

# New Hampshire WIC Policy & Procedure Manual

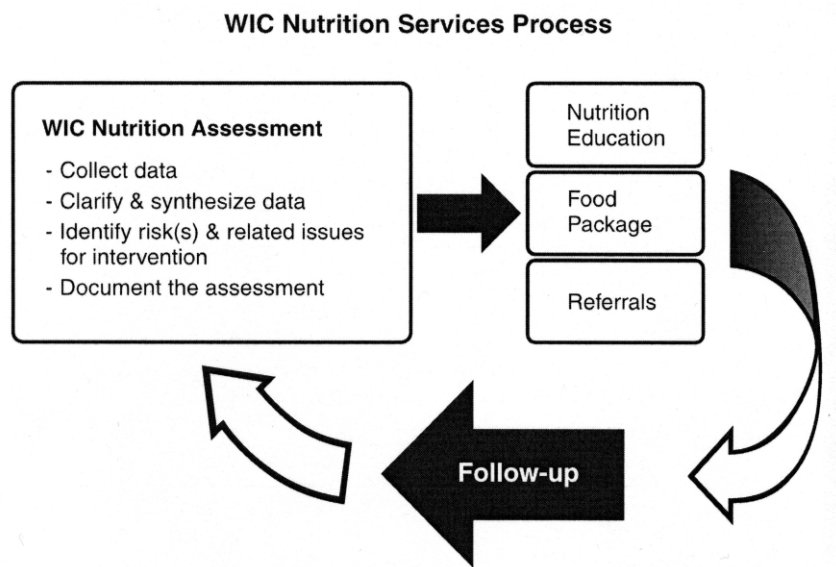
## Chapter Number 2. NUTRITION & BREASTFEEDING SERVICES A. Nutrition Education

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### VENA-Nutrition and Health Assessment

<b>Purpose</b>	To provide quality nutrition services through a thorough and complete WIC nutrition and health assessment.
<b>Policy</b>	To provide a standardized process of collecting nutrition and health assessment information to assure that all applicants/participants are assessed in a consistent and equitable way.
<b>Authority</b>	VENA Guidance-2007
<b>Procedure</b>	<p>The WIC nutrition and health assessment is used for the following purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To determine nutritional eligibility of the applicant;</li><li>2. To serve as the basis for which all subsequent WIC nutrition services are provided. Information gathered in the assessment process is used to assess the applicant's nutritional status and risk (associated with an increased likelihood of poor outcomes), tailor the food package, deliver appropriate nutrition education, and make referrals to health and social services; and</li><li>3. To provide follow-up through monitoring progress, reinforcing nutrition education messages, and to elicit feedback from the participant. It allows for continuity of care from initial certification visits to subsequent nutrition and certification appointments.</li></ol>

This process is illustrated in the figure below.



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### Chapter Number 2. NUTRITION & BREASTFEEDING SERVICES

#### A. Nutrition Education

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Staff shall explain the Nutrition and Health assessment is a partnership that works best with open-communication. Staff shall explain the assessment is needed to determine program eligibility (risks), identify a participant's needs and interests, to determine benefits provided, and to help direct education efforts to achieving positive health outcomes. A positive health outcome statement may be used to transition into the nutrition and health assessment. See Positive Health Outcomes sheet and Basic Contacts policy.

Staff shall conduct an assessment of the following main health determinants as appropriate to the participant's category to reach a positive health outcome:

- Receives on-going preventative healthcare, including prenatal and postpartum care.
- Achieves a normal growth pattern; recommended maternal gain; desirable postpartum weight/BMI.
- Remains free from nutrition or food related illness, complications or injury.
- Consumes a variety of foods to meet energy and nutrient requirements, including for infants breastmilk/formula and developmentally appropriate foods.
- Makes an informed decision to breastfed.
- Establishes a positive feeding relationship leading to positive feeding experiences and achievement of developmental milestones including self-feeding.
- Maintains safety by avoiding alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs.

During the assessment process, staff shall work to establish rapport, use open ended questions about broad topics and follow-up with appropriate questions. Staff shall use the StarLINC computer system certification/mid-certification tasks in conjunction with their choice of a NH WIC Assessment tool/technique or form (such as: VENA tools/techniques, Getting to the Heart of the Matter (GTHM) tools/techniques, Tell Us About You/Your Baby-Child forms or NH Dietary Assessment tools-Women/Infant/Child) to identify potential concerning health behaviors, risk codes, and/or the participant's health concerns.

Staff shall encourage behavior change that moves the participant towards a positive health outcome including individual goals identified in the process.

Refer to VENA Guidance Document, NH VENA and GTHM attachments.

#### **Exception**

Certification with either the Presumed Dietary RC 401 or 428 shall be based on a thorough dietary assessment that rules out inappropriate nutrition practices (INPs) for the participant's category. See Nutrition Services Documentation Policy.

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### A. Nutrition Education

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**Best Practice**

The nutritionist/CPA uses the power of influence principles or motivational interviewing techniques to move the participant to positive health behaviors.