

# WIC Local Agency Conference Call

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022, 8:30-9:30 AM

## Agenda and Summary Notes

### Agenda Items:

- National Updates - Kate
  - National PHE Renewal Expected; WIC Waivers likely extended through January 2023
  - Abbott Michigan Plant reopened earlier in June, Abbott CEO apologizes
  - Legislation introduced to prevent future formula crises
  - White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition & Health
  - HHS-USDA Virtual Round Table
- Infant Formula Shortage Updates – Jessie
- Contract Formula Transition – Rebecca
- CVB Level for October 2022 - Tami
- Pharmacies in Mobile App- Tami
- Civil Rights Poster Reminder - Tina

### National Updates- Kate

#### **Legislation Introduced to Prevent Future Formula Crises**

In early June, Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) introduced the Keep Infant Formula Safe and on the Shelves Act, to address the underlying structural factors that have led to the ongoing infant formula shortage and prevent similar crises in the future. The bill would expand FDA authority to inspect facilities producing infant formula, requiring more frequent inspections, and allow for unannounced inspections. Additionally, the bill calls for an inquiry into the status of the infant formula supply chain, evaluating the efficacy of several emergency measures to address future shortages (including invocation of the Defense Production Act), creation of an infant formula stockpile, and the establishment of a national registry tracking formula supply

#### **White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health**

This September, President Biden will convene the second White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. The White House set goals for the Conference: ending hunger by 2030 and increasing healthy eating as a strategy to reduce chronic diet-related conditions like diabetes, obesity, and hypertension. The White House has called for a broad range of input to inform and shape the content of the Conference and ultimate recommendations for policy and systems changes.

The last White House Conference was convened in 1969 by President Nixon, and recommendations from that conference led to the creation of WIC in 1974. There will be information coming out in the Wednesday Update this week about this opportunity to provide input on this important topic. Please considering registering for one of the virtual listening sessions. If you are unable to make the virtual listening sessions – or if you want to provide

written input to NWA's process – please share your feedback through the NWA survey [Input Opportunity: White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health](#).

### **HHS-USDA Virtual Round Table**

President Biden has directed his Administration to work urgently to ensure that during the Abbott Nutrition voluntary recall, infant formula is safe and available for families across the country. Join a virtual roundtable Wednesday, June 15, at 6:00 PM ET with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture for parents and caregivers to learn more about the shortage, and what families who are struggling to find formula can do. RSVP information was shared during the call due to the timing of the event.

## **Other Program Updates**

### **Infant Formula Shortage Updates – Jessie**

Vendor Survey results. Similac Advance and Sensitive redemption rates are improving. Utilization rates for both of these formulas are above 90%.

Kendamil products at Target are now available.

Formula Ordering. There is very little change in orders. Email went to agencies with details on Friday, June 17, 2022.

### **Contract Formula Transition – Rebecca**

We will be transitioning to a new contract with Mead Johnson for milk-based formula on October 1. Abbott will have the contract for soy-based formula. To help with this transition, we plan to continue with Similac substitutes through September. Keeping these substitutes available should help make the transition easier for families and WIC staff.

There will be more information coming out about Mead Johnson contract formulas and this transition at the end of June through the Wednesday Update. Materials are being developed to inform WIC staff about the types of formula, direction on how to make the transition in HuBERT and tools to help educate participants.

### **CVB Level for October 2022 – Tami**

The current CVB expires Sept. 30, 2022, and at that time we are unlikely to know our budget for the next Federal Fiscal Year. Beginning to late July, WIC staff will be early issuing benefits for October. We are working with our contractor and exploring our options in order to process these changes in an emergency situation. Watch the WU and HuBERT hints for more information coming the first week of July.

### **Pharmacies in Mobile App – Tami**

Under the store locator, pharmacies are added. We have been hesitant in the past to add this since pharmacies only redeemed benefits for medical formula. With COVID there have been flexibilities for pharmacies to make available formula substitutes, but no other food benefits. We will evaluate to see if this helps families find formula or if there is confusion, because families can't get their other benefits. Please share with us if you are receiving comments from families.

### **Juneteenth Holiday – Kate**

This Sunday is Juneteenth (June 19) and it is recognized as a Federal holiday. Minnesota also recognizes this holiday. All state staff will not be working on June 20, however, help desk staff are available.

### **Civil Rights Poster Reminder – Tina**

Tina shared that a civil rights poster order will be placed by the state by the end of the month. A survey was provided to local agencies to inquire how many posters they want at each agency. We extended the survey deadline to Thursday June 16 and Jenny Skinner, the new Civil Rights Coordinator, will be emailing those agencies that we haven't heard from. We do not have a date of when the posters will be ready or sent to us, but we communicate once we do.

## **Questions & Answers**

### **Could there be an App blast about the HHS-USDA Virtual Round table?**

We had limited awareness of this event. Due to the timing of this and limited knowledge about the platform of the discussion, we will not be sending a blast message out about this.

### **Are there any reports/data to tell if families are finding formula (redeeming their benefits)? Or was that included in the data Jessie shared?**

We can only see formula purchases; we can't see when families are not finding formula.

### **We ordered Enfacare in May after receiving information it may be available. Is this still the case? We have not received any so wondering if you think it may become available soon.**

If you have waited greater than 10 days and have not heard back from Trend about your Enfacare orders, please send an email to Trend and I to inquire. Mead Johnson has not been very responsive and most likely they are waiting in cue to be ordered or it was dropped. We can discuss reordering or see if they would be willing to move to Neosure as that powder product is returning to the market.

### **How has the formula shortage affected breastfeeding rates?**

We are going to be exploring this data and plan to share when we learn more.

### **Has the decision by WIC to use Mead Johnson for the next fiscal year's formula have anything to do with the recall of Abbott's formula?**

No. There is a competitive bidding process for each formula contract. The contract lasts three years with the ability to extend it up to five years. With Abbott's contract ending in September, the open bidding process occurred earlier this year. Mead Johnson offered the best rebate on their product and won the milk-based contract. Abbott offered the best rebate for soy formula and will hold that contract. While the recall might have impacted Abbott's ability to offer the most competitive bid, it doesn't affect the bidding process for the formula contract.

### **Are there any plans to App message for formula mixing instruction differences with the UK options or any additional communication plans?**

We encourage all consumers to follow the mixing and preparation instructions on the package since there can be some differences. With Kendamil instructions using the metric system and only being in Target stores right now, we will ask target stores to post mixing directions.

### **Are there any updates on using WIC cards for pickup orders for WIC items versus shopping in stores to buy WIC foods?**

Currently there is no technology that supports this.

## **Reference – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks**

[Input Opportunity: White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health](https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6890475/Input-Opportunity-White-House-Conference-on-Hunger-)  
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LOCAL AGENCY CONFERENCE CALL JUNE 15, 2022

Nutrition-and-Health?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=a0ec60a0-69fc-410b-91f2-5f2464126be7&eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=3f57bedf-82e8-43d8-9eb3-fd6c6ce32bd3)

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