

APPENDIX B
PROTOCOLS

LETTER SENT TO STATE WIC DIRECTORS AND FNS REGIONAL OFFICES

Hello!

We at Mathematica Policy Research, a national research firm, are asking for your help. The USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) recently awarded us a contract to describe the range of innovative programs currently in place at WIC agencies. While research has shown that WIC is effective, there is not much information available about the promising and innovative practices that clinics are using. We would like your assistance in identifying promising programs in your jurisdiction. We will also be contacting [FNS regional offices/state WIC agencies], the National WIC Association, and other experts.

What do we mean by an “innovative” program? We are trying to identify programs or practices that are different from what WIC usually does. Preferably, the program will be something that has been up and running for at least a year, and has shown evidence of its effectiveness. The program should also have potential for being replicated in other places. We are particularly interested in the following types of programs: (1) promotion of breast feeding and support of healthy infant feeding practices, for example, through programs such as peer counselors and lactation consultants; (2) prevention of overweight and obesity; (3) innovative service delivery approaches, such as home visits; (4) practices that increase well-child health care and immunizations; and (5) special training programs for WIC staff. If there are other innovative programs that you would like to bring to our attention, please do so. We are interested in programs that are at least partially funded by WIC, but they do not have to be solely funded by WIC. Because they are already under study, please do not include information about any Special Project Grants or FIT WIC programs.

Our plan is to use the information you provide us to select about 20 programs for further study, and 5 among these for site visits. In order to do that, please provide us with the following information for each innovative program or practice that you wish to nominate:

- a description of the service(s) and the target population
- why you feel it is a promising or innovative program
- the name of the local WIC agency or agencies, if applicable, and contact person information; if it is a state or regional program, also include the appropriate contact person information

Kindly return your feedback to any of the names listed below by January 3. Feel free to e-mail, mail, or fax the information. Thank you in advance for your time. We know your time is very valuable and appreciate your attention to our request. If you would like to designate another person in your office to respond to our request and serve as liaison for this study, please feel free to do so. Otherwise we may be contacting you in early January to follow-up or request more information. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact any of the staff for this study.

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With much enthusiasm,
Anne Gordon, Tania Tasse, and Teresa Zavitsky

INNOVATIVE WIC PRACTICES TELEPHONE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

SPRING 2003

INTRODUCTION

*Hello, my name is [INTERVIEWER] and I am calling from Mathematica Policy Research. We are conducting a study on innovative WIC practices for the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This study will describe a range of WIC programs and collect information on current innovative practices and lessons learned to help policy makers and program staff think about ways to improve the WIC program. At this phase of our work, we are collecting detailed information on approximately 20 programs across the country for possible inclusion in our report; we will select 5 programs from this group for more in-depth study. We received your name from *** with the ***, who thought that your program, [INITIATIVE], deserves to be studied further because it is innovative. When Mathematica invited nominations, we defined “innovative” as something that is different from what WIC usually does, and we were particularly interested in programs that include services in one of the following areas: (1) the promotion of breastfeeding, (2) prevention of overweight and obesity, (3) innovative service delivery approaches, such as home visits, and (4) coordination with preventative health care, such as dental health screening or lead screening. While we have a bit of information on [INITIATIVE], I would like to schedule a time to talk to you—or someone else from your agency if you think they would be more appropriate—to learn more about it. This conversation should take about an hour. Would you be interested in participating in this study for USDA, and if so, can we set up a time for me to call you back?*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name and title:

Program name:

Address:

Phone number:

E-mail:

Date of Interview:

Interviewer:

WIC INITIATIVE

A. Program Goals and Design of the WIC Initiative

1. How long has [INITIATIVE] been operating? Is it intended to be a pilot for a specific period, or to continue indefinitely depending on funding sources?
2. What prompted [INITIATIVE] to get started, and what are the main goals? What problems/issues is the program trying to address? Who were the main actors?
3. How did the initiative develop...which stakeholders participated during the planning phase, and what steps were involved in designing the [INITIATIVE]?
4. If this is a collaborative effort or part of a coalition, how did these relationships develop? What is the role of these community partners in [INITIATIVE]?
5. Did any challenges emerge during the design phase of [INITIATIVE]?
6. Do you know of other local initiatives in place to [*choose one*: improve coordination between the WIC agencies and health care agencies, or to deliver services through home visits/reduce obesity or improve dietary intake/improve breastfeeding rates]?

B. Services Provided

1. Before [INITIATIVE] started, what did the overall service environment look like with regards to [*choose one*: improve coordination between the WIC agencies and health care agencies, or to deliver services through home visits/reduce obesity or improve dietary intake/improve breastfeeding rates]? What services were provided, and to whom? Were there any enhanced services in place, like lead screening? *Essentially, get a sense of what services a WIC client would have had access to before the new initiative.*
2. What is the service area for [INITIATIVE]? (statewide, select counties/MSAs, one local WIC agency)?
3. Who is eligible for the services and to whom is [INITIATIVE] targeted? Is it aimed at current WIC clients or the wider community? Does it target subgroups (e.g. Spanish-speaking families, teen parents)? Is it targeted at health professionals or other service providers?
4. How many total clients (*tailor for type of initiative*...women—pregnant, breastfeeding/non-breastfeeding postpartum women—and children) does [INITIATIVE] serve annually? Are the participation rates what you had expected? Is staff overwhelmed by the interest, or is it a struggle to get people to participate?
5. Who is the ‘typical’ client?
6. Describe the specific services provided by [INITIATIVE].

7. Where do the services occur? How long are services designed to last, and how frequently do they take place (times per week or month)? What is the duration of each contact? Are services initiated by the program staff or by the client? *If multiple services, may need to ask separately for different services.*
8. What percentage of the targeted group participates, and how long to clients actually participate? *If multiple services, may need to ask separately for different services.*

For breastfeeding initiatives only:

9. Before [INITIATIVE] started, what percentage of your WIC clients chose to breastfeed? What were the duration rates like? Did these rates vary by subgroup (*for example, were teen parents less likely to breastfeed?*) How did these rates compare to the state average?

For coordination with health agencies and/or home visiting initiatives only:

10. To what extent is [INITIATIVE] linked to other local social service agencies—are service efforts coordinated? What services do these groups provide?
11. Does WIC provide services to health/medical center clients, and do health/medical centers provide services to WIC clients? How are these agencies linked to the WIC initiative? Through...
 - Co-location?
 - Referrals?
 - Shared staff?
 - Information sharing (e.g. clients' records)?
 - Joint training?
 - Common nutritional protocol?
 - Coordinated screening?
 - Joint enrollment?
 - Cooperative follow-up with clients?

For all initiatives:

12. In your opinion, what sets [INITIATIVE] apart from what other states/counties are doing?

C. Staff and Organizational Structure

1. What is the management structure of [INITIATIVE]? Who are the key staff, and what are their roles and responsibilities?
2. Are any staff employed by other agencies/partners?
3. Are there specific qualifications required for staff who work on the initiative? Do they need to have specific degrees or certifications?

4. Were staff for the initiative considered to be ‘new hires,’ or had they already been working for the agency?
5. Describe any training activities for {INITIATIVE}.
 - Who developed the training activities?
 - Who delivered the training?
 - How many and which types of staff participated?
 - When did the training occur?
 - How often is training repeated, if at all?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of this training?
6. Are there formal written procedures (e.g. protocol manual) and training materials in place (*so that other staff could easily come in and take over*)?
7. Are volunteers involved in the initiative? If so, what is their role? Who supervises them, and have they received any special training?

D. Outreach and Publicity Efforts

1. How are clients informed about the initiative?
2. How is the initiative publicized?
 - Did staff develop brochures, posters, public service announcements, and/or newspaper articles?
 - What were the main messages?
 - How widely distributed were these publicity efforts?
3. Are other community groups/local partners involved in outreach? Do other providers or agencies provide referrals to the initiative? If so, which ones, and how are referrals made?

E. Client Reactions

1. How receptive were clients to [INITIATIVE]?
2. What comments did they make about the services? What aspects of the program do WIC clients like the most? The least? What are you basing these impressions on—a survey, talking to staff, talking to clients?

3. Do you have any sense of how [INITIATIVE] affects the atmosphere in the clinic and clients' behavior?

F. Funding Levels/Budget

1. What are the funding sources, including dollar amounts (WIC funding, and outside grants)?
Confirm that it is not a Fit WIC program and has not received a Special Project Grant.
2. What are the general cost categories associated with [INITIATIVE] (labor, outreach materials, training materials, 'incentives' for clients, etc.)? How much staff time is spent on the initiative?
3. Are the WIC dollars food funds, NSA funding, state matching funds for WIC, or some combination?
4. If the program is funded with other grants, how did you get the grants and who was responsible for the grant application?
5. Did any grants come from community partners?
6. How stable is future funding for [INITIATIVE]? How long do you intend the initiative to continue?

G. Challenges and Successes

1. What have been the major challenges to implementing [INITIATIVE]? How were those challenges overcome (if at all)?
2. What do you consider to be the biggest success(es) of [INITIATIVE] so far? What factor(s) led to that success?
3. How would you assess the overall quality of the services provided and how well the program is being implemented?
4. If you could make any change to [INITIATIVE], what would it be and why?

H. Evaluation/Monitoring of Outcomes

1. What are the desired outcomes for [INITIATIVE]?
2. Do you monitor the outcomes of the initiative (e.g. collecting data on increased use of health screenings, etc.)? How are the outcomes measured?
3. What have been the results of [INITIATIVE]? *If breastfeeding initiative, see alternate question below:*

For breastfeeding initiatives only:

3b. What percentage of your WIC clients choose to breastfeed?

-- What are the duration rates like?

-- Have these figures changed significantly since the initiative started?

-- Do these rates vary by subgroup (*for example, are teen parents less likely to breastfeed?*)

4. *Do not ask if we know this already.* Has your agency conducted a formal evaluation of the program? If so, when was it conducted and by whom? *Request a copy of the report.*

5. *If the evaluation is ongoing...* What is the status of the evaluation?

I. Replicability

1.

1. Do you think this model can be successfully replicated in other places? Do you think that the program could be used in a range of WIC settings? Why or why not?

2. What advice would you give to an agency that wants to implement a similar WIC initiative?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (if time)

J. Community Context

1. Describe the area in general—locale, demographics, local economy, urban versus rural.

K. Local WIC Program and Policies

1. Describe the local WIC agency. What entity serves as the local agency (county health department, hospital, nonprofit)? *If state-level initiative, see alternate question below:*

For state-level initiatives only:

1b. Describe the participating WIC agencies. What entities serve as the local agencies (county health departments, hospitals, nonprofits)?

2. How many clinics are attached to this local agency(ies)? Where are the clinics located (e.g. hospital, nonprofit)?

3. How big is the staff at each location? How many numbers served (breakdown of numbers served into pregnant women, breastfeeding women, non-breastfeeding postpartum women, children under 5).

4. Describe the certification process, including nutrition education provided, and how nutrition education contacts are usually provided post-certification. For breastfeeding programs: What about specifically for breastfeeding women?

WRAP UP/NEXT STEPS

1. Is there anything that you would like to add about [INITIATIVE] or the WIC population in your community that we have not discussed?

If we include this profile in the report, we would like to give an overall description—can we include your contact information in the report (or someone else who would be more appropriate?)

Based on what you know about our study, do you think that this program would be a good candidate for a two-day site visit? The visit would take place sometime this summer by two members of the research team. We would like to interview stakeholders and participants, observe program services (e.g. a peer counseling session), tour a local WIC agency, and collect cost information. Information on topics that we covered today would be repeated during the site visit, but collected from a variety of perspectives, including the local WIC agency director, director of the innovative program (if different from local director), staff members in the WIC office, especially those delivering services, and finally the participants receiving services.

**INNOVATIVE WIC PRACTICES
XXX SITE VISIT
AUGUST 2003**

OBSERVATION

LOCATION: _____
DATE, TIME: _____

Location of observation (e.g. waiting room, classroom, WIC staff office, hospital, clinic)

Description of participants

WIC/Hospital/Clinic clients (e.g. number, race, sex, approximate age)

Staff (e.g. number, title)

Environment (e.g. distractions, cleanliness, comfort, engaging pictures/posters/bulletin boards)

Is Loving Support Breastfeeding Program theme/logo evident? If so, how? (e.g. posters, staff lanyards)

Description of activity taking place (e.g. class, counseling)

Language (e.g. English, Spanish)

Topic of activity

Intervention tools utilized and/or incentives distributed (e.g. slide show, handouts, food)

If applicable, style of class (e.g. lecture, facilitated discussion, activity based, food demonstration, combination)

If applicable, role of staff in activity

If applicable, role of caregiver or other adult in activity

If applicable, role of infant or child in activity

If applicable, duration of activity