

WIC Webinar notes

April 15, 2020

Attendance:

31-Broadlawns: Karen Goff, Kalin Berkland, Kristy Carr, Hannah Ledebouer

33-New Opp: Brenda, Julie and Paula

34-HACAP: Angela Munson

35-Hillcrest: Cindy Kaczinski

38-MICA: Sierra and Janet

37-MATURA: Karla, Michelle, Astra, Jessica, Brenda and Amy

39-Mid-Sioux: Cindy Harpenau

41-NICAO: Carla Miller, Jody Weiss

42-VNA: Sara Noack

43-Operation Threshold: Amanda Kirchhoff, Angela Becker

45- CASEI: Christine O'Brien and Sherri Wilson

46- AHFA: Cindy Meiners

47-UDMO: Emily Swancutt

48- WCCA: Amanda Blum

49- Siouxland: Jean Sterner

50-Webster County: Katie Loseke

51- Johnson County: Chuck Dufano

52-Pottawattamie: Kris Wood

54- CHC: Courtney Connor and Ashley Wandera

Updates (Kimberly)

- I will start with information we sent out last week - Charles sent out some info on stimulus checks, we did receive an email from our regional office that these checks will not be counted as income.
- We can use IMPA to find addresses, IMPA was able to add full addresses to that system, so we are able to use that as proof of address, and this choice has been added to Focus.
- Nikki also added some information on some resources on managing stress and that kind of thing, we know this is a stressful time and many of us are not seeing our co-workers, or not seeing our participants face to face so hope you find some of those resources helpful.
- We also added some updated breast pump guidance, and will turn it over to Nicole to discuss that updated guidance.

Breast pump guidance (Nicole)

- The guidance has changed as far as issuing breast pumps from the normal policy where we do the trial for the first month or two, to just issuing a personal breast pump in lieu of that period. The mom is identifying that she needs or

wants a pump, so agencies can hold on to their loaner pumps for now to avoid more personal contacts than we need, and pumps coming back in or pumps that need to be cleaned. I realize there will be situations where participants have pumps out now, just advise moms to hold on to those pumps, and we will get them back as soon as things calm down. I would advise to encourage moms to clean them and keep in a safe place for now.

- Someone I had talked to, had a concern about getting the pump back and if the mom has stopped breastfeeding and now needs formula, would that would be a change in process? No, please stress we will continue with regular policy and we cannot deny the participant formula just because they have not returned the pump, and that has always been the case, so continue with that.
- I talked to one agency about breast pump issuance where they are doing the education over the phone for using the pump, and was having the participant call ahead and when they were getting near the clinic. The WIC staff would go put the pump in the bag, in the walkway where there were 2 doors to enter the building, so they could see them through the door but they were not ever making contact with them and definitely keeping the 6 foot of distance. So, be creative with those kinds of encounters if you feel more comfortable that way.
- Until further notice, hold on to the pumps. More guidance will be coming this week, that we just included into the document about breastfeeding education and COVID – 19, be on the lookout for that.

Kimberly

- We just got a waiver for us to complete agency reviews remotely, waiver is currently through May 31st. We have just started discussing how this will look, and want to give you a heads up that we will be in touch with you on how we can get those visits scheduled and completed in a remote manner.
- Will turn over to the Vendor team to provide some vendor updates.

Vendor Updates (Kenny)

- No major updates, the food supply for WIC foods seem to be pretty good, got thru the 1st and calls have filtered up to me and calls have been down, so that's a good thing.
- We sent out notice that the self-check out option at Walmart should be turned on across the State. To expand on that a little, we did piloting for quite a bit with the location up there in Grimes, and I think the feedback we may get from some of the Walmart stores might come down to communication. There might be a time or two where a participant may want to use it and there might be something like a wrong food and the cashier that is running that POS, will not know that it is on, so might be something to look out for. The communication might not get all the way down to that cashier that it is in fact on, and to stress that if there is an issue, get a manager to walk them through it. That's the one concern I had,

- We did multiple buys and were happy with how the pilot went. I know we have had a couple of calls on the online piece for those not wanting to go into the store right now, and that is not an option yet, so maybe this will help with social distancing, so just another option for participants.
- At the same time, we still have to treat all the other vendors fairly. There are other chains that have self-checkouts that are not on or certified yet, but could be coming on any day now, so we don't want to make it a commercial. It is a great option out there, and I know I talked to Pott County Kris Wood this morning and they were going to go and try it out, so hopefully that all goes through and it will be a good option.

Kimberly- Thank you Kenny. I am going to turn over to Brandy for update on Zoom.

Brandy-

- Early on in the process we saw input from our information management department on what would be recommendations for using, for doing webinar type meetings with your participants, and the recommendations at that time were to use Zoom and we provided that in writing. As you are probably aware, Zoom has been in the news quite a bit lately about hacking issues and also some recent stolen passwords, so, it is my understanding that our department is changing their position on that and we are expecting internally to receive communication formally within the next several days and when we do we will be sure and pass on to you so we are giving you the same message that we are receiving. What it sums up to is that they are changing their position on Zoom, and I understand that the department is not going to continue to use Zoom either, so, that will change the recommendations, so look for that information once we receive it, we will pass it on in formal writing. That is all I had.

Kimberly-

Thank you Brandy. Connie wants to talk a little bit about eWIC cards, so I will turn it over to Connie.

Connie –

- I wanted to make sure everyone knew that I have been closely monitoring the card stock in Focus, and when it gets close to your threshold I will have to go into the office and I will make sure I get cards sent out to you.
- I know everyone is getting a lot of new participants, so the card stock is going down. I also get a lot of calls about cards not working. We want to be sure we always ask everybody questions, because we have to remember that the benefits are not going on the card, they are in Focus and then the card is what pods Focus to WIC Direct. So people call and think their card is not working and 98% of time benefits are either not on card, they are putting in the wrong pin, or trying to buy the wrong item, there are a lot of scenarios. If you can let your

agency users know that they can feel free to call me anytime, I can check WIC Direct for them, to see what is going on. If someone is putting in the wrong pin or sometimes they have gone to the store and the benefit has not be loaded on their card because they missed their appointment last month, a lot of scenarios, so make sure you let them know they can call me anytime and I hopefully I can fix it.

Kimberly-thanks Connie, I will turn over to Bruce for a fiscal update.

Bruce –

- I want to give all agencies a heads up that we have received some additional administration funding for WIC in the form of discretionary funding, and we would like to obligate that pretty soon. I will be sending an email. And what we are going to do is ask you if there are any projects that your agency might have to improve WIC services. Those might include, facility renovations, so if you are thinking of refreshing anything in your offices, carpet, desk, chairs, that type of thing, any equipment, if you have any outreach projects that you would like to do that might be a good choice, and lastly caseload maintenance, if for any reason you are don't believe your current funding with Amendment 1 is sufficient to cover all your normal WIC costs through the end of the year, we would like to know that and once we get all those requests we will go ahead and do the increases through a contract amendment. So, be thinking of something that you need, this is some money just a little above the normal funding stream, so good luck to you and I hope to have that email out to you by close of business on Friday.

Kimberly-That ends the updates we are going to provide today, so I would like to open it up to all of you to ask any questions that you have or any issues you are running into, what has been going well or anything you would like to share with us or each other, so I will open up that now:

Questions

Q. Karen at Broadlawns – one of my staff had a question about the voter registration, people can register to vote online, can we give them the option of texting them the website to register to vote? Instead of sending them the form?

A.Kimberly- that is a good question, we could look into that possibility, so why don't we look into that and see if that might be an option.

Q. Cindy Meiners – I had a call from somebody today saying that they didn't receive the WIC card we mailed them, do you have any suggestions on how to handle that? I assume we will just handle it as lost.

A. & Q. Kimberly – yeah it might be good to check to see if the card has been used at all to see if it may have gotten in the wrong hands or something, before sending a new one out. How many days has it been since it was sent out?

A. Cindy – March 23rd, so long enough.

A. Kimberly – yeah so it would be good to double check and see if that card has been used at all, and if it hasn't I would go ahead and mail them a new one.

Q. Cindy – we put to send back to us so we should have gotten that envelope back if it didn't get to her, but anyway, there should be a way to verify the addresses.

A. Brandy – I would like to add, before sending a new card out, I would call the participant to let her know you are going to do that because if she finds it and tries to use it, it could get confusing, so to let her know it is going to be deactivated and to not use that card again.

Q. Amanda 43- was wondering if you had any information on Farmers' Market?

A. Kimberly, no we don't, that is something we have thought about on what's going to happen with that, so Caryn, feel free to jump in here with any information that we have, but we have touched base with Paul Ovrom from the Farmers market program. He had some questions on where checks could be mailed and that kind of thing, so we have been in contact with him, but that has been a question that has come up, and what will happen with Farmer's Market or if there will be any changes to how that will work this summer. At this point he hasn't said anything other than he just wanted to know how to find out where agencies addresses are to get checks mailed out since he knows we some agencies are working remotely or not in offices. We should hopefully know more as time goes on, but that is all the information we have on Farmer's Market. Caryn, feel free to chime in if you have any additional information you would like to share.

A. Caryn Wittry, the checks should be mailed out in May so I would say to expect to hear from us or from Paul Ovrom either this month or early May just to verify where those checks need to be sent to.

Q. Karen from Broadlawns – the new foods benefit pick up report, is there any way whether you call it the parameters or something that would have the names of the families that haven't used their benefits? I just feel like it's easier to catch them at that point than waiting until we find them on the termination report, we use that report a lot because we ask them why they haven't used their benefits and can use it as a way to survey and get some more information and if they want to get back on or the age of their children or pick up newly pregnant or have a baby, is there any way that we can capture somehow those families or participants that haven't used their benefits in a couple months?

A. Kimberly, yeah we had turned that off to try to reduce some barriers of the participants terminating if they had not picked up benefits and try to make things a little

easier that route, we would have to have some internal discussions if there would be a way to provide those needs that would show up on that report. So we can have some discussions on that, but yeah we turn that off to just reduce some of the barriers, but I do understand that can be a helpful report to try to get those participants back in.

Q. Karen, I am not looking for them to be seen, or the termination part but just more of running que or something like that so we can have access to those families, we did a lot of education on the phone, nutrition Ed, just information, not to take any action on it I guess.

Q.Karla 41 – I agree, I think it would be so helpful, because that is one of our focus is to try and close that gap, and if we know who is not using their checks it is harder to close that gap and become creative with ways to do that. If we knew, the participants who were not using their benefits it would make that process much easier to try to figure out why they are not using their benefits.

A. Kimberly- I completely understand, and we can definitely have some internal discussions on that topic. Are there other questions?

A. Caryn Wittry- in the chat, there is a question that says ideas for handling returned formula.

A. Kimberly - I would say if you have specific questions, reach out to your consultant regarding formula that participants should not be returning and we can have a conversation.

Q. Karen Broadlawns – I am trying to figure out a way to record data, I know there are a lot of un-employed families in our State and counties, towns and so forth, but how can we reach out to those families, is there any type of report or operation or something with un-employment offices, I know they are super busy and I don't know how to reach them without adding any other , are there ideas or ways we can reach out to the un-employment offices or how can we know who our un-employed families are now, and reaching out and offering WIC services?

A. Kimberly- good question, we have not reached out to any un-employment offices.

A. Jill- part of the feeding Iowa taskforce that I am on, we have been reaching out to Iowa Workforce Development and actually the idea came from Bruce Brown and the Lt. Governor said he was brilliant for this idea and said so many call into their office and they are on hold for a significant amount to time due to so many people calling, and they are changing what you listen to while you are on hold. So, there is going to be information on there saying if you are having concerns about having enough food, there will be links to WIC and the Food Bank Association and different resources they are still working on getting the web page live, but, it is not quite ready. Workforce development is working on getting that changed, so we are taking a few steps in that direction. As far as you getting names of people, I can't even imagine that they would have time to talk to us right now, there could be mass numbers, and I don't know who to talk to but we

are going at it in a different perspective to give out your information for people who are calling and a lot of people who have never been in this type of situation and don't even know who to call, so kudos to Mr. Brown for the idea of this idea.

Q. Kris- will there be any PSA's we can access if we had extra money. Any out there we could do quickly?

A. Kimberly-I am not aware of any thru WIC, and I do not know if Nikki knows if there is anything through NWA about that. However, there is nothing on our end that I am aware of. Any other questions? Are appointments going well? We have been hearing that participants seem to be thankful for completing appointments remotely.

Kris- going well for us, don't have quite the no-show numbers since we have been having them come in, so we are rather busy.

Q. Kimberly-Anyone else like to share, feedback

A. Karla- a lot of good feedback, participants really, like they are not being exposed to anything our numbers are going up, pleased with that.

A. 41- Ours is going well also, having great way to get a hold of him or her, not a problem everyone is at home.

A. Amanda 43-same thing, our numbers are good reaching everyone by video

Q. Nicole- if agencies, how often do you think they can access their blood work information are we getting any of that at all, or in the appropriate time- frame.

A. Karen at Broadlawns – kind of a hit and miss for us, some moms have the information and others have no idea.

A. Kris-depends on age of child

Q. Nicole – that makes sense, do part use access to some of the portals or apps?

A. Kris-a few but try to measure their kids at home

A. Nicole- good to know.

Q. Kimberly- anyone else with questions

Q. Bruce – Question for coordinators, we sent out the participation data for March, wondered if you can tell me what they have been seeing for April, do you expect that to continue. Is it getting busier? What are your thoughts?

A. Karla 41- I think our numbers will continue to grow, get calls every day the phone is ringing with new participants and wanting to get on so I definitely think numbers will keep climbing.

A. Kristine at Burlington – with phone appointment we are able see a lot more and provide more benefits for a lot more people are, your show rate used to be 60-70% and

now they are like 95%, there are very few misses that we have. More people calling wanting to get back on the program or new people and I think over the summer we will see that continue to grow.

A. Courtney 54- pretty big increase in brand new people coming into the program that have never heard of our resources, have had people that were once on and calling to get back on.

Q. Bruce- Broadlawns Carla you have had probably the biggest increase, I think you were up 750 over last month, what are you seeing at Broadlawns?

A. Carla-we are busy, maybe 2 days out we may not be full, but the day of everything is full, we are busy, Headstart has let their families know, everything is on the phone and easier to obtain,

Bruce – thanks

Q. Kimberly – any other questions or comments?

Nikki- I want to mention I have an NWA recruitment and retention call this afternoon and I will ask if any other states have anything developed for a PSA targeting recently unemployed families or families not typically eligible for WIC, or if NWA plans to work on anything. I also have sent an email to the Secretary of State's office to ask about Broadlawn's Voter Registration question.

Question for Kenny, is there anything talking the corporate level Hy-Vee or Walmart any advertising on their sacks or in stores about WIC?

A. Kenny- I do not know if they are doing anything special, Walmart has their food marked and self-checkouts will have signs saying they will take WIC benefits

A. Karla Hynes – our participant are enjoying doing appointments by zoom, after this is all over, would it be possible to keep doing things this way , to keep numbers up,

Kimberly- we have had this conversation with other states, NWA has made comments from participants saying they like this, but all based on federal regulations and hard to change. Will be interesting if there are any changes because of this, any other questions? Thanks for sharing and asking your questions, we have originally said we would do this weekly, but would you prefer doing it more of every other week call?

Agencies agreed this was a good idea.

Kimberly –

- I think we will move to that then and do every other week.
- We have a contractor meeting coming up, we will still have that meeting, but what we will do is to have it on the 28th of April, we will have topics to talk about and what is going on with COVID-19, cancel call on the 22nd and just do the 28th of April.

- If no other questions, we will end the call at 12:49pm