Pathways to Breastfeeding Success

Momentum is building in California to realize a vision of a comprehensive breastfeeding continuum of care for all moms, dads and babies! This means culturally competent and evidence-based lactation support and encouragement wherever and whenever it’s needed.

Think of the care continuum as a path with stops along the way, with each stop being a place where young families get the help they need for breastfeeding success. WIC continues to provide stellar support and incentives. More California hospitals are going Baby Friendly, and community health centers are ramping up for direct breastfeeding support. Thanks to healthcare reform, health plans are rolling out breastfeeding preventive benefits and employers are increasingly providing lactation accommodation.

“Follow the flip-flops” through this edition to see how California WIC fits into a breastfeeding continuum of care. Thanks for the important part YOU play in making it work!
Breastfeeding News

Community Health Centers Collaborate for Breastfeeding Support

With implementation of the Affordable Care Act gaining momentum, community health centers (CHC) are ground zero for health care expansion, including caring for millions of new patients, working with new health plan rules, and adopting enhanced quality care measures. Some of these improvements include provision of breastfeeding support as a preventive service.

A CHC can satisfy many federal requirements and incentives by establishing and incorporating quality breastfeeding support. Certification as Patient-Centered Medical Homes and Accountable Care Organizations can include breastfeeding. Monitoring breastfeeding rates can contribute to Meaningful Use data collection. And staffing qualified lactation experts can enhance billing and reimbursement opportunities and decrease health care costs.

Fifteen health centers across California (listed on page 6 of the Winter 2013 WIC Watch) are working on improving their breastfeeding support through a CDC grant to the California Obesity Prevention Program of CDPH. These clinics are training staff for breastfeeding support, engaging IBCLC services, billing for lactation visits, recording infant feeding data in Electronic Medical Records, forming clinic breastfeeding task forces, establishing worksite lactation accommodation, and strengthening referrals—including WIC.

To help spread the word about these opportunities to enhance breastfeeding support, CWA has published a new brief addressing CHCs specifically. You’ll find it and many other resources at http://calwic.org/focus-areas/breastfeeding/health-care-reform.

With over half of California WIC agencies housed under a parent organization or co-located with a CHC, there are key opportunities for referral, staff education, and co-staffing. This type of collaboration is just what it takes to improve breastfeeding rates and health outcomes among California families.

For more information, contact Karen Farley, kfarley@calwic.org or Linda Cowling, linda.cowling@cdph.ca.gov.

Get the Latest Hospital Breastfeeding Rates

Just in time for World Breastfeeding Week, the 2013 Hospital Breastfeeding county and state fact sheets for California will be released in early August.

Updated each year, these tools from California WIC Association and the UC Davis Human Lactation Center are used by health advocates, coalitions, and hospital breastfeeding consortia to develop strategies for improving hospital breastfeeding policies. With 59 Baby Friendly designated hospitals to date, California is leading the nation. Yet, with over 250 hospitals providing maternity care, we have a ways to go.

Using 2012 data collected by the Genetic Disease Screening Program and posted by the Maternal Child and Adolescent Health Program of the California Department of Public Health, this year’s data can be trended to 2010 data which enables hospitals to chart progress.

Visit the CWA website http://calwic.org/focus-areas/breastfeeding/hospital-rates-a-reports for current and past Fact Sheets.
Breastfeeding News

WIC WORKS Webinars: Focus on Breastfeeding

Tune into our Summer Series of cool, concise, and convenient webinars as a way to prepare for World Breastfeeding Month (August) or just catch up on some current breastfeeding-related issues. You can learn right from your office about a variety of topics:

- **Breastfeeding, Medi-Cal, and the ACA (July 10)**
  Tune in with CWA’s Karen Farley to learn about opportunities for improved breastfeeding support and where advocacy is needed as health care reform rolls out.

- **What’s Working in New York Medicaid (July 17)**
  Join New York’s Deborah Gregg to hear how Medicaid benefits for breastfeeding in New York were recently amended to increase access to breastfeeding counseling and quality breast pumps.

- **Safe to Sleep (July 24)**
  Come hear Dr. Shavon Artis from NIH explain how WIC agencies, health centers and community organizations can partner with the national Safe to Sleep public education campaign to spread safe infant sleep messages to new parents, family members, and health and child care providers.

- **Citywide Breastfeeding Support (August 14)**
  Tune in with WIC RBL Alyson Foote to learn how Rancho Cucamonga, a California Healthy Cities member, is working with key partners in the process of becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly City.

If you can’t attend or missed one, you can visit our website afterward and listen to a recording. Register and get more details on the CWA events web page at http://calwic.org/events/wic-works-webinars

World Breastfeeding Week 2013: August 1-7

Adapted from www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org:

This year’s theme highlights the network of support for breastfeeding mothers. Even when mothers are able to get off to a good start, all too often there is a sharp decline in breastfeeding rates and practices in the weeks or months after delivery, particularly exclusive breastfeeding.

During this time, when mothers visit a healthcare facility less often, a community support system is essential. Traditionally, support is provided by the family. Changes in society and family mobility, however, mean that mothers need support from a wider circle, including trained health workers, lactation consultants, peer counselors, community leaders, and friends who are also mothers.

Are you celebrating WBW at your agency this summer? Send us your photos to post on Facebook or feature in a future edition of WIC Watch! Email notes and photos to Margaret at maumann@calwic.org.
Getting to Know Our Lactation Consultants...

From time to time we hear about the great work of International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs) in California communities. Here, we introduce two who have joined WIC more recently. Send us your stories and photos for future editions of WIC Watch!

Tara Stivers, MBA, IBCLC, is a board certified lactation consultant who joined the Ventura County WIC Peer Counselor Program in December 2011. In addition to her work with WIC, Tara enjoys providing support to new parents in the community as a private practice lactation consultant.

One of the things she enjoys most is leading a community breastfeeding support group, where she supports and learns from mothers on their breastfeeding journey. Tara has provided education and support to new parents in Ventura County for seven years as a childbirth educator, birth doula and prenatal yoga teacher, and lives in Camarillo with her husband and two children.

From Lindsay Stewart, RD, IBCLC, in her own words: “I remember the moment that I realized that I wanted to be involved in some way with helping moms to breastfeed. While sitting in a college nutrition course I was amazed to learn about all the incredible health benefits of breastfeeding, and what a gift this was for a mother to give her child. It was from this experience that I decided to enroll in a lactation educator course and to pursue a career with the WIC program. I feel so fortunate to have been a part of this program over the past 4 years and am thrilled to say that through the wonderful support I have received from North County Health Services WIC program, I am a newly certified IBCLC!”

...and the Great Service They Provide!

Diana Castro, who assists IBCLCs at Sacramento County WIC, shared this story with us—another great example of the invaluable support that lactation support staff at all levels provide!

“When Maria’s baby boy was just three days old, Maria felt miserable, was engorged and her son would not latch. I remember holding her baby and suspecting that he was tongue tied. Maria was frustrated as he struggled to feed at both bottle and breast. As part of her care plan, I sent her home with a hospital grade breast pump and referrals to her pediatrician and a doctor specializing in frenotomies.

“After the frenotomy a week later, at an appointment with IBCLC Laurie Grizoffi, baby was still struggling to latch on, although getting enough expressed milk via the bottle. When I called that same week to see how she was doing, breastfeeding was clearly not going well. I encouraged Maria to continue pumping and ‘hang in there!’

“When things were worse at the end of the week, I knew we were running out of time to establish an exclusive breastfeeding relationship. Although Maria was more frustrated, with my encouragement she continued pumping and practiced breastfeeding her son. At her next IBCLC appointment, Maria’s baby successfully latched and transferred 48 ml of breast milk. [At press time, baby is eight months old and still breastfeeding.] Maria’s hard work paid off and she is a very happy nursing mother!”

Tara Stivers

Lindsay Stewart

Diana Castro
First Kiss

The following is a first-person account of Melissa’s experience with her daughter that highlights the value of WIC’s “platinum service” breastfeeding support.

“March 2, 2013 was a day I will cherish forever. It’s when Delilah arrived at only 23 weeks gestation, under 1.5 pounds and 11 inches long. From the moment my water broke the doctors and staff warned me of the most horrible things a soon-to-be-mother could hear: “not viable” and “mentally challenged” were only a few of the problems she could have. Yet, there are few if any accurate studies available to measure how successful she could be. “Delilah is going to make it, she’s going to be just fine”, I thought again and again until the doctors confirmed it: she was stable and ready for the next step of her life, the struggle.

“Shortly after Delilah was born, hospital staff presented a lot of information about breast milk, or ‘liquid gold.’ I immediately started to pump and that first night was able to produce some colostrum which the doctors gave her right away. I sat with my daughter for hours at a time, reminding her of my love and how much she meant to our whole family.

“Day after day Delilah grew stronger and showed those doctors a thing or two about faith. By day four she was removed from the ventilator and put on oxygen. She digested my breast milk without problems, and I continued to pump. When I was discharged the nurses told me about WIC and the amazing things they do and how they could help me acquire a breast pump. Needless to say it was the first call I made.

“The Sacramento County WIC staff was astounded by Delilah and immediately got me a same-day appointment for a breast pump! The lactation consultant, a wonderful woman named Cindy [Bastian], told me so much about mothering a NICU baby. She taught me about primary care and my ability to pick certain nurses who would be with Delilah throughout her stay in the NICU.

“Cindy informed me about ‘kangaroo care’ or ‘skin to skin’ and how essential it was to Delilah’s development. I began skin to skin right away and Delilah loved it so much that I continued to hold her every day for weeks. Delilah is a testament to the enormous impact of breast milk and skin to skin on the development of premature babies.

“Thanks to the support from Sacramento County WIC and the personal investment they made in me, my daughter is thriving. I am eager to share Delilah’s success and help others, and visit the WIC office monthly to share the good news of her progress. She started breastfeeding at only 32 weeks gestation and grows stronger every day. I am truly blessed and extremely grateful for the support system Delilah and I have. I know that we all have had such a huge role in her success.”

At press time, Delilah is almost ready to go home. Thank you for sharing your story, Melissa!
2013 WIC/Breastfeeding Information & Education Day

On May 29th, over 70 WIC and Breastfeeding advocates from throughout California participated in CWA’s annual WIC/Breastfeeding Information & Education Day at the State Capitol, cosponsored this year with the California Breastfeeding Coalition and BreastfeedLA.

Seasoned advocates alongside enthusiastic new attendees heard Senator Kevin De León frame SB 402, CWA’s sponsored legislation requiring maternity hospitals statewide to become Baby-Friendly, as a health equity issue. We were lucky to have Jessica Bartholow from the Western Center on Law and Poverty clearly explain legislation related to pregnant women, CalWorks, and Medi-Cal. Lizzie Velten, from the California Center for Public Health Advocacy, shared information about bills promoting a soda tax and healthier items in state vending machines. For updates about these and other bills that affect WIC families, visit our State Policy web page at http://www.calwic.org/policy-center/state.

Over lunch, attendees learned tips for making effective educational visits with our legislators and advocating for policies that support breastfeeding and healthier families. Later that afternoon, the Senate approved SB 402 unanimously!

Thank you to our cosponsors and to everyone who took the time for this important event. We hope to see you all next year!

CWA was excited to honor Senator De León with our 2013 Breastfeeding Policy Champion award for his excellent work advocating for mothers and babies at the State Capitol!

Senator De León enjoys time with a healthy baby, reminding us why we advocate for WIC and families.

CWA News

Save the Date!
FALL CONFERENCE

Reaching for Results: Outcomes-Based WIC Management

October 22-23, 2013

Mark your calendars and get ready for some great training and networking at CWA’s annual Fall Management Conference! Local and state WIC program directors and managers will gather again at Sacramento’s historic 24th Street Theater for critical education about current management practices that ensure healthy outcomes for WIC participants. Registration will soon be on our website at www.calwic.org/events.

Get & stay connected!

Visit CWA on Facebook! [Search for California WIC Association.]
Follow us on Twitter, too! You’ll find us at www.twitter.com/calwic....and read our blog at www.calwic.org!
Federal Budget News

WIC funding levels for the fiscal year that starts October 1 are still very uncertain. In June, the House Appropriations Committee marked up their FY 2014 agriculture spending bill, funding WIC at $6.655 billion, and making funding for set-aside programs—including Breastfeeding Peer Counselors (BFPC) and MIS-EBT projects—contingent on first meeting caseload needs. But the low overall funding level (compare it to the President’s proposed $7.142 billion) means that the bill in effect eliminates BFPC! Senate appropriators fully funded WIC caseload at $7.070 billion, but cut breastfeeding by $10 million. The Senate included $14 M and $30 M for WIC infrastructure and MIS, respectively. President Obama warned he would veto the House version of the Ag funding bill, and it’s increasingly unlikely that the two bills will ever reach conference negotiations. A Continuing Resolution may be the last resort of a polarized Congress.

State Budget and Bills

Things are much less contentious in Sacramento – a welcome change! Thanks to increasing tax revenues and a “Super Majority” in the State Legislature, the State Budget was approved on time with an historic Medi-Cal expansion for single adults funded by the ACA, and some restorations to some key education and health programs, including Medi-Cal adult dental (partial) and enteral nutrition (full), both effective May 2014.

Recent modifications to CWA-sponsored SB 402 (De León-Pavley) have garnered key support from the hospital industry, and the bill is gaining momentum! Having sailed through the Senate, this historic bill, which will require all California maternity hospitals to go Baby-Friendly or implement specified alternatives by 2025, passed Assembly Health Committee unanimously. Your support made this happen!

Many of the other bills CWA supported this year are stalled in Appropriations Committees due to General Fund impact. See our complete Bill List at www.calwic.org/policy-center/state and check out any bill at www.leginfo.legislature.ca.gov.
From the WIC Grapevine

New Leadership at California WIC

We are thrilled to welcome Erika Trainer (on right in photo) to her new post as WIC Division Chief! Many of you know Erika well, since she served with distinction as Nutrition Services Chief during the historic rollout of the new WIC food packages in 2009. Erika is an RD and an IBCLC with a Master’s Degree in Nutrition Science and a Bachelor of Science degree in Dietetics. She worked in the Sacramento County WIC Program before joining the state WIC office.

The WIC Division management team has a new member: Lisa Kawano (on left in photo), who is the Division’s first Assistant Division Chief, a newly created position. Lisa will provide leadership and coordination in cross-cutting initiatives such as vendor cost containment, strategic planning and external communications. Lisa’s past experience includes leading the Allied Health division in the state Correctional Health Care system and serving as Assistant Division Chief at the Department of Health Care Services.

Acting Division Chief Christine Nelson has been juggling duties between WIC and CDPH while Erika and Lisa settle in. Chris will now be able to stay “down-town” in her permanent role as Assistant Deputy Director at CDPH Center for Family Health, but will continue to be actively involved with WIC.

Thank you so much, Chris, for holding down the fort with grace and humor during a challenging year! It has been an honor and a pleasure to work with you for the past year. Congratulations and warm welcomes to Erika and Lisa!

New Local Agency Directors

CWA extends a warm welcome to all the new and nearly-new directors of local WIC programs in California. Some have simply moved from one agency to another, while others are new to this role. We support you and encourage you to get involved in CWA – it’s your Association! Contact Teresa Morris, CWA Member Services Coordinator at tmorris@calwic.org, if there is anything we can do for you.

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Our CNC Scholar: Meet Mirella Lopez

Every applicant for CWA’s California Nutrition Corps (CNC) Scholarship must write about “My Professional Nutrition Career Goals.” If you were to read Mirella Lopez’s impressive application, all sorts of words might come to mind: goal-driven, tenacious, and accomplished, to start. It’s not surprising why she was awarded the Stefan Harvey CNC Scholarship this year.

Since she was young, Mirella knew she wanted to help people and work within her community, although she was not sure of the career she would pursue or whether she would attend college. As a teen, she became interested in nutrition, health and fitness, and would accompany family and friends to WIC program appointments in hopes of discovering educational materials. Encouraged by a WIC employee, Mirella thus began a 14-year journey in pursuit of her dream to become a registered dietitian (RD).

After high school Mirella attended junior college while working full time, but a learning disability made her begin to doubt her ability to finish college. So instead of following the path toward a RD, she headed for the California Culinary Academy, where she excelled in classes and an internship in Hawaii. She worked in several high-end restaurants for a few years, and even considered her own catering business.

When Mirella’s grandmother was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, the lack of Spanish-speaking RDs available to help her created a defining moment for Mirella, and she returned to the path toward becoming a RD. With help from teachers and tutors, she learned to compensate for her special ways of learning and completed junior college, then earned a degree in Nutrition and Food Science from San Jose State University.

With her degree in hand and some community volunteer experience, Mirella was hired as Chronic Disease Prevention Specialist I with the Monterey County WIC Program. While she enjoyed the work, she was faced with the next challenge: obtaining and financing a dietetic internship. After three years of persistence, she is enrolled in the San Diego WIC Dietetic Internship Program, Class of 2014.

She also plans to work toward certification as a diabetes educator, and hopes to write culturally-appropriate cookbooks, teach healthy cooking classes, and pursue other career opportunities that promote healthy lifestyle change. Whatever Mirella decides to do, it seems clear she will accomplish even more in her blossoming career. Congratulations, Mirella!

“The opportunities in this career are endless and I feel blessed to be able to serve my community in this way.”

– Mirella Lopez
Worksite Wellness

Good Things Come in Smaller Packages

The six employees who serve the Glenn County Health Services WIC program were excited to become a certified Well WIC Worksite in March. Alison Vera found the perfect opportunity for coordinating their wellness program when she participated in the 2012 Academy for Participant-centered Learning (APL) program. Alison had little trouble gaining buy-in from her colleagues, who are generally open to trying new things. Besides, in a small office each employee often wears multiple hats and has to be flexible.

As with all teams embarking on a new adventure, large or small, there were some minor challenges. One person had to overcome her reluctance to try new foods. All staff tried spaghetti squash at their second annual Food Day Celebration. Mixed with some marinara sauce, all the staff and participants who tried it liked it!

Another challenge—common for many of us—has been sticking to a goal. For example, everyone was on board during the first week of their Fab Ab February Fitness Challenge. Doing the workouts on office break time was great... until the motivation kind of fizzled in the second week. To help, Alison sends Wellness Wednesday emails, with a new recipe, article or just encouraging words to continue working on goals. She says, “It’s so important to remember with goals that if you fail today, start over tomorrow!”

Glenn County WIC had a great time in the first ever WIC Olympics at CWA Conference 2012. At first they were hesitant to get up that early, but once out there a competitive spirit took over. Staff enjoyed it so much that they hope to conduct a similar fun event for all of Glenn County’s public health staff.

Working in small towns or rural areas doesn’t provide many choices to eat out. So every day each employee brings food from home and they lunch together. It’s a great opportunity to talk about different foods, diets, and cultural practices, and try new things when they have enough to share.

Staff wants to model healthy lifestyles for WIC participants, whether it’s offering healthy food tasting, not drinking soda at work, continued next page
Worksite Wellness

GLEN COUNTY
continued from page 8

or keeping water at their desks at all times. As a daily water challenge, coworkers encourage each other to drink at least three tall plastic cups of water—ones they got at CWA Conference 2012.

Future wellness efforts will focus more on physical activity, such as walking around the park adjacent to their office once or twice on break. At monthly staff meetings they usually do a short activity/stretch break, often following Andy Padilla on the HealthNet DVD. Everyone receives daily email from www.exerciseatwork.com that encourages workers to get up and do a 5-minute exercise of the day.

Glenn County WIC is taking steps to becoming an agency where they can truly say “we walk the talk,” encouraging both employees and participants to reach their goals.

“One of my favorite parts of my job is when I am talking with a participant and she says, ‘That is a really great idea, I am going to try that at home.’ A few months later she returns and tells me she tried the idea or a new recipe and her child loved it!”

– Alison Vera, Wellness Coordinator

Share Your WWW Successes!

Is your agency a Certified Well WIC Worksite, or are you currently developing your WIC Worksite Wellness Program? Share your best practices, ideas or resources with other agencies going through the Ten Steps to Worksite Wellness! CWA has designed the online Agency Sharing Center for just this purpose, because we know you are doing great things to promote wellness!

Check out http://calwic.org/focus-areas/wic-worksite-wellness/agency-sharing-center and you’ll see that we need more materials. Send any documents you’d like to share on the CWA website to Teresa Morris at tmorris@calwic.org. Then click on other WWW web pages for ideas and resources, and let us know how we can help you stay healthy!
Save the Dates

FALL CONFERENCE
October 22-23, 2013
24th St. Theater
Sacramento

Contribute to the WIC Watch!

Share your best practices and success stories:

FALL 2013
Fall Management Conference Edition
Deadline:
September 6, 2013

WINTER 2014
Focus TBD
Deadline:
December 16, 2013

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SHARE YOUR STORY!
Send photos and descriptions of your Breastfeeding Month activities to CWA so we can share them with other WIC Watch readers and Facebook friends!
THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO!