

Monday October 26, 2020


9:30 am – 12:30 pm

## Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Topic	Presenter	NOTES
Welcome & Round Robin Introductions	Ellie & All	<p><b>ADVISORY GROUP (AG) MEMBERS PARTICIPATING:</b></p> <p>Jessica Allred (Winona Co.); Nikki Bennett (St. Louis Co.); Maggie Domski (Washington Co.); Kathy Duffy (St. Paul/Ramsey Co.) for Karen Mayer; Katlyn Hubbard (Becker Co.); Kris Klopp (Mille Lacs Co.); Amber Koski (Pine Co.); Miriam Lindblad (Countryside); Marlee Morrison (Hubbard Co.); Wendy O’Leary (Olmsted Co.); Stephanie Olson (Polk Co.); Arlin Penner (Nicollet Co.); Kathy Roycraft (Waseca Co.); Wendy Schoon (Otter Tail Co.); Ellie White (Kanabec Co.); Amber Converse (Dodge Co.) and Lenora Yellow Bird (White Earth Reservation).</p> <p><b>AG MEMBERS ABSENT:</b> Amy Caron (Dodge/Steele CHB)</p> <p><b>MDH STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:</b></p> <p>Kate Franken, WIC Director; Tina Breitenbach, Breastfeeding, Training, &amp; Communications Unit Supervisor; Rebecca Gruenes, Nutrition &amp; Clinic Services Unit Supervisor; Tami Matti, MIS &amp; Data Unit Supervisor; Jessie Zins, Food Delivery Unit Supervisor, and Tammie Edmundson, Fiscal Analyst.</p>
State Staff Updates	Kate	<p>Three state positions will be filled soon. Nutrition Consultant position for South Central Region, Food Delivery Unit position and the permanent MIS &amp; Data Unit Supervisor.</p>
Regional Meeting Highlights	Rebecca	<p><b>COVID – 19 &amp; LA Sharing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the time of the August meeting, there were collective concerns about waivers not being extended and a need for reopening flexibilities for in-person visits. Waivers are now extended 30 days past the end of the declaration of the public health emergency.</li> <li>• Once waivers expire there were questions raised about ht/wt/hgb, physical presence, and signing for the Rights and Responsibilities. There was a communicated need for additional guidance and clarification. <i>WIC In-Person Clinic Operations During COVID-19</i> guidance document has been updated with added clarification in these areas. It was posted to the website with updates on 10/19.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions raised about CPA Performance Evaluation during remote contacts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> WU memo further addresses this topic on expectations and ideas for observations while WIC services are offered remotely. There will be opportunity for additional discussion at the upcoming regional meetings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Infoview reports for Participant count trends and retention ideas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultants asked about various reports on Agency Management and Outreach that agencies are using.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information was gathered and shared with Operations team and it confirmed that agencies are measuring appropriate areas for participant count and retention.</li> </ul> <p><b>Formula Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder shared about changes from 19 calorie to 20 calorie formula in October and the last changes occurring in December. Need to update artwork on some materials and will share more information after all changes to 20 calorie formula have occurred.</li> <li>• Encouraged LA staff to watch the newly updated formula modules.</li> <li>• Had shared that during COVID, changes to MN medical formulary were on hold. Planning to resume conversations in November on how we might be able to continue the discussion about making the MN medical formulary more manageable on multiple levels, from the participant, LA and state staff perspectives.</li> </ul> <p><b>Continuing Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heard a need to continue to offer different types of continuing education opportunities.</li> <li>• <b>Current Staff continuing education opportunities:</b> PCS Webinars – Focus on Assessment 10/28 @ 8:30 will be recorded; Maternal Nutrition Intensive Course distance learning available now, Wednesday Update (WU) memo went out on 9/2; wichealth.org webinar recording, WU 10/28; Additional PCS training modules for new staff and more advanced training for seasoned staff coming in the next months, working with Altarum, that contract ends 12/31/2020. Planning to make announcements about these trainings late Dec. or early 2021. Monthly Great Lakes webinars for breastfeeding education, Webinars from NWA - WU 9/30 (SA will reimburse LA for membership). Membership provides your agency with the ability to access resources and tools NWA has available. NWA frequently has free education webinars, newsletters, and related information on legislation, funding and policy issues, and discounts on conferences.</li> </ul>
WIC Services During COVID	Ellie & All	<p>Ellie shared she has started once a week having “parking lot” WIC. Works from office once/week and can meet someone in the parking lot. Not doing any measurements or formal pieces just saying “hi” and maybe going over how to use the card and app information.</p> <p>Kathy from Ramsey shared her breastfeeding peers have had some meetings with moms and they continue to provide curbside service as needed.</p> <p>Miriam shared if someone struggles with a phone, they invite them to the office for help. Just a few occurrences of this. Might be to issue card too. Now surges in COVID cases but not sure if will change this practice.</p> <p>Maggie shared not seeing anyone in person and that it varies in the metro in terms of if buildings are even open or not. She mentioned in Washington Co. staff and participants are discouraged from going in.</p>

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		<p>Staff are anxious about COVID and much more comfortable working remotely. Different in all agencies.</p> <p>Kaitlyn shared they are starting to schedule MicroSoft (MS) Teams appointments. Will share how this goes for them since no one else at this time uses MS Teams. Also mentioned that they plan to state to participants that they do not have to turn their camera on. Nice for participants to see CPA's.</p>
WIC Conference	Tina	<p>The 2021 conference will be virtual only due to all the complex layers. Uncertain at this time what next year will bring. Many of the industry is furloughed, MDH staff on reassignment, and there is a need for safety when we are able to be in person. We will be moving ahead with planning and will keep everyone updated once we know more. Right now hopeful of offering virtually in September 2021.</p> <p>Q: Will be a full day or more?</p> <p>A: Not sure at this point and time. Welcome any additional input/thoughts.</p>
Visioning Progress Update	Kate	<p><b>Powerpoint presented was sent to AG members. Reach out to your regional AG rep if you have questions or would like a copy.</b></p> <p>In October 2018 AG had a facilitator come in and help brainstorm priorities and identify next steps.</p> <p>Priorities identified last October 2019.</p> <p>PCS – contract w/Altarum for PCS training and webinars</p> <p>Streamlining – working on wichealth.org to link to HuBERT record, pilot Vidyo for certification, medical formula workgroup, capturing electronic signatures, text messages – planning to build two way texting into app, also allow local agencies to manage messages themselves, app enhancement in October – allows multiple HH members especially helpful for foster families</p> <p>Outreach &amp; Retention – participating in NWA outreach campaign, there is a lot of behind the scenes outreach in particular w/social media</p> <p>Flexible program delivery – borderless services, can go where best for participant</p> <p>Education choice – made great progress in offering service delivery options for participants and COVID helped this move faster as well</p> <p>Healthcare providers – outreach to medical providers on the important work WIC does and how we serve families, moms, and babies</p> <p>Technology – eWIC statewide, still working w/partner states on Spirit web (will be Winnie in MN), working w/on-line WIC application tool for MN WIC</p> <p>Vendors – eWIC implementation on stores and shopping experience, relationship building during that time since had over 1,000 in person store visits, eWIC grants – POS (point of sale) step forward in helping</p>

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		<p>vendors, provided more on-line training modules and tools, now exploring and working toward an on-line shopping experience but will take time and is complex.</p> <p>Training – hired FT state training coordinator, provide regular training topics throughout the year and will be working on virtual conference</p> <p>Breastfeeding – FFY20 increase in peer grant at federal level, looking to expand existing programs and/or add additional peer programs across the state. Bus shelter advertisements and supported various projects in particular within diverse communities.</p> <p>Participant feedback – can now survey electronically w/ a link in the app</p> <p>Food packages- adjustments made w/COVID and waivers, shopping guide workgroup, MN has most expansive food package in the country, food package changes must happen at the federal level</p> <p>Adjunct eligibility – Medicaid match process for new enrollees – send letter about WIC in mail, on hold now w/COVID. Also, MN WIC has been invited to participate with the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) and Benefits Data Trust (BDT). The project offers a workshop series to a small number of state WIC agencies that are interested in implementing data matching with SNAP and/or Medicaid to identify and conduct outreach to families eligible for WIC who are not yet participating by using text messaging. The two organizations have previously piloted similar projects in a few states and hope to share the lessons learned with additional states for expansion.</p> <p>Still continue to work with Head Start at state level, conversations about data sharing on hold right now w/COVID</p>
2021 AG Meeting Calendar	Tina	<p>1/25/21, 4/26/21, 7/26/21, 10/25/21</p> <p>No objection, Tina will send out SAVE THE DATES for 9:30 am-2:30 pm</p>
Shopping Guide	Jessie & Rebecca	<p>Planning for a revised guide for Feb of 2021. Changes include, same cover but with a different banner color; front cover will show photos of diverse children and a revised date rather than an end date. The guide will have added content on shopping transaction tips, My MN WIC app and My MN WIC Card information, along with food layout changes. We took comments from Regional Meetings and incorporated what could help CPAs and shoppers alike.</p>
Winnie – overview & timeline	Tami	 <p>MINNESOTA Winnie WIC Information Next-gen for Nutrition, Integrity, &amp; Education</p>

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		<p>WINNIE is the next iteration of HuBERT. It is a browser-based version of SPIRIT, the software used by a consortium of states that includes MN WIC. In early 2019, the SPIRIT Users Group (SUG) received approval and funding from USDA to re-write SPIRIT. This was identified as necessary to greatly expand the life of the system, as well as improve performance, security and maintainability. The primary goals include modernizing the application to ensure it continues to be viable into the future by making the system browser-based and improving system performance by streamlining its existing code and using the most current standards for its development. WINNIE will use the existing database structure, which eliminates the need for any data conversion. It will also support mobile device use and will meet all current accessibility standards.</p> <p>Development includes re-writing the Clinic, Finance and Vendor modules. A workgroup, the SUG Technical Advisory Committee (STAC), was developed to work with the contractor, CDP, and includes representatives from all states currently using SPIRIT. This workgroup is responsible for ensuring current functionality is maintained and that development stays within the scope of the project, which limits enhancements to improvements where bugs/issues currently occur in the system or small changes that can be made without increasing the initial scope (cost and hours) of the project.</p> <p>This project has had a very aggressive timeline and is expected to be completed by July, 2022. This includes development, Requirements Validation Testing (RVT), User Accept Testing (UAT), pilot and statewide roll-out.</p> <p>A WINNIE newsletter, starting in November, will be included in the Wednesday Update on the third Wednesday of each month. The first newsletter will provide the tentative expected timeline. Subsequent newsletters will provide more information about the WINNIE software.</p> <p>We are looking to select a Pilot site in the next month or two.  Tentative timeline:  Round 1 UAT – June 2021  Round 2 UAT – August 2021  Pilot begins – November 2021  Statewide rollout begins – March 2022</p>
WICHealth.org	Tami	<p>State office is working with DXC to allow WICHealth.org lessons to be automatically imported into the Nutrition Ed Tab in HuBERT. In addition to the Nutrition Ed tab, a note will be added with the subject <i>WICHealth Education</i> that will include the lesson title, start stage, end stage, action statement and any participant questions that were indicated during the lesson. Information about the topics that are changing and the timeline will be in a Wednesday update memo on November 18, 2020. We hope to have this process in place by January 2021.</p>

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Benefits Utilization Reports Update	Rachel	<p><b>Powerpoint presented sent to AG members. Reach out to your regional AG rep if you have questions or would like a copy.</b></p> <p>Rachel from MIS/Data Unit shared information on benefits and participation for past year. A data workgroup at the SA worked together to develop and analyze the data.</p> <p>Plan to post this information and to further break down data by local agency and also food type.</p> <p>Usually participation dips in Nov – Dec and also when school gets out (but did not see this school year).</p> <p>Participation in WIC has increased, but households not using any benefits at all is near 10% which has almost doubled over the last months. Could be many reasons, fear of going out, panic shopping, some foods not available, and SNAP &amp; unemployment benefits increased. We are hopeful that in the future we can allow on-line shopping, but that is not possible with any MN vendors right now. Remind participants they can use self check-out at Walmart and go at odd times to avoid higher volumes of people, right now no other stores allow self check-out. It is up to the store to decide if they will allow self-out not MN WIC. Walmart shares 45% of all transactions are self check-out.</p> <p>Report on foods redeemed. Formula, milk and fruits and vegetables are steady or increasing in use, infant cereal and meats are usually low, also could be due to complex foods items – whole grains choices for example.</p> <p>Other comments:</p> <p>Homeless participants might have a lot going on and even for curbside don't show up for card, lot on their plate and living day to day in poverty.</p> <p>PCS skills even more critical. Keep in mind that not everyone is comfortable w/technology, go back to basics – how to use card, download app, what that means, ask participants how doing, if able to use all their benefits, any concerns they have.</p> <p>Also brand new families to WIC may have harder time shopping since all information provided over phone.</p> <p>Some vendors report higher charges for eWIC (up to 3x's) since participants might just buy one item at a time. This results in more transactions. In past might have been \$10,000/month now \$30,000/month.</p>
Vendor Issues& Transaction Issues Update/FYI	Jessie	<p>A few AG members asked to talk about reporting and troubleshooting transaction issues. Since a survey was recently completed, we will table this item until Regional Meetings to discuss survey results and questions at that time.</p>

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		Emily Gomez (from the State Vendor Unit) will attend all meetings to share information and gather input on what you would like for trainings and troubleshooting for all staff (CPA, clerk, etc). She also will showcase a new troubleshooting guide.
NWA MW Local Agency Section Meeting Update	Ellie	<p>Meet usually once a month, Ellie is the MN rep for local agency section of NWA board of directors</p> <p>WI, MN, MI, IL, IA, OH, share how state is doing</p> <p>We are in good shape in MN due to eWIC and the card we chose, don't have to go in person to load the card or bring the card in to load, we can do it remotely, discussed opening/re-opening concerns and pushed for extension of waivers.</p>
Advisory Group Team Members Membership completing their terms	Kate	<p>Question asked &amp; discussed about why we have both regional and caseload reps.</p> <p><b>A:</b> Within region can be very different based on size, also helps identify peers of similar size, caseload reps don't formally met, but should reach out to the group they represent to ask for items to bring up or concerns bring back to AG meetings.</p> <p><b>Additional supporting documents sent to AG members. (3)</b>  <b>Reach out to your regional AG rep if you have questions or would like a copy.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisory Group Categories</li> <li>• WIC Advisory Group Description.</li> <li>• Map of MN – by Region</li> </ul> <p><b>Three members will be completing their terms Dec 2020. Ellie White (Chair) Kathy Roycraft (Waseca Co.) and Stephanie Olson (Polk Co.).</b></p> <p><b>We will be following the selection guidance below for new members.</b></p> <p><b>AG Members:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Selection:</b> Individuals either volunteer or are nominated by their peers. If more than one person is “running”, the WIC Coordinators of the agencies represented vote.</li> <li>▪ <b>Terms:</b> begin in <b>January</b> and are <b>three</b> years. Terms of the AG member body are staggered, so that only 1/3 of the member “turn over” each January.</li> <li>▪ <b>Role:</b> to represent their constituents, getting information from them to bring to AG meetings, and to get information from AG back to them.</li> </ul> <p><b>AG Chair:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Selection:</b> selected by AG members from among current members;</li> <li>▪ <b>Term</b> begins in <b>January</b>, and is <b>two</b> years.</li> <li>▪ <b>Role:</b></li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Works with the WIC Director to create meeting agenda, and then chairs/facilitates the meetings.</li> <li>○ When serving as Chair, individual does not represent any single constituent group.</li> <li>○ Represents MN local agencies on the Midwest Region Local Agency Section of NWA. As such, the Chair participates in quarterly NWA regional conference calls and may attend the annual NWA conference (with the state WIC program covering travel expenses).</li> </ul>
Agenda Items for January 2021 Meeting	Tina & All	Update on where at w/National State of Emergency, beyond next deadline