



Welcome to the Nutrition Services Branch first quarterly newsletter! The intent of this newsletter is to keep you informed of the Nutrition Services Branch services, activities and program updates.

Kentucky First in Nation to Implement WIC Program

Connie Howell, M.Ed, RD, LD
Nutrition Services Coordinator

Kentucky has always been a leader in providing nutrition services to its population. In the early 1930s, Kentucky employed one of the nation's first fulltime public health nutritionists as part of its Maternal and Child Health Program. In 1958, Kentucky recognized the impact that persons with a bachelor's degree in nutrition could make on patients in local health clinics and employed them to provide patient counseling and nutrition education. This practice continues 40 years later.

The late Helen B. Fraser, M.D. designed and implemented a program in 1961 to provide iron-fortified formula to premature and other high-risk infants. The program could not provide needed services to other groups such as young children and pregnant women due to inadequate funding.

The Kentucky Nutrition Program, with its background of including nutrition education as an integral part of healthcare, welcomed the opportunity to implement the WIC program as outlined in the Federal Register of July 11, 1973. Peggy Kidd, R.D., M.P.H. led the way in Kentucky to start the first WIC Program in the nation as Chief of Nutrition for the Office of

Health Services, Kentucky Bureau for Health Services.

By January 1974, the Maternity and Infant Care Project was operating and serving Bell, Harlan, Floyd, and Letcher counties. By March 1, 1974, 13 project areas were providing WIC services. Today, the WIC program is in all 120 counties, with 161 sites serving 142,000 participants per month. The program provides:

- Quality nutrition education and services
- Breastfeeding promotion, education, and support
- A monthly food prescription (package)
- Access to maternal, prenatal, and pediatric healthcare services

Numerous studies have shown that pregnant women who participate in WIC have:

- Longer pregnancies that lead to fewer premature births
- Fewer low and very low birth-weight babies
- Fewer fetal and infant deaths
- Prenatal care earlier in pregnancy
- A diet higher in key nutrients such as iron, protein, calcium, and vitamins A and C

Prenatal Care Saves Money

- WIC prenatal care benefits reduce the rate of low birth-weight babies by 25% and very low birth-weight babies by 44%.
- Every dollar spent on pregnant women in WIC produces \$1.92 to \$4.21 in Medicaid savings for newborns and their mothers.

Reference: National WIC Association

New Foods and Packages for the WIC Program



Emma Walters, MS, RD, LD

The WIC Program food packages have always been offered based on the nutrition content of each item and how it impacts the health of the participant. In 2005, the Institute of Medicine conducted a study of the WIC Program food packages. The IOM report titled “WIC Food Packages: Time for a Change” included recommendations to meet the changing needs of the WIC participants. In

response to the report, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service then issued an interim rule defining the WIC food packages on December 6, 2007. The new food packages are aligned with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and include reduced-fat milk, whole grains, and the addition of fruits and vegetables. See box below for the “Top 10” list of WIC food package changes.

“Top 10” WIC Food Package Changes:

1. All states must complete the changes by October 2009. The Kentucky WIC Program implemented the new food package changes in May 2009.
 2. A Cash Value Benefit provides fruits and vegetables. The dollar amount ranges from \$6.50 to \$15.00, depending upon the category.
 3. The amount of formula a non-breastfeeding infant receives varies by age.
 4. Breastfed infants are defined as exclusively breastfed and receive no supplemental formula. A partially breastfed infant is defined as an infant who receives breast milk at least one (1) time per day along with supplemental formula.
 5. Juice has been eliminated for all infants.
 6. All infants receive complementary food starting at 6 months of age. These foods include infant cereal and plain infant fruits and vegetables. Exclusively breastfed infants also receive plain infant meat.
 7. Children age 2 and older and women receive only reduced-fat milk (2%, 1%, skim).
 8. Soy-based beverages, cheese, and calcium-set tofu can be substituted for milk. A medical prescription is required for children to receive the substitute. Lactose intolerance or cultural and religious preferences can be considered. At this time, only tofu or cheese will be available in Kentucky. A soy-based beverage that meets federal guidelines is not available in Kentucky.
 9. Children over 1 year of age who receive an exempt infant formula (e.g., extensively hydrolyzed product, metabolic formula) can also receive additional supplemental foods (whole grains, fruits, and vegetables), if a medical necessity form is presented.
 10. At least 50-percent of the WIC cereal choices are whole grain.
- Note:** This is only the “Top 10.” There are additional food package changes.

References:

- American Dietetic Association—Public Health/Community Nutrition Publication—The Digest—Summer 2008
- WIC Food Package Regulations—Federal Register/Vol. 72, No. 234, Thursday, December 6, 2007

For More Information:

- Institute of Medicine Report
<http://www.iom.edu/CMS/3788/18047/26667.aspx>
- WIC Food Package Regulations
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/regspublished/foodpackages-interim.rule.htm>
- USDA, National Agriculture Library—WIC Works Resource
http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/Food_Packages/html

**WIC Trivia: How many participants does WIC serve each month in Kentucky?
Answer on next page**

Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA)

A Positive Approach for Positive Results

Dianna Colson, MS, CN
WIC Nutrition Education Consultant

Let's start with the basics. VENA (Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment) is a positive approach to improve nutrition services in WIC. VENA was developed in response to the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) report, which indicated that traditional diet assessment methods were not valid to determine an *individual's* WIC eligibility. To maintain program integrity and to retain WICs status as a premier public health nutrition program, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), in conjunction with the National WIC Association (NWA) developed VENA Policy and Guidance.

VENA represents a paradigm shift in that it will change the way WIC interacts with participants and program staff. Participant risks and needs change over time, as does the scientific knowledge and best practices for methods to improve the health of women, infants, and children. VENA will allow for these methods to be used with focus on the participants' needs.

VENA defines a quality and comprehensive WIC nutrition



assessment and shifts the focus of the assessment process from eligibility determination to a participant-centered health outcome based process. The focus of VENA is assessment. It does not prescribe specific nutrition education messages or interventions. In short, VENA is designed to improve services and personalize the

WIC visit for each client. VENA will provide an opportunity for the WIC client and the health professional to set reasonable goals together and provide pertinent information to the client as needed. Working with an integrated system here in Kentucky, the health professional will be able to fulfill the general requirement of goal setting for each patient to which the Public Health Practice Reference (PHPR) refers.

We are very excited to have the opportunity to provide client-centered nutrition education and we look forward to providing training to the local agencies. The first training was held on September 16, 2009. A repeat of this training is scheduled for September 28, 2009.

WIC Internal Reviews

Rhonda Goff
Supervisor, Program Operations

Due to recent retirements and staff changes in the local health departments, we have had several inquiries about the WIC Internal Reviews. In order to assist you in performing your reviews, we are providing the following information.

The WIC internal review must be performed at all clinic sites a minimum of once every two years, and it must include management, certification, observation of nutrition education counseling, participant services, civil rights, food delivery, and financial management. Documentation of the review must be kept on file for a minimum of five years. For agencies with multiple clinic sites, we suggest that documentation of that site's review also be maintained at the site. Although many agencies review patient records in

their quality assurance reviews, a review of patient records alone does not meet WIC requirements. Please refer to the Administrative Reference, Volume II, WIC Section, page 4 for information about this requirement.

The local agency WIC Program Internal Review form, along with a random patient sample of charts to be reviewed, food package III recipients, and ineligibles can be requested for each site to be reviewed by contacting Chris Taylor via email at chris.taylor@ky.gov or by phone at 502-564-3827, ext. 3850. Please feel free to contact the WIC Field Representative in your area or the Program Management Section in the State WIC Office with any questions you may have about the reviews.

WIC Trivia Answer: Approximately 142,000!

WIC Resources

WIC Works Resource System

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks>

- Resources for WIC Staff
- Patient Education Materials
- Breastfeeding Education Materials
- WIC Databases
- WIC Learning Center
- WIC Topics A to Z

Kentucky WIC

<http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/mch/ns/wic.htm>

- History of Kentucky WIC
- Breastfeeding Information
- Vendor Management
- Breastfeeding Resource Guide
- Nutrition Education Materials
- Formula Resource Guide

USDA Food and Nutrition Information Center

<http://fnic.nal.usda.gov>

- Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Professional and Career Resources
- Food Safety Information Center

MyPyramid

www.mypyramid.gov

- MyPyramid basics
- Interactive Tools
- Multimedia
- Professional Resources



Your WIC Contacts in Frankfort:

• Branch Office

General questions regarding Nutrition Services and the WIC Program
(502) 564-3827, Option 5

• Program Operations

Income Eligibility and Administrative Policy and Procedures
(502) 564-3827, Option 4

• Vendor Section

Vendor related questions and applications
(502) 564-3827, Option 3

• Food Delivery/Data Section

Stop Pays, computer, auto dialer, printer and printing problems
(502) 564-3827, Option 1

• Clinical Nutrition Section

Special Formula Approvals, breast pump rentals and nutrition
(502) 564-3827, Option 2

What to expect from future issues:

- How WIC helps infants
- Update on Implementation of food packages
- VENA update
- Self-paced learning pilot test
- EBT update



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
WIC is a registered service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture for USDA's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children.

