

Contractors Meeting Minutes
April 28, 2021

Attendance:

31- Broadlawns	33- New Opp	34- HACAP	35- Hillcrest	37- MATURA
Karen Goff Hannah Ledeboer Kalin Berkland Kristy Carr	Paula Klocke Brenda Densmore	Angela Munson Carie Davenport	Cindy Kaczinski Gina Gassman	Karla Hynes Michelle West
38- MICA	39- Mid-Sioux	41- NICA0	42- VNA	43- OT
Sierra Stevens Janet Weber	Cindy Harpenau	Carla Miller	Sara Noack	Amanda Kirchoff
45 CASEI	46- AHFA	47- UDMO	48- WCCA	49- Siouxland
	Cindy Meiners	Tami endering	Amanda Blum	Jean Sterner
50- Webster Co	51- JCPH	52- Pott Country	53- Marion Co	54- CHC
Tricia Nichols	Chuck Dufano Amy Hackman	Kris Wood	Julie Miller	Ashley Wandera
State Office				
Jill Lange Brandy Benedict Kimberly Stanek	Nikki Davenport Nicole Newman Caryn Wittry	Charles Lorinser Jane Stockton Connie Glover	Bruce Brown Ken Kane Kenny Kane	Todd Erskine Sherry Smith

General Updates: (Kimberly Stanek)

- Public Health Emergency extended another 3 months through July 2021, with the 30 day USDA extension giving approval for waiver continuation until August 19, 2021
- American Rescue Act of 2021
 - We received guidance on how to count income for WIC purposes under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Per the policy memo, the act included recovery rebates for individuals and child tax credits for qualifying households.
 - Section 9601 - Recovery Rebates to Individuals: This section of the act further amends the Internal Revenue Code to authorize additional \$1,400 rebated payments to eligible individuals, including children, similar to those authorized under the CARES Act and Consolidated Appropriations Act. These rebates are excluded as household income for the purpose of determining WIC eligibility.
 - Section 9611 - Child Tax Credit Improvements for 2021: This section of the Act makes the Tax Credit fully refundable so that it is available in full

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to children in families with low or no earnings, increase the maximum credit to \$3,000 per child or \$3,600 for children under the age of 6, and extends the credit to 17 year olds. These changes only apply to calendar year 2021. This section allows the Child Tax Credit to be provided in advance monthly payments. Whether received as an annual credit or in the form of advance payments, it is excluded as household income for the purposes of determining WIC eligibility.

- WIC Works Trainings:
 - Received some info from regional office about some courses and will be sharing communication on that soon too
 - Now available- “Feeding Infants and Nourishing Attitudes and Techniques” and “Communicating with WIC Participants”
 - Being updated- VENA, VENA: Connecting the Dots, and WIC Baby Behavior

Focus Release Updates: (Caryn Wittry)

- UAT is currently underway for an upcoming 6.07 release
- Changes include:
 - Participant profile issue for women going from breastfeeding to no longer breastfeeding status is resolved- will no longer need to terminate women
 - Can return after ABCs
 - Updating care plan functionality
 - Other defect releases
- New Breastfeeding Panel
 - Background- an enhancement request was submitted by the user group in 2017 by ND and UT because infant breastfeeding status changes were difficult and if questions in the Nutrition Interview weren't answered correctly and data looked incorrect,
 - Changes- Breastfeeding status data is now moved out of the Nutrition Interview and live in a separate panel
 - MPUG Breastfeeding Task Force was formed to determine a compromise
 - Alternate solution: Nutrition interview questions will be modified to improve clinic flow
 - Final change decision in Spring 2021: Release 6.07
 - A new Breastfeeding panel will be added
 - All infant and child Nutrition Interviews will be modified in some way
 - A parameter will be in the system to choose which option is preferred
 - Option 1: Questions about breastfeeding status will be removed from the infant and child Nutrition Interviews and moved into the Breastfeeding History grid
 - Option 2: all Breastfeeding questions will stay in the Nutrition Interview, will be reworded, and the Breastfeeding History grid will be view only
 - Option 1- Breastfeeding panel:
 - Can add and remove rows at any time, including historical rows for fixing previous errors or changes in reported status

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- Description, BF Change Reason- same reasons in the current Nutrition Interview
- Formula and Foods have drop downs- can leave blank or select a reason from “nothing”, “rarely” or “regularly”
- BF Description Definition link has all of the description definitions
- Total Weeks Breastfeeding and Total Weeks Exclusively Breastfeeding are listed at the bottom
 - Shows as NA until numbers are available at the end of exclusive or any breastfeeding (final calculation, not rolling)
- Starters/prompts are the same as what was in the nutrition interview
- The addition of the Breastfeeding panel shortens the Nutrition Interview to 5 questions with some text boxes, still do need to complete the nutrition interview because health, immunizations, etc. still are listed here, some additional feeding information
- Option 2: Nutrition Interview
 - The Breastfeeding panel is a view only grid, no add or remove rows, not as much data can be collected, information is pulled from the Nutrition Interview
 - Will only calculate Total Weeks Breastfeeding, not Exclusive
 - Nutrition interview- length similar to current
 - Question 1c starts “Has baby received anything other than breastmilk?”
 - 1d becomes available if yes to 1c
 - Asks about foods before formula
 - Not as many questions as current interview, more prompting than the Breastfeeding panel and is familiar to staff
- Provide feedback by May 7, 2021
- Since the option is a system parameter, we will set the parameter for statewide use by using majority vote
- Questions:
 - Kris Wood- Parents sometimes tell WIC what they are planning to do (i.e. formula feeding), and they are still just completely breastfeeding at 3 mo IHU and staff need to work backwards. Which option will be easier for this scenario?

A: Changing the Breastfeeding panel is easier and in the Nutrition Interview the past record would be stuck in the panel even with the Change Interview button available
 - Amanda Kirchoff- will BFPCs have access to modify the status?

A: Not thinking so at this time as they don't currently have access to the Nutrition Interview

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ZLR Campaign Toolkit: (Nikki Davenport)

- ZLR Ignition is a marketing company that the State uses and WIC has contracted with to facilitate an in-state outreach campaign
- To date they've provided:
 - Development and distribution of a toolkit, Statewide digital social media campaign- Google, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Developing and printing of the Eat Healthy. Be Happy Book, Billboards (information on specs to share with agencies), Magnets, Movie theater ads and TV spot, Print materials such as posters, booklet, Focus groups, Electronic survey from fall 2020
- Toolkit was shipped in October 2020- posters, booklets, etc. and resources are located on the WIC Portal under the Resources home page
- Specific files can be requested from nutrition consultants in print-ready format
- Focus group results-
 - Learning about WIC from family and friends or healthcare providers, some from churches or schools or other governmental agencies
- Electronic survey results-
 - Learning about WIC from family and friends or healthcare providers, also Head Start, food pantries, lactation consultants
 - More outreach in other areas- colleges, churches, etc. would be opportunities to focus efforts
- Agency feedback using the materials so far:
 - Kris Wood (52)- Did the Facebook ads in March and April 2021, \$450 for the ads, ad center summary showed the reach was 7,000 with 51 clicks and 55 post engagement, also did a billboard with 2 new graphics from last year
 - Amanda Kirchoff (43)- asked about acceptable use of WIC funds with advertising
A: Bruce- anything that promotes WIC, most agencies would have put in their original budget with the application, but anything directed to WIC participants or potentially eligible WIC participants is good, specific questions on an item can be submitted through Correspondence in iowagrants.gov so it can be approved
 - Cindy Kaczinski (35)- Are you sending out the results of the focus groups/surveys?
A: not sending the official report but coming up with things we can do internally at the State to focus on results of the surveys/focus groups
 - Cindy Meiners (46)- Billboards being used- prices range from \$200-400
 - Kalin Berkland (31)-
Q: Were banner ads developed or used or are Google ads developed?
A: Part of the digital media campaign included banner ads, Google keyword items, targeted based on females and indications that people had children, lower income, etc., some beyond social media posts and advertising within those, advertising on Pandora
Q: Were samples of keywords or descriptions given?
A: Not sure if that was included but it was talked about in the final presentation, Nikki will find out from ZLR and share.

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Farmers Market Nutrition Program Updates: (Kimberly Stanek)

- Available for infants 9-12 mos, all children, pregnant, breastfeeding, and PP women
- Checks will be \$3/piece totaling \$27/participant
- Make sure ppts have an active WIC status at the end of May
- Use the Termination by System Pending Report to determine which participants need to be certified by the end of May to ensure they are eligible for the FM checks.
- Some participants indicated in the survey/focus groups that they may not feel knowledgeable about using the FM checks, so make sure to provide details on how to use the checks. Families may be new to WIC or new to using the Farmers Market checks.
- A FM handout was developed that will be shared for participants to provide education on the checks: how to use, how to shop at FM, how to get the most f/v for your money, etc.
 - Available in English and Spanish
- Mailing FM checks- The State is waiting on information from IDALS about mailing and if there is funding available for that at this point, will share when more information is available
 - Some agencies stated they didn't need as many booklets if they can be mailed, they are creating local agency specific handouts and referring them to the FM website, some include maps of landmarks that the markets are nearby

CVB increase: (Charles Lorinser)

- Messaging group has met twice for discussing messaging and getting the correct information out to everyone consistently
- Information from NWA, Broadlawns, etc was uploaded into a file and will be shared with local agencies within the next week
 - Broadlawns shared lots of information for other agencies

Data Reports for CVB Increase: (Kenny Kane)

- CVB redemptions by county for the past 3 months
 - Only can break down statewide
 - Larger cities/counties- like Scott County, Polk County, etc. have participants shopping from other agencies' counties
 - Will send weekly once into June, July, and August with larger amounts issued we are hoping for increased redemption
 - Thinking about the number of stores and participants that are in that county is helpful when looking at this report
- CVB redemptions for the past 30 days
 - Daily sales only for fruits and vegetables
 - Spikes at the beginning of the month with a general slow decrease over time and another spike at the end of the month
 - We want to maintain trend lines with the increase in issuance
- CVB utilization over the past year
 - Report represents the monthly trend of issuance versus redemption of CVB benefits

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- Green bars represent what CVB benefits were issued statewide by month
- Blue line reflects the percentage of benefits redeemed for each of the months, percentage to issuance has dropped a little bit
- Goal is to maintain equal redemption rate (blue line) when green bars increase as we get closer to June 1 with increased issuance
- CVB benefits issued vs redeemed since May 2019
 - This report is the list view of the actual numbers for issuance versus redemption of CVB benefits from the previous report, can be used to monitor the overall increase of benefits issued in the future months (i.e. July 2021)
 - Goal will be to understand the increase in benefits issued while maintaining or increasing the percentage of the benefits redeemed as we get into the bonus period
- Additional information:
 - Kenny will be sending these reports weekly to Coordinators
 - County level redemption is available but doesn't calculate which benefits are issued in specific counties versus redeemed
 - Some counties will look better based on store availability (i.e. larger cities)
 - Information in the reports is from our eWIC host, not Focus, so the information can only be based off of the store location in counties
 - Retailers will be notified about the increase in CVB amount and encouraged to reach out to the State Office if assistance is needed, reminded about the UPC request form to submit, using the Shopper App, etc.
 - Stores are being reauthorized this year so more communication will be taking place prior to this increase
 - New UPCs per quarter
 - Last quarter, 500+ more items were added, including 100 or more cut fruits
 - Issues happen in this category when stores use their own labels that are UPCs that aren't universal, could be the same number as numbers for different foods at other stores
 - Encourage participants to scan with the Shopper App to avoid trouble at the register
- Process for issuing the \$35 benefit issued
 - State Office will need to test, a food package should automatically appear for June 1, 2021 with the increased CVB amount and will return to the previous CVB amount in October, 2021
 - Staff will need to do a reissuance to give the additional amount
 - More information about what will happen for the change back to the normal CVB amount will be shared when available
 - Lists should be sent to LAs from the State with names of participants that need benefits reissued for the new CVB dollar amount

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- A question about if communication will be required (mailed or texted) to families about the increased CVB once benefits are reissued will be answered when more information is available
- Kenny will be compiling some talking points for agencies that want to go to stores and talk to produce managers prior to the increase and share
 - Will be passed through Charles in the messaging group and added into the shared drive
- Broadlawns will hang up some signs they developed and got approved about the increased CVB amount
 - Kalin will create and share a version of the poster with a signupwic.com QR code instead of BMC WIC sign up code

Appointment reminder project updates: (Brandy Benedict)

- Extensive changes to contract have been made, so legal representation has gotten involved, now on the path the getting the contract finalized
- Some agencies have current contracts with other companies and are wondering what to do

Agency Sharing:

31- Broadlawns- Karen Goff:

- Each clinic will be different compared to others with getting back to clinic
- Thinking about having appointments come in for FM checks via drive up in larger clinics, ordered FM bags for flyers and other FM handouts
- No clients have been in the office for over a year now with varied feelings from staff at this time
- Thought about seeing some certifications in larger clinics in June, pregnant mom or mom and baby starting small, potentially one family in the clinic each day
- Brainstorming/testing logistics for where clients will wait, will they call in, etc.
- Working on CVB benefit social media to share with participants
- Will visit local vendors to have face-to-face conversations about the increase in CVB
 - Participants report that cut fruit is not approved at checkout so they want to talk to stores about this

33- New Opportunities- Paula Klocke:

- Haven't changed recently, seeing some Carroll clinics, about half of the participants in-person and others over the phone, show rate has been about 50% for in-person visits
 - Concerned about moving forward with the travel clinics for this reason
 - Reasons are similar to no show appointments- not feeling well, change in work schedule, transportation, etc.
- Looking at Guthrie Center, Jefferson, and Rockwell City for potential certs to consider traveling to start

34- HACAP- Angela Munson:

- Continue with the same process, all certifications at all but 1 site are seen in-person

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- Outreach Clinic that serves Hispanic population is the one that isn't open because the library isn't open yet, these participants are going to another clinic
- Talking about bringing back other types of appointments later in the summer
- Farmers Market- mailing flyers for FM coming with food benefits list for remote appointments, clients in-person receive it at their appointments, will add \$35 CVB messaging to that

35- Hillcrest- Gina Gassman:

- All appointments over the phone, thinking of starting certifications in-person in June
- Lots of mixed feelings from both staff and participants
- \$35 CVB increase handout is being mailed out now

37- MATURA- Michelle West:

- Some clinics in-person and over the phone at this time
- Some staffing issues at times for hosting in-person clinics

38- MICA- Sierra Stevens:

- Everything over the phone still
- Plans to start seeing in-person certifications in Ames and Marshalltown June 1
- Will have 2 patient rooms where families will stay and staff will rotate, will encourage families to wait in their cars
- Will consider starting travel clinics before the end of the year or when waiver ends

39- Mid-Sioux- Cindy Harpenau:

- All appointments are being done by phone and starting conversations about back to in-person
 - Not cost effective or efficient to start seeing 4-5 families at a travel clinic
 - ED is encouraging waiting until fully ready to see all certs in-person

41- NICAO- Carla Miller:

- All appointments being seen by phone
- Conversations are taking place about the transition to in-person
- Concerns about working families that have used a lot of their sick time for kids already and coming to appointments being a barrier
- Created a "Coming Soon" flyer that is sent with food benefits list and appointment reminder talking about CVB increase and FM checks and discussing on the phone

42- VNA- Sara Noack:

- In-person travel clinics for recerts and certs only- 60-75% coming in some clinics
- All other appointment types being done over the phone
- Considering starting to bring CHU appointments in for being able to see children in May
- Sometimes families are bringing in other children to get heights/weights, see dental, etc.
- CVB and Farmers Market information is added to the newsletter that is provided for in-person appointments or mailed with benefit list for phone appointments

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43- Operation Threshold- Amanda Kirchhoff:

- Continuing to do all appointments over the phone until August or waiver expiration
- Staff will all come back into clinic and then start seeing the required appointments in-person when the waiver expires
- Clinic sites are being contacted regularly and will welcome WIC back

46- AHFA- Cindy Meiners:

- Doing phone appointments whenever requested otherwise seeing clients in 4 of 7 counties for certifications and HU appointments
- For the other 3 having to change clinic locations and hope to be open in May or June
- Show rate for in-person appointments varies
- Nut ed/benefits appts are over the phone
- Have promoted the increase in CVB in outreach
- Are screening everyone with COVID questions over the phone reminder calls the day before and also call when families arrive, screen again, and take temperatures at arrival

47- UDMO- Tami Meendering:

- Seeing certifications and new appointments at clinics
- 50-60% in clinics, 6-12 participants/day
- Hoping to offer Health Update appointments in May

48- WCCA- Amanda Blum:

- 4 counties going back to in-person clinics starting in May, only a few families have been interested
- Sending the message about being open and seeing you at your appointments, expecting no shows
- ED is encouraging to start at the clinics within 30 minutes to main office to start
- With Sidney and Glenwood they are going by COVID cases less than 15% and if participants are interested in attending in-person, using COVID questions to gauge interest

49- Siouxland- Jean Sterner:

- Have been seeing people in-person for certifications or those that need a new card for several months now but will see those that object or prefer not to by phone
- Will start encouraging recertifications to come in-person in May
- Immunization clinic shares a waiting room with WIC so they need to make sure they are limiting people in the waiting room to be safe
- Hoping by July that health updates are being seen in-person if they want
- Talking about CVB increase to families and writing on the food benefits statement, also working on incorporating into goal setting

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50- Webster County- Tricia Nichols:

- Fully open since September seeing everyone that is willing and able to come to clinic in-person, accommodating those that don't want to, all sites welcomed them back
- Screening and texting for COVID questions and encouraging not to bring extra people to the appointment if possible, and encouraging (not requiring) masking
- iSmile there, 5 counties seem like business as usual now

51- Johnson County- Chuck Dufano:

- Most staff will be vaccinated by May 14, and all staff back on-site now
- Seeing all appointments by phone currently and reviewing the plan for back to in-person clinic with the updated waiver

52- Pott County- Kris Wood:

- Going to Avoca clinic and open at the main Council Bluffs clinic without seeing many families, those that need cards - new pregnant or returning families
- Encouraging families to pick up Farmers Market checks
- Looking for the nutrition brochures that were emailed previously-
 - They are located on the IDPH WIC website

53- Marion County- Julie Miller:

- All appointments are seen by phone
- Erin is doing COVID shots so Julie is seeing most/all of the appointments
- Planning on opening 2 biggest clinics- Knoxville and Indianola- first in August, then moving to other clinics opening by the waiver expiration date

54- CHC- Ashley Wandera:

- Considering starting in May seeing those that are new to Iowa WIC needing cards in-person and continuing other appointments virtually
- Considering clinic flow and increasing number of appointments seen gradually
- 2 staff members have been hired since COVID and need to be oriented to what in-person appointments are like and take it day-by-day

Questions:

- Kris Wood- concerned about kids coming back to the clinic with full schedules with coughs or colds.
 - A: Tricia Nichols- Screening over the phone and by text and encouraging families not to come with more than those that need appointments and wear masks.
- Karen Goff- How are you bringing participants to iSmile and other programs like CH/MH and are WIC appointments being reduced in time based on that?
 - A: Angie: Staff are taking the participant to see the iSmile member. Angie/Tricia: Appointments are taking the normal amount of time (45 minutes from check in to check out.)
- Ashley Wandera- How are others handling scheduling with spreading out appointments for cleaning/spacing?

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A: Agency 50 is blocking off some appointments in the morning and some in the afternoon to allow for additional time (3-4 each). No shows help too.

Other updates:

- Several handouts are being updated:
 - Weaning from the Bottle
 - Food Safety for Pregnancy (from the Quarterly Order)
 - Staying Healthy for You and Your Baby (the one for pp exit counseling)

Upcoming meetings:

- August 25, 2021- scheduled 3 hours
- November 17, 2021- scheduled 1 hour
- Monthly calls will continue on the second Wednesday of each month, 12- 1 pm
- May 12 meeting agenda requests:
 - More clarification for the reissuing of benefits for the CVB increase
 - Email Kimberly or other consultants with other ideas