

Breastfeeding Action Plan

Objective

By September 30, 2023, increase the proportion of Iowa WIC participants who initiate breastfeeding, breastfeed exclusively through six months, and continue to breastfeed until one year of age, by improving breastfeeding support through partnership development and providing extended, consistent education for all WIC staff.

Purpose Statement

According to the Center for Disease Control 2020 Breastfeeding Report Card, 80.2% of Iowa mothers initiated breastfeeding, 24.8% continued breastfeeding exclusively until the recommended six months, and 32.5% breastfed until one year of age in 2017. The Healthy People 2030 goals for breastfeeding include increasing the proportion of infants who are breastfed exclusively through six months of age to 42.4% and the proportion that are breastfed at one year to 54.1%. The most recent Iowa WIC Program data through May 2022 show that 72% of Iowa WIC participants initiate breastfeeding, 21% continue to exclusively breastfeed at six months, and 33% continue to breastfeed until one year of age.

Mothers and infants participating in the WIC Program are often aware that breastfeeding is the best choice, but face barriers beyond those of the general population, including lack of support from family and friends, a need to return to work sooner, and lower confidence in their ability to breastfeed. The Iowa WIC Program strives to help families succeed by providing anticipatory guidance, education, and support by breastfeeding peer counselors and professionals with extended breastfeeding education, such as nurses, dietitians, or lactation consultants. Breast pumps and other breastfeeding supplies are available to ensure women are able to breastfeed longer and can meet their breastfeeding goals.

In the past couple of years, the Iowa WIC Program has started to offer extended lactation training available as a part of the Midwest Region OA Grant to WIC staff at local agencies, including Certified Lactation Specialist training and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training through Lactation Education Consultants and Outpatient Breastfeeding Champion training through the Institute for the Advancement of Breastfeeding and Lactation Education. The goal of offering these trainings is to expand staff knowledge and ability to provide extended, tailored, and equitable lactation support to all families. In a short period of time, data from the previous fiscal year shows an increase in exclusive breastfeeding through six months of age of 11 percent (10% to 21% from January 2021 to May 2022) and an increase in breastfeeding until one year of 14% (19% to 33% from January 2021 to May 2022). The Iowa WIC Program will continue to offer more training to staff to assist in improving breastfeeding initiation, duration, and exclusivity rates in years to come.

Action Plan

- 1) By December 31, 2022, five WIC agencies will receive technical assistance for program development to implement new Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Programs, including Peer Counseling Coordinator training.
- 2) By February 28, 2023, peer counseling staff at the five new Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Programs will have received USDA WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum training.
- 3) By September 30, 2023, all current WIC staff will have completed the USDA WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum training.
- 4) By December 31, 2022 a plan for ongoing WIC staff breastfeeding training will be

developed.

- 5) By January 31, 2023 the USDA WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum recordings will be available for staff to access online according to the level of training required for each staff role.
- 6) By September 30, 2023, all WIC staff will have been offered the opportunity to and interested staff will have participated in extended lactation trainings through the Midwest Region OA Grant to expand knowledge and ability to provide extended, tailored, and equitable lactation support to all families.

Evaluation Plan

- 1) Percentage of WIC agencies that have received technical assistance for program development to implement new Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Programs, including Peer Counseling Coordinator training.
- 2) Percentage of peer counseling staff at the five new Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Programs that have completed the USDA WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum training.
- 3) Percentage of current WIC staff that have completed the USDA WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum training.
- 4) Percentage of USDA WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum modules available online for staff to access for new employee training requirements.
- 5) Percentage of local agency WIC staff that participated in at least one extended lactation training through the Midwest Region OA Grant.

Resources Required

- Staff time for work on projects
- Google platform for virtual calls/meetings
- WIC Portal editing access for posting breastfeeding modules
- Data system (Focus) reports
- Training attendance records

Lead Staff

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