

Section 6.2: General Nutrition Education

4/2020

References: 7CFR 246.11, [WIC Nutrition Services Standards](#)

Policy: The local agency must make nutrition education available to WIC participants or caregivers according to federal and state requirements and to meet the nutrition education needs of families.

Purpose: To ensure that WIC participants receive adequate nutrition education intended to improve the health of nutritionally at-risk women, infants, and children.

Procedures

- Local agencies must designate a Nutrition Education Coordinator to plan and evaluate the agency's nutrition services. See [Section 4.3: Competent Professional Authority \(CPA\) Qualifications and Responsibilities](#)
- All participants must be offered nutrition education at a rate equivalent to quarterly during each certification period.
 - Provide nutrition education at the time of certification and mid-certification. See [Section 6.3: Initial Education](#) and [Section 5.10: Mid-Certification](#).
 - Provide additional nutrition education, or High Risk Care, at a rate equivalent to quarterly during the certification period. See [Section 6.7: Additional Education](#) and [Section 6.6: High-Risk Individual Nutrition Care Plan](#).
- Nutrition education should:
 - address the individual's nutritional risks and nutritional interests
 - emphasize the relationship between nutrition, physical activity habits and health
 - be appropriate to the literacy level of the participant and easily understood
 - meet the cultural and language needs of the participant
- Nutrition education is a benefit of the program and will be provided at no cost to the participant.
- Staff may not withhold WIC food benefits from participants who fail to participate in nutrition education.

Guidance

Provision of Nutrition Education

- Create and offer options to reduce barriers to nutrition education. Transportation, childcare, and work obligations can make it difficult for families to participate in nutrition education activities. [Education Choice](#) allows participants to choose how they would like to receive nutrition education at follow-up visits. Options include education in WIC clinic, by telephone or video call, or through self-guided modules.
- If multiple nutrition and health needs for education are identified, the CPA should prioritize those needs and focus education on just 1 or 2 topics.
- Use delivery methods/mediums and approaches that are appealing, creative, relevant, and interactive to engage the participant, as well as create opportunities for feedback. Examples include:
 - [Participant Centered Services](#) (PCS): PCS is a counseling approach that helps participants identify their own motivation for change and set individualized, simple, and attainable goals; provides clear and relevant “how to” actions to accomplish those goals; and tailors nutrition education to the needs of the participant.
 - Technology such as telephone, video calls, and computer modules when appropriate.
 - Materials that reinforce the education message such as educational cards, a newsletter, video, bulletin boards, and displays. These materials supplement counseling, not replace it.
- Incorporate community/national nutrition and physical activity messages (e.g., [Fruitsandveggies.org](#); [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#); [Healthy People Goals](#); [The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding](#); [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#); [Bright Futures Nutrition](#)).
- Promote WIC as an adjunct to good health care.

Reference – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks

[WIC Nutrition Services Standards](https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/resources/wic-nutrition-services-standards) (https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/resources/wic-nutrition-services-standards)

[Section 4.3: Competent Professional Authority \(CPA\) Qualifications and Responsibilities](https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch4/sctn4_3.pdf) (https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch4/sctn4_3.pdf)

[Section 6.3: Initial Education](https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch6/sctn6_3.pdf) (https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch6/sctn6_3.pdf)

SECTION 6.2: GENERAL NUTRITION EDUCATION

Section 5.10: Mid-Certification

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch5/sctn5_10.pdf)

Education Choice

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/localagency/nutrition/edchoice/index.html>)

Participant Centered Services

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/localagency/training/pcs/index.html>)

Fruitsandveggies.org (<https://fruitsandveggies.org/>)

Dietary Guidelines for Americans (<https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/>)

Healthy People Goals (<https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/About-Healthy-People>)

The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding

(<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/resources/calltoaction.htm>)

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (<https://health.gov/paguidelines/>)

Bright Futures Nutrition (<https://www.brightfutures.org/nutrition/>)

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, www.health.state.mn.us. To obtain this information in a different format, call: 1-800-657-3942

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.