

# WIC Local Agency Conference Call

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024, 8:30-9:30 AM

## Agenda and Summary Notes

### Agenda Items:

- National Updates – Kate Franken
- And Justice For All poster – Jenny Skinner
- Today's Baby update – Carrie Klun
- Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Visit – Kathy Duffy
- Staffing Survey Announcement – Rebecca Gruenes
- WINNIE Schedule announcement – Tami Matti
- Online Shopping Update – Jessie Zins

### National Updates- Kate

#### WIC Funding

Federal agriculture programs, including WIC, are currently funded through **March 1**. Congress will need to act prior to midnight on March 1<sup>st</sup> to prevent a federal government shutdown. We will keep local agencies posted on updates as they are available.

#### NWA Online Community Now Live

The National WIC Association has announced that the NWA Online Community is now live and available for all NWA members. The goal of this platform is to serve as a space where State and Local agency members can connect, collaborate, and learn from your peers throughout the year. Getting started is easy, just follow the simple steps outlined by NWA:

#### How to Get Started:

1. Look for the invite email from [notif@community.nwica.org](mailto:notif@community.nwica.org).
2. Click the "Activate my account" button and then select "Login with your existing NWA account". Follow the prompts to enter the community.
3. Bookmark the page: [Welcome to the NWA online community](#)

NWA highly recommends using a **Google Chrome browser** when accessing the community. If you have any questions or run into any issues, feel free to reach out to [support@tradewing.com](mailto:support@tradewing.com). They will be able to get your questions answered. We encourage you to join the online community and will provide these details in the notes from this call.

#### WIC 50th Anniversary February Toolkit Available Now from NWA

Check out NWA's [50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary website](#) for materials and access to the videos and toolkit. NWA is producing a short video about WIC each month during 2024 to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. There are two videos now available for January and February 2024.

## Other Program Updates

### And Justice For All posters and new CRIA survey– Jenny

The **And Justice for All poster** is being updated with the May 2022 version of the Nondiscrimination Statement, we are still waiting to receive printed posters from USDA. Continue to display the 2019 And Justice for All posters. If you need additional posters while we wait for the revised version you may print your own from [And Justice for All](#) (PDF) in color on 11X17 inch paper or reach out to the Civil Rights Coordinator, [jenny.skinner@state.mn.us](mailto:jenny.skinner@state.mn.us) to get help with printing or for further questions.

**Civil Rights Impact Analysis (CRIA) survey – NEW!** Use this form when opening, closing, or relocating a WIC agency site to ensure your program will continue to provide or improve access for potential and current WIC participants and applicants. Connect with your State Consultant as soon as you find out about a possible change in location, they will help you complete this form, it is designed to help facilitate a conversation. This has been posted to the Minnesota Operations Manual, [Exhibit 1-R: Civil Rights Impact Analysis Survey](#). There will be an opportunity to discuss questions or concerns about using the CRIA at the upcoming regional meetings.

### TodaysBaby update – Carrie

Minnesota WIC will be partnering with researchers at Boston University, the University of Virginia, and Washington University in St. Louis, to provide pregnant participants with the opportunity to participate in the TodaysBaby Programs and Research Studies. Participants are eligible if they are 18 years of age or older and less than 32 weeks pregnant at time of enrollment.

TodaysBaby are free video-based education programs delivered through text message and private Facebook groups. The programs are aimed at promoting adherence to American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendations for breastfeeding and safe infant sleep. For additional information see the [WIC Breastfeeding Resources](#) page.

### Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Visit – Kathy

Kathy shared about the visit and experience setting up for the Secretary to visit Ramsey County WIC clinic on Feb. 1. The importance of WIC services was conveyed during the visit. "Tremendous work being done here," Secretary Vilsack said after he toured the clinic and heard from staff and families.

Secretary Vilsack is urging Congress to provide full funding for WIC, because the current funding levels will not cover all eligible participants.

St. Paul – Ramsey County staff worked hard to make this visit possible. We thank them for their efforts! You can watch the entire [press conference with Secretary Vilsack at the Ramsey County WIC clinic on YouTube](#).

### Staffing Survey Announcement – Rebecca

The Minnesota WIC Program and Local Agency Staffing workgroup are conducting a survey to better understand the challenges of recruiting and retaining WIC staff. Your responses will help us identify the impact that issues like adequate compensation, benefits, and job satisfaction have on staff recruitment and retention. The results may help local agency administrators advocate for fair compensation for WIC staff and enable the Minnesota WIC Program to elevate the importance of local agency staff and support national efforts.

**Update:**

*To access the survey, please refer to the Weekly Update email you received on Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2024, or ask your WIC coordinator for the survey link.*

The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. All WIC staff are asked to complete the survey, including WIC Coordinators, CPAs, clerks, Peer Breastfeeding Support staff, and Supervisors. Coordinators, please forward the survey link to any staff who may not receive the Weekly Update.

Results are confidential and will not be reported by individual or by local agency. We appreciate your participation in this survey. Survey will close on March 22, 2024. Aggregate results will be available to local agencies in early summer.

### **WINNIE Schedule announcement** – Tami

The WINNIE Pilot and Roll-out schedule has now been posted to the [WINNIE Information System](#) page of the MDH WIC Website. This page also includes links to the draft WINNIE Training materials, WINNIE Readiness Guide, and WINNIE Transition Guide that provides the information needed for WINNIE and HuBERT users during the transition.

This information will also be sent directly to all HuBERT Users on Thursday Feb. 23, 2024.

### **Online Shopping Update** – Jessie

Iowa, Minnesota, and Nebraska are all part of the Midwest State WIC Online Order Project (MSWOOP) in collaboration with Hy-Vee and the eWIC Service Providers FIS/CDP. The project is on track to go through the end of July 2024. FNS is funding numerous online ordering projects like this one through Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition. [Center for Nutrition — WIC Online Shopping](#).

Iowa began pilot first on January 25, 2024 and the online shopping pilot began in Hennepin County in Minnesota, February 15, 2024 at Hy-Vee in Brooklyn Park off Hwy 610 and Zane Ave. Both states were promoting participants to shop online but some bugs were identified hindering transactions. Nebraska will begin pilot mid-March.

We are excited to announce Minnesota had the first successful online shopping transaction in WIC history February 16, 2024, ahead of all other projects and states. There is still work to be done to fine tune online shopping through the Hy-Vee Aisles Online website. More information will be provided as pilot progresses and milestone are met.

### **Questions & Answers**

#### **Is the CRIA form necessary if you are doing a mobile clinic?**

Yes, please use the form when also setting up a mobile clinic. You can review the details with your consultant.

#### **How long is the TodaysBaby program running?**

At this time, we are uncertain, we have asked this question to the researchers and can provide additional details when we have them.

#### **Do we have access to the videos on TodaysBaby so we can see what our participants are seeing?**

Researchers have not provided the ability to share broadly.

#### **Gentlease formula has not been in any of our area stores for about a week. Curious if this is a more widespread issue?**

Mead Johnson is reporting healthy levels of Gentlease; however, we have heard about some supply issues at different retailers across Minnesota. Local Agencies can order from the state office where we

order directly from Mead Johnson. If you have supply issues in your area, place an order from the state office.

**Is there a user guide or reference sheet for clients that want to try on-line shopping?**

During pilot, we have resources posted on our website under WIC Shopping Help>>Online Shopping on our [WIC Shopping Help](#) web page. These resources may change after pilot based on what we learn.

**Is there a cheat sheet or something for the Aisles online staff to make sure the substitutions are also WIC approved items?**

HyVee is providing training to staff picking the products and they get a list on their handheld device of WIC only approved substitutions. With every transaction, the picker is scanning each item including substitutions. This can alter the final transaction slightly compared to the online order. The WIC foods at the online checkout are held in a pending status on the card and once the order is fulfilled, the true items picked are removed and items without a substitute or out of stock are put back on the card.

**When the shopping online project expands, will it only expand to other HyVee stores?**

Yes, through this project we are working on an online ordering solution for HyVee. Over the coming years we hope to work with additional retailers to offer online ordering. There are other states working with other retailers to develop an online ordering solution. The hope is that we will be able to easily adopt these online ordering solutions with other retailers.

## Reference – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks

[Welcome to the NWA online community \(https://community.nwica.org/\)](https://community.nwica.org/)

[50th Anniversary website \(https://wic50th.nwica.org/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=f1d98b06-9cb8-4221-8dea-6a84a21a1ddc\)](https://wic50th.nwica.org/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=f1d98b06-9cb8-4221-8dea-6a84a21a1ddc)

[And Justice for All \(https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/ajfa-green-030223.pdf\)](https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/ajfa-green-030223.pdf)

[WIC Breastfeeding Resources \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/bf/morebflinks.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/bf/morebflinks.html)

[Press conference with Secretary Vilsack at the Ramsey County WIC clinic on YouTube \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNUDU-ELquU\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNUDU-ELquU)

[Employment Characteristics \(https://redcap.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=KYXR9YNLH3LTE8HC\)](https://redcap.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=KYXR9YNLH3LTE8HC)

[WINNIE Information System \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/localagency/winnie/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/localagency/winnie/index.html)

[Center for Nutrition – WIC Online Shopping \(https://www.centerfornutrition.org/wic-online-shopping\)](https://www.centerfornutrition.org/wic-online-shopping)

[WIC Shopping Help \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/shopforwic/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/shopforwic/index.html)

Minnesota Department of Health - WIC Program, 625 Robert St N, PO BOX 64975, ST PAUL MN 55164-0975; 1-800-657-3942, [health.wic@state.mn.us](mailto:health.wic@state.mn.us), [www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us); to obtain this information in a different format, call: 1-800-657-3942.

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