



Memorandum

11-087

TO: WIC Regional Directors
WIC Local Agency Directors

FROM: Linda Brumble, Unit Manager
Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit
Nutrition Services Section

DATE: June 30, 2011

SUBJECT: *Policy NE:01.0, Standards for Nutrition Education Contacts; Policy NE:02.0, Local Agency NE Coordinator Staffing Responsibilities*

This memo announces revisions to the subject policies as follows. The policies will be effective July 1, 2011. At that time they will be posted and you may update your *Policy and Procedures Manual* by accessing the *WIC Website* at: http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/policy/toc_ne.shtm.

Summary of Revisions

Policy NE:01.0, Standards for Nutrition Education Contacts:

- Nutrition education contacts shall be delivered using client-centered learning principles.
- WIC staff will use professional assessment to determine issues to be addressed and stress the positive long-term benefits of nutrition education.
- Periodic evaluation to ensure appropriateness and effectiveness of nutrition education. (Minimum of once each fiscal year for all sites as per *policy QA:01.0*)
- Individual counseling shall include the completion of the VENA documentation tool. Also WIC staff will attempt to establish rapport, explore participants concerns using active listening and open-ended questions, summarize conversation, set an appropriate goal and conclude on a positive note.
- Texaswic.org lessons shall be accepted as an NE contact.
- Take-home lessons shall consist of an activity and evaluation.

Policy NE:02.0, Local Agency NE Coordinator Staffing Responsibilities (policy name change):

- Guidelines and policy for submitting a *NE/BF Plan*. These guidelines were previously stated in *policy NE:03.0* but are now found in *policy NE:02.0*.
- Evaluation of nutrition education shall be completed annually and shall include observation of group and individual NE sessions to ensure appropriate delivery of information. Results of observation should be used to determine and plan staff training.
- Parts five and six of the *policy NE:02.0* that address staffing responsibilities pertaining to nutrition education have been removed and will be added to *policy TR:03.0*. Currently *policy TR:03.0* is being updated and revised.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Meghan Coffey, Nutrition Education Consultant, at meghan.coffey@dshs.state.tx.us or (512) 341-4514.

Attachments

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Effective: July 1, 2011

Policy No. NE:01.0

Standards for Nutrition Education Contacts

Purpose

To ensure nutrition education (NE) is made available to all participants and addresses the nutritional needs of the participants.

Authority

7 CFR Part 246.11, USDA memos 2004-WIC-13 and 2008-01

Policy

WIC participants shall be offered nutrition education according to standards and staff qualifications.

Definitions

Nutrition education means individual or group sessions and the provision of materials that are designed to improve health status and achieve positive change in dietary and physical activity habits, and that emphasize the relationship between nutrition, physical activity, and health, all in keeping with the personal and cultural preferences of the individual.

Procedures

- I. All adult participants and parent/guardians/caregivers of infant and/or child participants shall be offered two nutrition education contacts per each six-month certification period or offered every three months to women or parent/guardian/caregivers of infants certified for a period exceeding six months.
- II. All NE contacts shall:
 - A. Be provided by qualified staff (*Policy NE:02.0, TR:3.0*).
 - B. Address participants' questions and concerns.
 - C. Be delivered using current participant centered learning principles.
 - D. Meet participant's language and cultural preferences of participants.

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- E. Include professional assessment by WIC staff to determine issues to be addressed and stress the positive, long-term benefits of nutrition education.
 - F. Be offered at no cost to participants.
 - G. Consist of accurate messages and current information.
 - H. Be documented with the correct NE code in the WIN system.
 - I. Offer a variety of NE delivery methods and accept certificates or codes for completion of web based lessons at texaswic.org.
 - J. Include periodic (at a minimum once each fiscal year for all the sites as per *Policy QA:01.0*) evaluation to ensure appropriateness and effectiveness.
- III. Substance abuse information shall be provided to all pregnant, breastfeeding, postpartum women and to parents or caregivers of infants and children.
- IV. Breastfeeding information and support shall be provided to all pregnant and postpartum participants.
- V. Types of Nutrition education contacts include:
- A. Individual counseling
Individual counseling shall be provided at initial certification, subsequent certification, at the request of the participant, and:
 - 1. May be conducted in place of group class at benefit issuance; it is optional to complete a VENA Documentation Tool.
 - 2. Shall include the completion of the *VENA Family Documentation Tool* (Stock No. 13-06-12805 and this replaces the care plan).
 - 3. Staff shall:
 - a. complete assessment forms, review previous VENA tool (if applicable) and sign or initial;
 - b. attempt to establish rapport;
 - c. attempt to identify and explore parents' concerns using active listening skills and open ended questions;
 - d. summarize conversation and if appropriate assist participant in setting goal;
 - e. provide appropriate referrals; and

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- f. attempt to conclude on a positive note.
- B. Group classes
 - Group classes shall:
 1. Be offered at benefit issuance between certifications to all participants in the form of discussion based groups, poster or bulletin board group sessions, breastfeeding support group meetings, lessons with activities and or videos, health fairs or other client centered methods such as garden based classes, grocery tours etc. Certificates or codes for completion for web based lessons provided at texaswic.org shall be accepted.
 2. Be presented by qualified staff, who have been trained on the subject matter prior to teaching the class (*Policies: NE:02.0; TR:03.0* and LA NE Coordinator/WIC Director's discretion).
 3. Be scheduled as indicated in the current NE plan.
 4. Be a SA or LA developed and SA or LA RD approved lesson plan.
 5. Always have a staff member present in the classroom.
 6. Be offered according to participant's category, risk conditions, interests, time considerations, preferred language and cultural needs; participants may choose a preferred class.
 7. Allocate time for participants to ask questions related to the class topic. If the educator is unable to answer the question, then the information shall be obtained and made available to the participant.
- C. Self-paced lessons
 - A self-paced lesson-may serve as a NE contact if:
 1. It is a state agency (SA) developed or approved by LA or SA RD.
 2. The participant completes the questions and a designated staff member reviews the answers with the participant prior to benefit issuance.
 3. It is not substituted for individual counseling at certification.
- D. *Texaswic.org* lessons shall be accepted as an NE contact by LA
- E. Take home lessons
 - Take home lessons shall:
 1. Consist of an activity and evaluation to be completed.
 2. Can be provided by the SA or be a video or a book or a lesson developed by LA and approved by SA or LA RD.

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- F. Breastfeeding support group meeting
 - 1. Breastfeeding support group meetings must be led by an IBCLC, a trained Peer Counselor or any Certification Authority who has completed their required BF training (*Policy BF:04.0*).
 - 2. Local agencies must submit a breastfeeding support group schedule to their State agency nutrition education liaison and include:
 - a. At least one main topic that will be addressed at each meeting
 - b. At least one objective for the named topic(s)
 - c. At least one evaluation question for each named topic.
 - G. Alternate forms of nutrition education
 - 1. Participants may receive WIC NE contacts from outside agencies or certain professional persons at the discretion of the LA NE coordinator and based on standards specified in Section II, with the approval of the SA NE Section. Examples include and not limited to: La Leche League, diabetes support groups, and nutrition counseling by a registered dietitian. NE codes shall be assigned by the SA, at the request of the LA.
 - 2. For families of children with special health care needs, see *Policy CR:07.0*.
- VI. Nutrition education may be declined by participants.
- A. Food benefits shall be issued to all participants, even those who decline nutrition education.
 - B. Participants unable to stay for a NE contact or who decline a NE contact shall be issued food benefits as soon as possible. When a participant declines or refuses NE or is unable to receive NE due to an emergency, the NE code field in Texas WIN should be left blank. The blank field indicates that no NE was provided.
- VII. Each LA is responsible for ensuring that the equipment and materials necessary to conduct NE classes or counseling is available at all clinic sites in accordance with the approved *NE/BF Plan (Policies AC:33.0, AC:34.0, NE:2.0)*.

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VIII. LA NE expenditures shall be in accordance with *Policies AC: 33.0, AC: 34.0.*

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Policy No. NE:02.0

Local Agency NE Coordinator Staffing Responsibilities

Purpose

To ensure that a qualified, designated staff administers (plans, implements and evaluates) nutrition education.

Authority

7 CFR Part 246.11; State Agency

Policy

All staff providing Nutrition Education (NE) shall have appropriate qualifications and complete required training. Each local agency (LA) shall follow an approved Nutrition Education/ Breastfeeding Promotion (NE/BF) Plan and ensure that lessons and materials presented to WIC participants contain accurate, current, professionally recognized nutrition information.

Procedure

Each LA shall designate a NE Coordinator to oversee NE activities. All staff providing NE shall have appropriate qualifications and complete required training.

- I. The designated LA NE coordinator shall be one of the following:
 - A. A registered dietitian (RD) or licensed dietitian (LD); or
 - B. Any other certifying authority (CA), preferably a degreed nutritionist with 24 semester hours of food and nutrition (Refer to **Policies: CS: 15.0, CS:16.0**)

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- II. The NE coordinator shall complete all the required trainings (TR: 3.0) within specified timeframes. Documentation of the completion shall be kept on file at the LA for review.
- III. The NE coordinator shall attend the annual Texas WIC Program's Nutrition/Breastfeeding Conference every year. Other conferences or training may be accepted, in lieu of this conference, with the approval of the state agency (SA).
- IV. The LA NE coordinator shall be responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating nutrition education at the LA.

A. Planning

- 1. The NE/BF Plan shall be completed and submitted to the SA by the designated date. The plan shall be in effect October 1 through September 30. Each LA shall follow an approved Nutrition Education/ Breastfeeding Promotion (NE/BF) Plan.
- 2. SA shall have the option to withhold reimbursement if the NE/BF Plan and/or required revisions are not submitted by September 30, or the date agreed upon between the SA and LA.
- 3. A new LA shall submit a NE/BF Plan no later than the end of the third month of operation.
- 4. When the plan is approved, the LA shall receive final notification from the SA. The LA NE Plan is not approved until notification is received from the SA.
- 5. Changes and amendments to the NE Plan shall be submitted electronically to SA NE liaison during the fiscal year.
- 6. The LA NE coordinator shall work with the LA Breastfeeding coordinator to submit the NE/BF Plan.

B. Implementing Nutrition Education

- 1. Nutrition Education materials used at the LA shall:
 - a. Be accurate, current and relevant in content.
 - b. Be based on sound, established and scientific evidence.
 - c. Meet the cultural and language needs of the participants.
 - d. Be provided by SA or approved by SA or LA RD.

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2. All clinic sites must have current NE resources such as pamphlets, videos, lesson outlines, and other materials required for effective delivery of nutrition education.
 3. LA shall maintain a current inventory of NE and BF lessons and materials provided by the SA Deleted and out-of-date materials shall not be used for participant education.
 4. NE shall be provided by qualified staff with appropriate trainings (TR:03.0).
- C. Evaluating Nutrition Education
1. Regular (annually at a minimum) quality management activities related to NE shall be conducted by the LA and:
 - a. shall include observation of group and individual nutrition education sessions to ensure accurate and appropriate delivery of information in a learner-centered way
 - b. results should be used to determine and plan training of staff
 2. Participant feedback related to nutrition education should be used to plan future education activities.