

NEW HAMPSHIRE WIC BREASTFEEDING PROMOTION PLAN FFY24

Quality nutrition services are the centerpiece of WIC: nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion, education and support, nutritious foods, and healthcare access for low and moderate-income women and children.

Families turning to WIC for nutrition assistance are vulnerable and at-risk. WIC food packages, including food packages specifically designed for fully breastfeeding mothers and their infants, and the nutrition and breastfeeding services that accompany them ensure that WIC mothers and young children are supported towards healthy outcomes.

Research shows that breast milk is the best nutrition for a child's first year of life. Moreover, breastfeeding provides numerous and significant health benefits to both the mother and her baby. WIC promotes breastfeeding to all pregnant women as the optimal infant feeding choice.

NWA has developed a Breastfeeding Strategic Plan for states and local agencies to build off in order to meet the specific needs of New Hampshire families. New Hampshire State WIC Agency encourages all local agencies to adopt the following breastfeeding strategic goals for their program.

Goal #1: Promote and support exclusive breastfeeding for all mothers.

Objective #1: WIC agencies adopt the NWA Six Steps to Achieve Breastfeeding Goals for WIC clinics.

Activities may include:

1. The State Agency will assess the Local Agencies using the NWA Six Steps to Achieve Breastfeeding Goals for WIC clinics at biennial Management Evaluation and/or Self Evaluation.
2. Local Agencies will develop action steps and include their work plans to become breastfeeding friendly using the NWA Six Steps checklist.

Objective #2: Coordinate breastfeeding activities and promotion efforts with other health care organizations and institutions.

Activities may include:

1. WIC agencies will work with local hospitals in their service area to support the Baby Friendly Hospital initiative and coordinate support resources for post-discharge.
2. WIC agencies will communicate through mailings and in-person visits to local healthcare providers about services of benefits of the WIC Nutrition and Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program.

Objective #3: Promote breastfeeding in the community.

1. Support and become members of the New Hampshire Breastfeeding Task Force.
2. Collaborate with other breastfeeding advocates to promote the benefits of breastfeeding.
3. Coordinate local World Breastfeeding Month events in the community.

Goal #2: All WIC staff is knowledgeable and skilled in breastfeeding promotion and support.

Objective #1: WIC State and Local Agencies will develop and foster staff competencies appropriate to their role to promote and support breastfeeding.

Activities may include:

1. WIC Local Agencies will include breastfeeding competencies in job descriptions and performance evaluations.

Objective #2: WIC staff and volunteers gain competencies appropriate to their particular role in the program to promote and support breastfeeding.

Activities may include:

1. WIC State and Local Agencies will train all new WIC and Peer Counseling staff to provide breastfeeding support as defined by their roles such as breastfeeding peer counselor, CPA (Competent Professional Authority – Nutritionist) and WIC Designated Expert role.
2. WIC State and Local Agencies will provide ongoing training or financial resources to support staff competencies.

Objective #3: WIC Agencies increase the number of specialists trained as WIC Designated Breastfeeding Experts (DBE) and Certified Lactation Counselors. When requirements met continue to pursue training as an international board Certified lactation consultant (IBCLC) at both the local and state agency levels.

Activities may include:

1. WIC agencies will provide lactation-specific educational opportunities to staff.

Goal #3: – WIC is the primary community resource for breastfeeding promotion and support.

Objective #1: WIC Agencies educate public health organizations, educational institutions, and community organizations about WIC's role in breastfeeding promotion and support.

Activities may include:

1. WIC agencies will encourage local agency staff to visit medical staff offices, community organizations to share information about WIC's breastfeeding services and specific breastfeeding programs.
2. WIC agencies will invite representative from public health programs and other community groups to WIC breastfeeding in-services and training sessions.
3. WIC agencies will increase the visibility of and promote the Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program within their communities.
4. WIC agencies will plan collaborative breastfeeding events within their communities.