

IV.(A). ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

GOAL: In early 2023 it became clear from WV WIC data that caseload counts were dropping indicating a lack of connection to and sustained engagement between WV families with young children and WV WIC. As local agency directors and state agency staff discussed the issue it became clear that Outreach (its staff and activities) are the cornerstone of WV WIC. Reaching out to, connecting, and forming relationships with WIC clients is the foundation for bringing nutrition services and health surveillance to WV's young families. Through the use of outside consultants WV WIC will create an outreach framework that highlights outreach as a cornerstone of the WV WIC program.

METHODOLOGY: Through consultant facilitated meetings, state and local agency teams will continue work on standard operating procedures for key areas of work related to outreach, engage in peer-to-peer learning and information sharing, and increase the overall capacity of WV WIC to more effectively engage in outreach work.

EVALUATION: The WV WIC program will have an outreach training packet used to onboard new outreach coordinators, new standard operating procedures for key areas of work related to outreach, and a new annual reporting tool for the whole WV WIC program.

STATUS: 2023 WIC Infrastructure funding has supported this initiative throughout FY2024 with status updates provided via FNS-908 quarterly reporting.

The WV WIC Outreach Quality Improvement (ORQI) initiative had a quarterly meeting October 16-19, 2023. Sessions developed the basic content needed to develop Local Agency Outreach Liaison job descriptions, an orientation training guidebook, and developing a standard operating procedure for contacting eligible Medicaid recipients identified through a data-sharing report. Likewise action plans were developed for each Local Agency to host a partner meeting to introduce a digital referral process with Google Forms.

The WV WIC Outreach Quality Improvement (ORQI) initiative had a quarterly meeting January 22-25, 2024. Sessions finalized the Local Agency Outreach Liaison job description, drafted version 2 of an orientation training guidebook and defined the top 3 priority areas for development, and shared a picture of achievements, challenges and solutions with hosting partner organization referral sessions with clinic tours. The State Agency presented a PPT and evaluation tools for assessing partner presentations effect on electronic referrals.

The WV WIC Outreach Quality Improvement (ORQI) initiative had a quarterly meeting April 15 - 18, 2024. Products from this meeting included: Development of FFY2025 Annual Planning Goal and Action Plan templates and process, development of Local Agency Medicaid Outreach Form, evaluation tools, and training PPT. drafting Policy 7.01 - Introduction to Outreach, Staff Activity Policy Guidance on Outreach Activities and Hours, Guide to Partner Relationship Building Tools, Community Partner PPT Presentation, Community Partner Referral Form, Community Partner Training Feedback Form, WIC Community Partner Pre-Meeting Survey, Recommendations to Strengthen the Outreach Liaison Mentoring Process, and Outline of Topics and Timeline for development of the Outreach Liaison Guidebook.

The Outreach Guidebook is being constructed currently. The materials are being gathered to make this take shape. The materials captured by August 26, 2024 will be presented to ORQI in August. The work on this project will continue, with its fruition coming in October ORQI. **Although the outreach guidebook and policy revisions are ongoing this goal is complete as the process and team building for continual quality improvement via SA-LA collaborative workgroups is established; the state outreach coordinator will facilitate complete and maintenance of products as part of her functional job description.**

IV.(B) ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

GOAL: WIC services have changed through the COVID-19 Health Emergency. It is paramount that WV WIC undergo process changes to stay relevant and connected with West Virginia families. Through the use of outside consultants WV WIC will build capacity at the local agency level to effectively pilot projects and report their effectiveness. The state agency will gain valuable skills to increase their capacity to provide technical assistance to the local agency teams.

METHODOLOGY: Through consultant facilitated meetings, state and local agency teams will continue to develop leadership skills and test various project management styles, engage in peer-to-peer learning and information sharing to increase the overall capacity of WV WIC local agencies to modernize the West Virginia WIC Program. The state agency team will develop leadership, note taking, and facilitation skills to better serve the local agencies in their role as technical assistants.

EVALUATION: Operational Quality Improvement (OQI) is operating under a 3-year plan, October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2025. The group meets quarterly and has four workgroups; service delivery, workforce, communication and training - reference Nutrition Services II (C) for this specific goal. Each Local Agency will engage in at least one modernization (i.e. pilot) initiative for continual quality improvement which creates a cultural shift of a bottom up vs. top-down approach for quality improvement and modernization efforts.

Individual workgroup performance indicators for products will be developed in August 2024. The WV WIC program will implement a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the initiation of new pilot projects. This tool will promote and streamline the process of starting a new pilot project. It contains an algorithm of how the process should be initiated, researched, planned and presented for OQI approval. Evaluation of each pilot project is defined and conducted by the State Agency Research Coordinator.

STATUS: Technology for a Better WIC Experience funding has supported this initiative January 1, 2023 through May 31, 2024 with status updates provided via FNS-908 quarterly reporting. Modernization funding began funding the initiative June 1, 2024 and will continue through FFY2025.

The pilot project SOP is in final review and will be presented at the August 2024 OQI meeting for approval. A Local Agency staff meeting pilot project and SOP will also be finalized by the end of the FY.

The use of a Medicaid List SOP was initiated in February of 2023. The purpose of this outreach activity is to target pregnant mothers and children under 5 that are currently receiving WV Medicaid for WIC services. This is being accomplished by the use of targeted phone calls, emails, text messages, and mailings (based on designated Medicaid preferred method of contact) for pre-certification/application via a Google form or online portal application. This tool and SOP are currently in pilot with all local agencies throughout the state. To date, 21,419 emails have been sent with 376 responses.

Medical Nutrition Therapy for diabetes began piloting in July 2024 through the Monongalia County Health Department in a collaboration and partnership to develop policy and procedures to expand public health services within WIC clinics. Pilot is ongoing and will continue in FY 2025.

Hospital certification and enrollment pilot program is currently under development through the ONS and WVU Medicine. Hospital certifications are active at WVU Medicine Children's Hospital in Morgantown and United Health Center Hospital in Bridgeport. The goal of this program is to have mom and newborn leave the hospital a WIC participant. A FFY2024 WIC Infrastructure proposal seeks to fund expansion of hospital certifications to six additional facilities over the next three years. It is proposed infrastructure funding support operations for two years in each facility to build caseload for ongoing support of hospital WIC personnel to be permanently within the facility. This personnel is a BFPC who conducts intake and breastfeeding services while a CPA remaining in clinic completes nutrition assessment via Google Meet. WVU Medicine has granted access to the EMR to obtain mom and baby anthropometric measures.

Lead testing was initiated in FY2024 through ONS and the Monongalia County Health Department in Harrison County via a Medicaid Quality Improvement grant. The data collected through this pilot proved 50-70 lead tests were being conducted monthly which is the most within WV in any setting. As such, the program will be expanded in FY2025 to include Monongalia and Marion county WIC clinics through the Monongalia County Health Department, and Ohio County WIC clinic through the Wheeling-Ohio Health Department. MCHD will pilot Medicaid billing for these services within Harrison County while the Medicaid Quality Improvement funding transitions to support Ohio County. This will provide feedback to Medicaid on the current reimbursement rate and the ability to sustain testing within WIC clinics long term. CDC funding was secured for the expansion into Monogalia and Marion County, but Medicaid billing will occur for those eligible to also test a blended funding structure.

A pilot project between Valley Health WIC Program and FamilyCare Health Centers has been awarded funding from The Pallottine Foundation and the Health Plan to implement the FamilyCare Prescribing Better Health Produce Prescription Program. FamilyCare Health Center patients will be receiving \$50 preloaded debit cards to purchase fruits and vegetables each month for six months. Eligible maternal and child patients will also receive a “WIC fresh fruits and vegetables prescription form” as a referral for WIC services in Boone, Cabell, Kanawha and Putnam Counties. Additional referral methods were established to create a comprehensive approach that meets the needs of various providers and junctures in a patient experience. FamilyCare Eligibility Specialists will assist all potentially eligible families in applying for WIC through the online participant portal. FamilyCare Social Workers will utilize a Google Form for referral that will go directly to the Valley Health Systems WIC Program.

The use of the Massimo device to collect hemoglobin measurements noninvasively, is currently being studied in the Mid Ohio Valley Health Department Wood County clinic. The device is currently being tested against the traditional method of a finger stick. Data is being collected and analyzed at this point. This will continue into FY 2025.

Annual planning goals, objectives, methodology and evaluation have been developed via a collaborative SA - LA partnership in March and April of 2024 for the following areas:

- Farmers Market Nutrition Program
- Vendor Management
- Nutrition Services
- Breastfeeding
- Outreach

A standard operating procedure will be developed and adopted for the annual planning process.

WV accessibility and utilization rates have been discussed between state and local agencies. The local agencies commented in April 2024. The refinement of the definition and tracking will be discussed again in August 2024.

This will be an ongoing goal for FY2025.