DATE: August 14, 2018
TO: WIC Coordinators
FROM: State WIC Staff
SUBJECT: WIC State Plan Goals for FFY19

Each year the MN WIC Program completes and submits a State Plan to USDA for the coming Federal Fiscal Year. The purpose is to describe how we will administer the WIC program in each of FNS-designated 11 functional areas (e.g., Nutrition Services, Caseload Management, Civil Rights, etc.). As part of the State Plan, we share goals for our work in the coming year focused on those functional areas. Many of the “goals” are operational – work that has to be accomplished to meet changing policies, priorities, or technology. Some goals carry over from year to year as a part of our ongoing work. We want to share with these goals with all of you and also get your feedback.

In October, we will have a discussion with the WIC Advisory Group about goals, visions and aspirations for the future of Minnesota WIC – where are we headed? what’s on the horizon? what do we want WIC to look like in 3-5 years? We can use our State Plan goals as a starting point for this discussion and gather input on other priorities, activities, and initiatives that we should consider in order to pave the way for WIC moving forward. This will also be a topic at the August regional meetings - please share your input and ideas with your Advisory Group representative so that they can bring the information to the October Advisory Group meeting.

FFY19 State Plan Goals

I. VENDOR & FARMER MANAGEMENT
   • Develop and implement new store training for WIC-authorized pharmacies.
   • Develop and implement new WIC-authorized store training.
   • Develop and implement Peer Groups for WIC-authorized stores after full implementation of eWIC.
   • Maintain and update the Approved Product List (APL) for WIC allowed food items and work with stores to keep the APL updated once transitioned to eWIC.
   • Continue to meet, as needed, with the WIC Vendor Advisory Group to obtain input on WIC rule changes, e-WIC implementation, the WIC shopping experience and other vendor related matters.
   • Promulgate and implement revisions to the State WIC rules to insure a smooth transition to e-WIC and to tighten up on WIC store requirements.
   • Continue to explore ways to foster and enhance local agency partnerships with stores.
II. NUTRITION SERVICES

- **Education Choice:** Implement statewide expansion of Education Choice pilot program to enhance options for WIC participants for ongoing nutrition education.

- **Mobile Nutrition Information:** Create and provide electronic nutrition education information and resources to WIC participants via the My MN WIC App mobile application.

- **Risk Codes:** Implement new required risk code changes.

- **Nutrition Education Plan:** Continue to monitor and support local agency efforts to address anemia/low-hemoglobin through the Nutrition Education Plan by providing training and technical assistance. Local agencies will implement plans to address anemia goals identified in the NEP and will conduct a midpoint assessment of efforts to meet goals.

- **Participant Centered Services:** Submit an RFP for a contractor to build on and sustain PCS skills of local agency WIC staff.

- **High Risk Manual:** Update the High Risk guidance to reflect current information and references to assist local agencies in providing effective high risk counseling.

- **Breastfeeding Promotion and Support:** Continue work to promote and support breastfeeding for individual participants, and to help in creating an environment that better supports women who breastfeed.
  
  - Continue work toward achieving the State Agency breastfeeding-focused goal in the 2018-19 LA Nutrition Education Plan, and assist LAs in preparing participants for their hospital birthing experience and in providing early postpartum breastfeeding support.
  
  - Continue to collaborate with others (including other MDH programs, MN Breastfeeding Coalition, hospitals, clinics, and cultural communities) to build a supportive environment for breastfeeding women.

- **Peer Breastfeeding Program**
  
  - Provide trainings as needed for new staff;
  
  - Offer in-services to peers and coordinators on identified topics and other issues applicable to the peer program;
  
  - Update Peer Program policy to reflect recent updates to Loving Support model;
  
  - Complete *Mobile Health Communication* study with UM MPH student and disseminate results;
  
  - Explore projects with MPH students to increase effectiveness with limited resources.
  
  - Explore other sources of funding for expanding peer services to other LAs.
  
  - Plan and prepare for implementation of the next 5-year grant cycle.

- **WIC Training:** Continue to identify WIC training needs and explore options at the state agency for addressing those needs.

- **WIC Policies:** Continue reviewing and updating MN WIC policies.
III. INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- Kick-off SPIRIT Web (HuBERT) project. This major upgrade will re-engineer SPIRIT (HuBERT) to be a browser-based system. This is a multi-year project scheduled to be completed by July 2021. Data conversion is not needed because SPIRIT will keep the current database. Some goals are: significantly extend the life of the system; improve performance and security; reduce maintenance cost; enable use with mobile devices if desired.
- Provide oversight to the SPIRIT web project manager as co-chair of the SPIRIT Executive Steering Committee. Participate on the newly formed SPRIT Technical Advisory Committee (STAC). STAC will suggest design and usability improvements and be empowered to decide on feature implementation.
- Continue to actively participate in SPIRIT User Group (SUG) Activities such as the Executive Steering Committee, Designated Governing Board, Change Control Work Group, various task forces etc. These groups will be involved with both SPIRIT (HuBERT) and SPIRIT Web (HuBERT Web).
- Award contract for MIS Operations and Maintenance. Begin transition to new contractor after eWIC rollout, if needed.
- Continue with activities to maintain SPIRIT (HuBERT). Test and Implement Enhancement Releases 2.32.02 and 2.33. Priorities continue to be:
  - Emergency Codes fixes
  - Regulatory changes (risk code changes)
  - EBT related enhancements and fixes
- Implement mobile application enhancements for WIC participants (eWIC benefits balance info, store locator, shopping tips etc.).
- Update WIC Health indicators reports and maps annually. Continue reporting of selected indicators by race/ethnicity and cultural identity. Update and create fact sheets on breastfeeding, obesity and other areas of interest. Develop data report templates as needed and respond to data requests.
- Complete hardware replacement activities planned for this year.

IV. E-WIC PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GOALS

- Attend eWIC User’s group, eWIC conferences, and visit other states to gather latest information.
- Continue to engage with key stakeholders regarding eWIC Implementation Activities.
- Submit APDU’s, Quarterly Reports to FNS.
- Pilot eWIC in late October 2018; begin statewide rollout in late January 2019.
- Complete drafts for all eWIC related polices as well as update all polices which reference WIC vouchers.
- Complete development and distribution of training materials, modules etc. for all stakeholder groups.
- Deliver training to stakeholder groups as planned (i.e. HuBERT training modules and Transition Guide for local agencies, modules and/or face-to-face training for stores).
WIC STATE PLAN GOALS FOR FFY19

- Implement eWIC mobile application enhancements.
- Implement any needed eWIC fixes to HuBERT as needed.
- Complete Level 3 store certifications prior to pilot and rollout. Continue to distribute vendor integration funds.

XI. Civil Rights
- Complete the updated Civil Rights and Working with Interpreters training modules; post and implement for both State and Local Agency staff.
- Review and address issues identified in the 2018 Federal Civil Rights Review.
- Continue to educate State staff responsible for Civil Rights duties, on the most current Federal Civil Rights policies and procedures.