Health Updates

Policy

USDA Federal Regulations:

Certification periods

246.7(g) (1) Program benefits will be based upon certifications established in accordance with the following timeframes:

A/an:	Will be certified:
(iii) Breastfeeding woman	Approximately every six months. The State agency may permit its local agencies to certify a breastfeeding woman up to the last day of the month in which her infant turns 1 year old, or until the woman ceases breastfeeding, whichever occurs first.
(iv) Infant	Approximately every six months. The State agency may permit its local agencies to certify an infant under six months of age up to the last day of the month in which the infant turns 1 year old, provided the quality and accessibility of health care services are not diminished.
(v) Child	Approximately every six months ending with the last day of the month in which a child reaches his/her fifth birthday. The State agency may permit its local agencies to certify a child for a period of up to one year, provided the local agency ensures that the child receives the required health and nutrition assessments, as set forth in §246.11(e)(3).

Nutrition education contacts

246.11(e)(2) During each six-month certification period, at least two nutrition contacts shall be made available to all adult participants and the parents or caretakers of infant and child participants, and wherever possible, the child participants themselves.

(3) Nutrition education contacts shall be made available at a quarterly rate to parents or caretakers of infant and child participants certified for a period in excess of six months. Nutrition education contacts shall be scheduled on a periodic basis by the local agency, but such contacts do not necessarily need to take place in each quarter of the certification period.

Authority

7 CFR Part 246.7(g)(1)(iii-v)
7 CFR Part 246.11(e)(2-3)

Procedures

Modality of Health Update appointments

Health Update appointments can be done in person or via teleWIC based on participant preference and needs.

Scheduling frequency and requirements for Health Update appointments

Infants	Schedule all infants for Health Update appointments every three months. Each of these appointments includes a brief health assessment and breastfeeding data collection and nutrition education. At a minimum: ● A new nutrition interview will be created, questions reviewed and asked as needed depending on the conversation with parent/guardian, ○ Evaluate the current feeding plan, including but not limited to the parent's breastfeeding goals and expectations; discussion regarding the introduction and advancement of solid foods and if formula feeding, preparation, sanitation and special formula issues as applicable. ● The breastfeeding status will be updated (even if it is unchanged) ● At least once during the certification period during a health update appointment, obtain weight and length measurements.* ● Between 9-12 months of age, obtain referral bloodwork data or measure hemoglobin (or obtain the hematocrit level). ● Complete a new risk determination. ● Complete and document nutrition education and referrals. ● Complete a new care plan as appropriate.
Breastfeeding Woman	Schedule a Health Update appointment for each breastfeeding woman to coincide with her infant's mid-year Health Update appointment (between 5-7 months). Each of these appointments includes a brief maternal health assessment and breastfeeding support, guidance, nutrition education and referrals specific to her. At a minimum: A new nutrition interview must be created, questions should be reviewed and asked as needed depending on the conversation. ● Obtain weight (for all mothers) and height (up until age 21).* ● Measure hemoglobin or hematocrit level if it was low at their certification. ● Complete a new risk determination. ● Complete and document nutrition education and referrals. ● Complete new care plan as appropriate.

	For breastfeeding women, schedule Nutrition Education appointments approximately three months after the certification appointment and approximately every three months after the Health Update appointment until she has been terminated for categorical ineligibility or she is no longer breastfeeding, whichever comes first. Breastfeeding mothers whose infants receive more than half of the WIC formula package after the age of 6 months will no longer receive food benefits for themselves but because these women continue to be active participants, they should continue receiving nutrition services including nutrition counseling, education and referrals. • These appointments should be scheduled around the time she is 9 and 12 months postpartum (to coincide with her infant's health update and one year certification appointment.) • Mark her FB Issuance on the family panel as "No Food Benefits" to prevent her from terminating for "No recent FB pickup".
Children	Schedule all children for a Health Update appointment 6 months after the certification appointment. Each of these appointments includes a brief health assessment and nutrition education. At a minimum:, • A new nutrition interview must be created, questions should be reviewed and asked as needed depending on the conversation and identified changes since the previous certification. Conduct lead and immunization screening as necessary. • Obtain weight and height measurements and assess growth and weight.* • Obtain blood work data if due or if it was low at the certification appointment. • Complete a new risk determination. • Complete and document nutrition education and referrals • Complete new care plan as appropriate.

Note: *Anthropometric data used for a health update appointment can be from any time during the certification period.

Anthropometric and bloodwork data for teleWIC appointments

For teleWIC appointments, local agencies must make concerted efforts to obtain referral data for anthropometric measurements and bloodwork values in advance of or at the time of the appointment.

- When anthropometric referral data is obtained prior to the appointment, the CPA will create a new anthropometric record and record the results, making sure to adjust the measurement date to coincide with the date the measurements were taken.

- If anthropometric data is not available prior to the appointment, the CPA will skip the anthropometric panel when completing the assessment.
    - Every effort will be made to obtain referral data through use of release of information forms, requesting participant/parent/guardian obtain and submit measurements in person or electronically, and/or offering/scheduling the participant a time to come in to get weighed and measured at the WIC clinic.
    - Once received, this information will be documented by creating a new anthropometric record and adjusting the measurement date to coincide with the date the measurements were taken. (A new risk determination should be completed at this time too.)
- If bloodwork data is due or needed but not available prior to the appointment, the CPA will create a new record date on the blood panel and mark "No" blood work was not taken and select "No Physical Presence" from the No Test Performed Reason drop down box and screen for lead as needed.
    - Every effort to obtain referral data through use of release of information forms, requesting participant/parent/guardian obtain and submit measurements in person or electronically, and/or offering/scheduling the participant a time to come in to get their hemoglobin checked.
    - Once received, this information will be documented by recording the value in the blood panel, making sure to adjust the Blood Work Date to coincide with the date the measurement was taken. (A new risk determination should be completed at this time too.)
- If bloodwork data is not needed, the CPA will create a new record on the blood panel, mark "No" blood work was not taken and select "Screening schedule Ok" from the No Test Performed Reason drop down box and screen for lead as needed.

Best Practices

Use of referral data

WIC agencies are strongly encouraged to use previously collected bloodwork and anthropometric data from well-child visits

Care plans

A new care plan is required for high-risk participants, but CPAs are encouraged to write a new care plan for others as well following Health Update appointments in order to:

- Expand on the responses recorded in the nutrition interview,
- Document the infant's or special woman or child's formula feeding plan, or
- Document other nutrition information not recorded in the record.