

## Assessment and Counseling Cheat Sheet

\*While this document is not meant to replace policies it is meant to summarize the key pieces during the assessment and counseling process.

- ✓ Do a quick review of the previous nutrition interview, risk panel, and care plan, making mental note of anything significant or anything that may relate to today's appointment. Don't forget to follow up on the previous goal they set too!
  - Continuity of Care is important!
- ✓ As you call the person back, start to establish rapport. Think about:
  - Is there something you can help them with like carrying something for them?
  - Is there small talk you can make?
  - Is there a genuine compliment you have for them or their child?
- ✓ Introduce yourself. Explain:
  - What is going to happen during the time you spend with them
  - The purpose of the WIC appointment; which is for them and/or their child to be healthier in the long run
  - It is their appointment, you want to help them problem-solve the things (diet or health wise) that they are concerned about for themselves, their child or their family.
- ✓ Listen. Pay close attention to detail, storing information mentally for later questions, discussion and evaluation.
  - E.g., if they have already told you they have a script for a special formula because of a milk protein allergy, don't ask if the baby has any medical conditions or allergies. Instead, acknowledge you heard what they said and probe further. I.e. "You mentioned \_\_\_\_ has a milk protein allergy, can you tell me a little more about that and if \_\_\_\_ has any other medical conditions or allergies?"
- ✓ The questions that appear in the data system provide structure and are a starting point but:
  - Rephrase questions to fit your interviewing style or to improve understanding
  - Utilize the starters and prompts that are found at the bottom of each section in the participant's nutrition interview
  - Use open ended questions, reflections, affirmations, probes and summarization. A few examples to get you started are:
    - "What I hear you saying is \_\_\_\_\_, am I understanding you right?"
    - "I think a lot of parents feel that way."
    - "Can you tell me a little bit more about that?"
    - "So it sounds like you are saying \_\_\_\_\_ and feeling like \_\_\_\_\_, did I get that right?"
- ✓ Assign all risks identified by their responses by either marking the circle or check box next to the risks listed on the panels. If you are not sure what all the risks entail or when/why they should be assigned, spend some time looking at the Nutrition Risk Definitions policy and the full nutrition risk definitions located on the [WIC web portal](#).

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- ✓ Before providing counseling:
  - Summarize the concerns and interests brought up by the parent/participant during the appointment and the findings/topics that have been discussed. Ask, out of those things, what are they most interested in talking more about, working on, or problem solving together or, is there something they want to talk about today that hasn't been brought up yet?
    - Ask about what they already know
    - Find out what have they already tried or are thinking about trying
    - Point out their strengths and capacities
    - Ask permission to share other ideas (If you are given permission, it's helpful to frame those ideas in the context that it is what you have heard other parents try or what has worked for other parents that you've talked to.)
- ✓ Can the use of WIC foods or recipes using WIC foods be used in the discussion?
- ✓ Is there a need to offer other resources or referrals?
- ✓ Provide written or electronic handouts or tools that might help reinforce the discussion as appropriate
  - Do they have a preference in the kind of resource they get? (paper handout, electronic handout, web-based)
- ✓ Based on the discussion you just had with the participant/parent, determine what is the end result they want to achieve and how can they start to work towards that?
  - Have them verbalize what they are going to do and then help them to make it a SMART goal:
    - **Specific:** What exactly is the activity/action they want to do/take?
    - **Measurable:** How will they know they accomplished it?
    - **Achievable:** Do they feel confident that they can do this? (If not, work with them to adjust it to something they are confident they can do!)
    - **Realistic:** Do they feel the activity/action and the timeline is in fact realistic with other things going on in their life? (If not, work with them to adjust it to something they feel is more realistic.)
    - **Time specific:** What is the time frame they will be doing this goal in or by?

Remember: *"It's a marathon, not a sprint!" "You don't have to see the whole staircase, just the first step!" "Baby steps!" and "Slow and steady wins the race!"*

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