lingo” or medical terms understandable to participants, e.g., certification, termination, hemoglobin?

Activity: Practice using open-ended questions. For ideas, see
- Instructor Guide: Open-Ended Questions Instructors Guide
- Staff Handout: Open-Ended Questions Staff Handout

Section 4: Anthropometric/Bloodwork

PCS Themes:
- Explaining the purpose and process
- Establishing rapport
- Engaging children

Discussion Questions:
- What are some ways to explain the process to children?
- How do you engage and calm children during the process?

Activity: As a staff, look at your WIC clinic’s Anthropometric/Bloodwork area(s). How could the area(s) be made more kid-friendly?
Section 5: Nutrition Assessment

PCS Themes:
- Explaining the purpose
- Using open-ended questions
- Importance of holding education until after assessment is complete
- Asking without judgment
- Reflective listening
- Maintaining focus on participant while using computer

Discussion Questions:
- How do you explain the purpose of the assessment?
- What ideas do you have for making the assessment process more conversational?
- How do you show a participant that you are listening?
- How do you “hold” education until after the assessment is complete?
- What are the advantages to completing a full assessment before providing education?
- Discuss tips for maintaining focus on the participant while using a computer for assessment.

Activities:
1. Practice reflective listening. For ideas, see
   - Instructor Guide: Reflective Listening Instructor Guide
   - Staff Handout: Reflective Listening Staff Handout
2. Discuss techniques for holding off education until the end (completing the full assessment before providing education). For ideas, see
   - Instructor Guide: Complete Full Assessment Instructor Guide
   - Staff Handout: Complete Full Assessment Staff Handout
Section 6: Nutrition Education

PCS Themes:
- Autonomy – counselor as facilitator but decision for behavior change rests with the participant
- Using open-ended questions
- Asking permission to share information or give a referral
- Affirmations: highlighting participants strengths and resources
- Helping participants craft achievable goals
- Identifying “change talk”

Discussion Questions:
- How do you help participant craft achievable goals?
- How do you facilitate behavior change?
- What are some ways to ask permission before sharing information or giving a referral?

Activity: How do you recognize “change talk”? Share examples of times you recognized “change talk”. For ideas see:
- Facilitator’s Guide: Change Talk
- Trainee Workbook: Change Talk

Section 7: Mid Certification (Additional Education)

PCS Themes:
- Following up on goals
- Brainstorming challenges
- Open-ended questions
- Reflective listening
- Affirmations: highlighting participants strengths and resources

Discussion Questions:
- What are some examples of affirmations you use?
- How do you follow-up on a previous goal, in a way that will stimulate conversation?
- What are some ways to engage dads during appointments?

Activity: Practice Affirmations. For ideas, see
Section 8: Assigning Food Packages

PCS Themes:
- Connecting the food package to established goals
- Emphasizing choice
- Tailoring the foods offered

Discussion Questions:
- What are some ideas for connecting the food package to a participant’s goal?
- How do you emphasize participant choice during food package selection?

Activity: Often participants are unsure how to use a WIC food. As a staff, talk about your ideas for using the WIC foods. For Example: Do you have an easy idea for making a bean wrap? How about a quick fruit smoothie?

Section 9: Scheduling

PCS Themes:
- Emphasizing choice
- Finding out what works best for the participant
- Explaining the process – preparing for the next visit

Discussion Questions:
- What questions do you ask to determine what works best for the participant?
- How do you prepare the participant for the next appointment?
- What could we do to help participants remember their appointments or remind them or their appointments?

Activity: Talk about your clinic schedules. Think about busy times and down times. Are there ways you could better accommodate participant’s scheduling needs?
Section 10: Issuing Food Benefits

PCS Themes:
- Explaining the process
- Asking open-ended questions to find out about prior shopping experience

Discussion Questions:
- How do you explain voucher use?
- What tools or resources do you use to explain voucher use?
- What ideas do you share with participants to make their shopping experience smoother?

Activity: Go to a local grocery store. Think about how you would use WIC vouchers in the store. How do you identify which foods are WIC-allowed? In which areas of the store did you find the WIC-allowed whole grains, juices and baby foods? At a staff meeting, share how this experience helped you to better explain voucher use.

Section 11: Why I work for WIC

Discussion Questions:
- Share why you work for WIC. Have fun sharing your stories!
State Specific Section

View the Minnesota section. As you watch the video, note the different PCS skills that are demonstrated. Share your findings as a group. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

Some of the skills you might see: (you might find others!)

- Welcoming the participant – smiling, eye contact, welcoming body language
- Explaining the purpose of the appointment
- Explaining the process of the appointment
- Using open-ended questions
- Completing full assessment before providing education
- Identifying change talk
- Reflective listening
- Asking permission before sharing information or giving a referral
- Helping participant craft an achievable goal
- Emphasizing choice in the food package
- Finding out what works best for the participants when scheduling an appointment
- Explaining the process for using the vouchers