



LOCAL SUCCESS STORIES

This newsletter is part of a mini series to spotlight local success stories and provide insight into key strategies that local health departments have implemented to increase and maintain WIC participation.



What has worked well...

Flexibility:

- We've been working to accommodate clients in whatever way we can. If they have recent measurements, we are able to offer TeleWIC. If they do not have recent measurements, we are having them come into the office whenever is most convenient for them to complete that portion, and then completing the nutrition/ certification at a later time over the phone. We keep a folder in clinic with those clients' information in it, then when we have a late cancellation or a no-show, the nutritionists are going to that folder and calling to finish the appointments.
- We've stopped turning clients away when they are more than 15 minutes late. If they can be seen at the time they show up, we will see them. If not, we will have them do measurements while they're in the office, send them home, and their information will go into the folder for the nutritionists to call the client and finish the appointment later.
- Similarly if clinic is backed up, in order to cut down on wait time for the clients we offer to take measurements and send them home, then finish the appointment later.

(Continued below)

Communication:

- The Teletask system will automatically send a text message for all scheduled appointments two days in advance. In addition to that, our staff makes a phone call one day before as another reminder and also to let the clients know what to bring or to see if they have measurements to do the visit via TeleWIC.
- Our voicemails are returned within one business day. We have two admin staff whose top priority is to answer the main English and Spanish lines and to respond to messages.
- We send out missed appointment letters to everyone who no-shows or does not answer for a food benefit issuance call.
- After state assisted issuance (SAI) ended in August, we made lots of calls from the Participants who Failed to Pickup Benefits report to re-engage the clients who were just being automatically issued benefits and not necessarily participating in the program, and therefore fell off when SAI stopped. We don't have enough man power to regularly continue running that report, but that's the first place I'd go if our caseload started to drop. Those clients are already certified, they just missed their issuance for whatever reason so it's low hanging fruit...

Staffing:

- Every time we've received an AA increase and/or additional grant funding, we've put it towards staffing, specifically nutritionists. We currently have 7 nutritionist FTEs and currently our unofficial caseload for May is at 3,804 clients. We try to keep it as close as we can to 500 clients per CPA, much more than that isn't sustainable for staff.
- We've also tried to be flexible with staff, allowing occasional work from home days when we have a lot of phone calls that need to be made.

If you have any questions or want to learn more about Union County's progress, please contact Emily Colson, WIC Director: emily.colson@unioncountync.gov

Have a success story you want to share?



We welcome more insights and are excited to hear about your progress!
Please email Bethany Milford with your story: bmilford@ncapha.org