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**#14-126**

**TO:** WIC Regional Directors  
WIC Local Agency Directors

**FROM:** Amanda Hovis, Director  
Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit  
Nutrition Services Section

**DATE:** November 3, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Update on Changes to WIC Breast Pump Issuance

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### **Revised Prenatal Flier**

*Ask About Breastfeeding Help Offered by Your Health Plan*, stock #13-06-14212 has been revised. The how to complain information has been deleted from the flier to allow health plans more time to gear up for the changes regarding breast pump issuance. A call out box has been added to the back of the flier which assures moms that WIC can provide them with a pump if they need one and are unable to obtain one from their health plan. The revised English flier is attached and will be available for order from the WIC catalog soon. The Spanish and Vietnamese versions are in translation and will be available on the catalog in the next few weeks. Please discontinue use and recycle all old fliers when the new fliers are ordered and received.

### **Tricare Update**

The state agency has recently learned that Tricare health plan *will* issue hospital-grade pumps to moms who have babies in the NICU. We are not aware of Tricare covering pumps for any other reasons so moms enrolled in Tricare may still need a WIC pump for return to work or school or other reasons.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

A FAQ document regarding changes to the WIC pump program is attached. The document includes questions that were submitted to state staff in the Pump Program Overview at the 2014 Texas WIC Nutrition and Breastfeeding Conference and questions that have been asked of the state since the conference.

### **Reminder**

Local agencies should continue to issue WIC pumps to moms as needed, according to guidelines provided in Memo#14-095, Changes to the Texas WIC Breast Pump Program Effective September 1, dated August 20, 2014. **Local agencies should continue issuing pumps to participants who call or present in the WIC clinic needing a pump, and have not already received one from their health plan for any reason OR if they received a pump that is not meeting their needs.**

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jessi Cano at [Jessi.Cano@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:Jessi.Cano@dshs.state.tx.us) or 512-341-4584.

## ASK ABOUT BREASTFEEDING HELP OFFERED BY YOUR HEALTH PLAN



Did you know most health plans including Medicaid, CHIP, and private insurance now cover breastfeeding help and supplies? WIC recommends that you call the number on your health plan benefit card when you are pregnant, and speak to a person who can explain the breastfeeding support and supplies offered by your health plan.

Not all moms need breastfeeding help or equipment but calling your health plan while you are pregnant to find out what kind of support is offered is one less thing you'll have to do once your baby is here.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR HEALTH PLAN:

Does my health plan cover expenses related to breastfeeding?  Yes  No

What types? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If I need a breast pump, how do I get one?

- Will I need a written prescription for the pump from my doctor?  Yes  No
- Where do I get the pump? \_\_\_\_\_
- When can I get a breast pump?  Before giving birth  After giving birth
- If I can't get the breast pump until after the baby is born, will I need to get it before my baby reaches a certain age?  No  Yes By what age? \_\_\_\_\_
- What type of breast pump can I get?  
 Hospital grade rental pump  Electric personal-use pump  Non-electric pump

Write names of pumps here: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Do I need to get one of the pumps that are pre-approved by my health plan or can I choose to purchase one and get my money back?  Health plan pump  Can purchase my own
- If I can purchase my own, how much can I spend? \_\_\_\_\_
- How do I get my money back for the pump? \_\_\_\_\_

In addition to a breast pump, your plan may cover breastfeeding counseling services and additional breastfeeding supplies such as extra or replacement breast pump parts.

**AFTER TALKING TO YOUR HEALTH PLAN CUSTOMER REPRESENTATIVE**, contact your WIC clinic to let them know about the breast pumps your health plan offers. The peer counselor or lactation consultant at your WIC clinic can tell you if the pump(s) your health plan offers will work best for you and your situation.

## BREAST PUMP QUESTIONS



**AFTER YOU HAVE YOUR BABY**, if you have not been taught how to use your pump, bring it to WIC, and staff can show you how to use and clean it.

### **WHAT IF THE PUMP I GET FROM THE HEALTH PLAN DOESN'T WORK FOR ME?**

Bring the pump to your WIC clinic. WIC staff can help you and let you know if your pump needs to be replaced.

**WHAT IF I AM NOT ENROLLED IN A HEALTH PLAN AND DON'T HAVE HEALTH COVERAGE?** You may be able to get a pump from WIC. Let the staff at your WIC clinic know that you need a pump and do not have a health plan or that your health plan doesn't cover pumps.

**IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE GETTING A BREAST PUMP THROUGH YOUR HEALTH PLAN OR IF YOU RECEIVED A PUMP THAT IS NOT WORKING WELL FOR YOU**, please call WIC and let them know so WIC can issue a pump to you if you need one.



Visit our website at [breastmilkcounts.com](http://breastmilkcounts.com)

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## BREAST PUMP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Questions about Changes

1. Is Medicaid and CHIP giving breast pumps now? **Yes all Medicaid and CHIP managed care health plans are supposed to be issuing breast pumps now however, many are still working out how they will do it. Some plans offer additional breastfeeding support such as breastfeeding consultations.**
2. At what point should we direct moms to get pumps from their insurance plans? **Moms should be directed to their health plans as early as possible when they're pregnant. If a mom presents in the WIC clinic after having her baby and needs a pump right away but was not aware she could get one from her health plan, issue a WIC pump rather than directing her to her health plan.**
3. When is the best time to give the prenatal education flyer to the participants - at their 1<sup>st</sup> WIC appointment, or during the breastfeeding class? **At their very first prenatal WIC appointment. If a mom enrolls after she has had her baby and tells you she will need a pump in several weeks (e.g for return to work or school in 4 or more weeks), give her the prenatal education flyer and recommend she try calling her health plan first for a pump. Make sure she knows she can get one from WIC if she can't get one from her health plan or can't get one from her plan that works well for her.**
4. Can the flyer be put in the prenatal bag? **No. Adding information to the prenatal bag dilutes the message that the prenatal bag information is to help them build their support systems at home. If a mom chooses to add the flyer to her bag once you have discussed it with her that is up to her.**
5. How can we refer moms to their healthcare plans to seek help, without seeming like we're pushing for them to get pumps? **Assure them that not all moms need breastfeeding assistance or pumps but encourage moms to call their health plans when they're pregnant to find out what kind of breastfeeding services their health plans offer, including pumps, in case they might need one. Let them know that it is to help them prepare so that they will have less work to do and will spend less time on the phone with their health plan once their baby is here.**
6. Who can get WIC breast pumps? **Any enrolled participant who has not obtained a breast pump from another source OR if she is unable to obtain a pump from another source in a timely manner OR if she cannot or has not obtained a pump that is adequate for her needs. **When in doubt, issue a WIC pump.****
7. Is there need of justification as to why a client was issued a pump, yet she already has a pump from another source? **No**
8. If mom does not want to call her health insurance to follow up on getting a breast pump, can she still be issued one at WIC? **Yes.**

9. Will Medicaid/CHIP issue pumps prenatally since coverage ends at delivery, or will the infant be eligible for a pump under Medicaid? **Most Medicaid/CHIP plans will not issue pumps until after the baby is born however, pumps are a covered benefit under both mothers and babies. If the mother's eligibility has expired in Medicaid, the pump can be issued under the baby's coverage.**
10. Some plans require moms to have a prescription before they're issued with breast pumps. Where does this prescription need to come from? **From the mother's or infant's physician or nurse practitioner. Many health plans also require a prior authorization form with the prescription. The mother's or infants' physician or nurse practitioner also complete the prior authorization form.**
11. Is there a specific medical condition that must be met for a mother to receive a breast pump from Medicaid. **No, however the Department of State Health Services has shared a list of potential reasons for issuance with State Medicaid who is working on incorporating issuance guidelines into policy.**
12. Are the pumps issued by healthcare plans purchased and reimbursed? **Some health plans may be requiring their members to purchase a pump and then request reimbursement. Moms who do not want to pay up front for a breast pump and wait for reimbursement can get a breast pump from WIC.**
13. Can patients request a specific pump from WIC or from health plans? **At WIC, the breast pump issued to a patient is dependent on her need upon assessment at the clinic. The health plans all work differently and may or may not allow their member to request a specific pump.**
14. What would you be required to do if mom brought the wrong pump back? **Let her know that the pump she brought back isn't the one issued to her, and request she bring the one that was issued to her.**
15. What should WIC staff do if the client brings us a pump that we are not trained on how to use? **Involve the more experienced staff, and have them train mom on how to use the pump. If the more experienced staff doesn't know how the pump works, proceed to issue mom with a WIC pump.**
16. Who is liable when WIC staff show a client how to use a pump that WIC did not issue or client did not sign a release form? Should the client sign a release form when they need WIC staff to teach them how to use the pump they received from their HCP? **WIC liability is low however the state agency is in the process of developing a release form that can be used when staffs provide training on non-contract pumps.**
17. Can we buy different sized breast pump flanges for pumps that are not on the WIC contract? **Yes. Pump flanges for any type of pump are an allowable WIC cost.**

## General Pump Questions

1. Can Peer Counselors issue pumps and assist with troubleshooting pumps for moms? **If the PC has undergone the relevant trainings according to Policy BF: 04.0, she can issue pumps and assist to troubleshoot pumps.**
2. Can a mom doing both breastfeeding and formula feeding be issued with a pump? **Yes**
3. Is using the internet (YouTube) for pump functions and operations permitted? **It cannot substitute for the pump training required by policies BF:05.0 and BF:06.0 which state, *Before receiving a breast pump, mothers shall be trained by WIC staff on assembly, use, and cleaning of the breast pump, and storage of human milk utilizing the pump that is being issued to the participant or a demonstration pump. Showing a participant a breast pump video does not count as training.* Supplementing the required pump trainings with an additional internet demonstration is permitted.**
4. With no gauges, how do we ensure that MU's are working well before re-issuing? **Analogue vacuum pressure gauges are no longer available due to their high margin of error and digital gauges are too expensive for WIC to purchase. WIC staff should follow the basic troubleshooting guidelines in the *Breast Pump Reference Manual*. If the troubleshooting guidelines are followed and low suction continues to be suspected, staff should issue an entire replacement breast pump (including a new kit, motor, and bag) to the participant, then contact the vendor regarding warranty issues according to the guidelines in the *Breast Pump Reference Manual*.**
5. Why aren't the manual spring pumps available? **Medela did not bid the *Spring Express* for the current contract because they want to discontinue them.**
6. How do you handle a mom who is adamant about getting an electric pump, yet upon assessment you determine that she requires a manual pump? **Manual breast pumps are appropriate for moms who only need to pump on occasion for infrequent separation or to help resolve short term breastfeeding issues. If you determine a manual pump is appropriate but it upsets the mom, explore the reasons she thinks she needs an electric pump. After listening to the mom's concerns, if an electric pump is more appropriate, issue an electric. If a manual pump is still most appropriate, issue a manual pump.**