At CWA, we envision a Breastfeeding Continuum of Care: an integrated system that supports new parents with quality support services whenever they need it and wherever they are, and tracks their progress so they don’t fall through the cracks. This means, for example, a pregnant or breastfeeding mom should be able to get help in many places: at WIC (of course!), at medical appointments—not only hers, but her baby’s—and even at the grocery store, pharmacy, child care and in the wider community!

In other words, there should be No Wrong Door for anyone who seeks breastfeeding help. All doors should lead to high-quality, evidence-based messaging, information, and support. Every mother seeking support should be able to find her way to what she needs, no matter where she enters the realm of services.

As healthcare reform sweeps in, it’s important to realize that WIC is no longer the only “door” where moms can find accurate information, peer support, counseling and skill-building. Many other doors are opening: hospitals, community clinics, and retailers are rapidly getting into breastfeeding.

This is excellent news for our participants! On their behalf, WIC practitioners should embrace, not resist, community partnership opportunities. Not only does it keep the focus on moms and families, but it could increase the power of WIC to make breastfeeding truly the norm in the communities we serve.

The time is ripe for WIC to embrace partnerships with community clinics and others to provide a quality breastfeeding continuum of care.
Breastfeeding: A Winning Goal for Life!

We hope you’re already planning to take part in this global celebration of the positive impact breastfeeding can and does have on family health and success. It’s a golden opportunity to join with community partners to highlight the importance of increasing and sustaining the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding. You’ll find background info and downloads at www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org.

New Hospital Breastfeeding Report

Now we really can talk about the possibility of a breastfeeding continuum of care for California communities. More key organizations, especially hospitals, are making the improvements needed in order for moms and babies to have a secure safety net of breastfeeding support.

Starting in January of this year, hospitals began complying with Senate Bill 502, which requires a hospital infant feeding policy supportive of breastfeeding to be posted for employees and the public. By 2025 all California hospitals will have to achieve Baby Friendly status or adopt comparable comprehensive policies.

California leads the nation with 62 Baby Friendly hospitals! More hospitals are in the process of becoming so designated, while other hospitals have comprehensive breastfeeding policies. Best yet, state breastfeeding rates are reflecting these policy improvements with increased initiation, exclusivity and duration.

CWA and the UC Davis Human Lactation Center plan to release a new hospital breastfeeding report in early August, featuring 2013 hospital breastfeeding data in state and county fact sheets. Look for some encouraging news and timely recommendations for keeping the momentum going toward a continuum of breastfeeding care!

DON’T MISS CWA WEBINARS About Breastfeeding Support!

We hope you’ve been able to attend some or all of our summer series of free webinars, providing relevant continuing education for public health professionals on WIC-related issues. We’ve had fabulous attendance and look forward to a few more—especially focused on breastfeeding support—coming up! Remember, you can view recordings and materials from past webinars up to two months following the webinar broadcast. More information at www.calwic.org/events/wic-works-webinars.

- July 23 - Steps to Reform: Changing Breastfeeding Policies in Community Clinics
- August 21 (Thursday) - Best Practices for Breastfeeding Support in Community Clinics
- August 27 - Hospital Breastfeeding Policy Reform Updates
Breastfeeding News

One Thousand Ounces

“What is this?” Sandra Erb of Merced County Community Action Agency WIC asked, looking at a photo on her coworker Debbie Duenas’ phone. Debbie had come into the office for her WIC appointment. “It’s my extra milk,” she replied. Sandra asked incredulously, “How much milk is that?” “It’s about 1,000 ounces,” said Debbie. This was in addition to the milk she was pumping for her exclusively-breastfed four-month-old daughter, Abigail.

Born with a cleft lip and palate, Abigail found breastfeeding challenging. While Abigail remained hospitalized for several weeks, Debbie used the hospital breast pump every 2-3 hours and gave the milk to the nurses to refrigerate. Whenever Abigail was hungry, the nurse warmed her breast milk in a bottle with a specially adapted nipple. Debbie felt the nurses were irritated by the extra work, as offering a ready-to-feed bottle supplied by formula companies would have been easier, but she knew breast milk was best.

Debbie has a long history with WIC. She originally enrolled on WIC in San Jose when she was pregnant with her first child, Jesus, now six. In 2010, the Duenas family moved to Los Banos where Debbie managed the Baby’s Nutrition store. Debbie was hired as a WNA at Los Banos WIC with Merced County CAA in May 2012.

Along with complementary foods, Debbie provides exclusive breastmilk to Abigail. She knows her breastmilk provides a strong defense for Abigail during her surgeries and she has no plans for stopping pumping anytime soon! Additionally Debbie has donated over 700 ounces of breastmilk to Mother’s Milk Bank in San Jose.

For more information about milk banks, listen to CWA’s webinar recording from June 25 at www.calwic.org/events, or visit www.hmbana.org.

Breastfeeding: A Family Tradition

The breastfeeding tradition goes back many generations in Mary Henry’s family. Mary’s mother said that “everyone breastfed” in the 1950’s in rural Wisconsin. There, she breastfed Mary and her five siblings with support from her own mother, who lived on a farm down the road.

When Mary gave birth to twin girls in Valencia, California, her mother came from Illinois to help her continue the breastfeeding tradition. Once again, breastfeeding wasn’t questioned: it was the norm. Mary breastfed the twins and each of her other four children as they came along.

Mary now supervises the La Palma/Anaheim site for the Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC Program. Mary had just become a Certified Lactation Educator when her eldest daughter gave birth to her first son, so “grandma” was called in to help the pair start breastfeeding successfully. Seven grandchildren later, Mary is grateful that her four daughters have continued the practice.

Given their shared experience, Mary and her daughters have supported each other through many challenges. When initiating breastfeeding proved difficult for two of the infants who spent time in the NICU, Mary knew to ask for hospital lactation support. Each of Mary’s daughters has her own breastfeeding story and plans to carry on the family breastfeeding custom.

One thousand ounces of breastmilk, for Debbie’s daughter and other infants in need.

Abigail will celebrate her first birthday in August!

One thousand ounces of breastmilk, for Debbie’s daughter and other infants in need.

Four of Mary Henry’s seven grandchildren are breastfeeding concurrently, at (left to right) 20, 8, 8, and 13 months!
AltaMed Clinics Improve Breastfeeding Rates

Already on track to improve breastfeeding support, the AltaMed General Pediatrics Clinic at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) fast-tracked comprehensive breastfeeding services and policies, with impressive results.

AltaMed was one of 15 grantees in a one-year, CDC-funded, Community Clinics Breastfeeding Support project of the California Department of Public Health. The experiences and feedback provided by staff at AltaMed reflect the experiences of all the participating clinics as they identified successful strategies as well as challenges to implementing comprehensive breastfeeding support.

Commitments from interdisciplinary clinic providers and staff, plus community referral and communications systems with hospitals, WIC agencies, health plans and durable medical equipment providers (DME/breast pumps), are needed to establish the continuum of care for pregnant and breastfeeding moms and babies.

Under the leadership of Dr. Jonathan Goldfinger, AltaMed at CHLA took steps to implement comprehensive policies and practices including:

- Training for medical assistants, dietetic interns, occupational therapists, providers, residents, clinic administrators, hospital staff and WIC agencies
- A breastfeeding-friendly clinic environment including spaces to breastfeed, comfortable recliners, breastfeeding posters, educational materials, and no formula marketing
- Modified clinic operations and work flow to register mothers and babies
- A model interdisciplinary Lactation Clinic, staffed by IBCLCs and MDs, with successful billing for lactation services
- Analysis of billing data
- Routine collection and regular analysis of breastfeeding data, weights, and outcomes from the Electronic Medical Record (EMR).

These combined efforts resulted in:

Better Breastfeeding Rates:

- More than 95% of Lactation Clinic babies are breastfed; 73% make it to 12 months; and mothers happily reach infant feeding goals.
- 45% of babies seen at Lactation Clinic are breastfed exclusively through 12 months of life, compared to 20% seen by CHLA pediatricians only, and 12% seen at other AltaMed sites. (See graph.)
- Lactation Clinic mothers are more than twice as likely to exclusively breastfeed past 6 months than mothers seen by physicians only at the AltaMed General Pediatrics Clinic at CHLA, and over 3 times more likely than mothers seen by physicians only at other AltaMed Clinics.

Use of IBCLCs: Reimbursement rates, at least at Federally Qualified Health Centers such as AltaMed, are enough to support IBCLC staffing in clinics. AltaMed at CHLA’s Lactation Clinic now runs 2 days a week with IBCLCs.

Higher Reimbursement: Approximately 75% of all Lactation Clinic
Breastfeeding News

Dr. Jon Goldfinger, MD, MPH, FAAP, Nicole Meadow, RD, IBCLC, and Debra Diaz, IBCLC, staff the Lactation Clinic at the Los Angeles AltaMed Community Clinic.

claims, for both mother and infant visits, have been paid. AltaMed was able to bill for all types of insurance, but analysis indicates low frequency of payment among PPO plans. Comparatively, Medi-Cal and Medi-Cal Managed Care plans paid 88% of infant claims and 79% of maternal claims. Because AltaMed is a Federally Qualified Health Center, increased payment frequency from these public insurers was expected. Statewide, reimbursement rates will vary due to the large number of plans and contracts for Medi-Cal, Medi-Cal Managed Care, HMO and PPO plans. Regardless, AltaMed’s analysis provides important data for breastfeeding support business models and the provision of Preventive Services required by the Affordable Care Act.

Meaningful EMR Use: Staff helped identify EMR fields that could be used for breastfeeding data. Dr. Goldfinger then analyzed data extracted from these fields to compare breastfeeding rates over time of patients seen in the Lactation Clinic, the AltaMed General Pediatrics Clinic at CHLA (where the Lactation Clinic is housed), and other clinics in the AltaMed system. Lactation staff was trained to appropriately chart for data extraction and billing. AltaMed is ahead of many clinics in its ability to input, extract, and provide ongoing, reliable breastfeeding surveillance data, but all clinic grantees in the project dedicated significant effort toward this.

With 22 clinics seeing predominantly underserved families system-wide, and a successful start at the CHLA site, AltaMed opened a second interdisciplinary lactation clinic in Santa Ana in late June 2014, and opportunities for further system expansion look promising.

For more information on the AltaMed Lactation Clinic at CHLA contact Dr. Jonathan Goldfinger at jgoldfinger@chla.usc.edu. For more information on breastfeeding policies and community clinics, attend CWA’s August 21 webinar (see page 2), visit the CWA website or contact Karen Farley, kfarley@calwic.org.

Grow Our Own Lactation Consultant Course Open for Fall 2014

It takes a village to make breastfeeding the norm! And the Grow Our Own Lactation Consultant Course uses a community approach to education, bringing together health professionals from diverse areas within the community to better serve the neighborhood.

This AARC-approved 105-hour course will be offered by Riverside County Department of Public Health Lactation Services in Rancho Cucamonga, starting in September. Following the IBCLC Exam Blueprint Disciplines and Chronological Periods, Grow Our Own is designed to help further your career goals and increase your confidence through knowledge, raising job satisfaction.

To find out more, visit http://calwic.org/events/grow-our-own-lactation-consultants, attend the August 5 informational webinar described on the flyer, or contact KayEllen Layscheck at klaschec@rivcocha.org.
CWA News

Save the Date!

As healthcare reform sweeps in, California is entering a new era of innovation and rapid change. Our public health delivery systems have embraced the Triple Aim approach to maximizing performance in three dimensions: “Better Health, Better Care, Lower Costs.”

WIC can play a critical role in collective state and local efforts to realize California’s vision of being home to high quality, efficient, seamless health systems which improve health outcomes for all. But to play that role, WIC will need to go Beyond Caseload, and include an equal focus on quality services that deliver better outcomes for the families and communities WIC serves.

This fall, our CWA Management Conference will help you understand the context of the innovation and reforms sweeping through public health and WIC in California. We’ll train you on Continuous Quality Improvement, share some practical tools to make you a more effective change manager at the local level, and give you time to explore burning WIC contract and management issues with your peers. Go to calwic.org/events.

Celebrating 40 Years of WIC in California

Our celebration on May 28 at the state Capitol was fabulous! Breezy and beautiful weather, engaging and informative health fair exhibits, passionate speakers, lively entertainment, and about 300 guests all helped make it a fitting and festive public recognition of California’s premier public health nutrition program.

THANKS to all of you who came, and especially to local agency representatives Gloria Pecina, Yang Her, and Ashley Wright for speaking so movingly about WIC. Diana Dooley, Health Care Services Secretary, Jesus Mendoza, Food and Nutrition Service Western Regional Office Director, and Chris Nelson, CDPH Center for Family Health Assistant Deputy Director, all spoke as well.

At right are a few treasured event photos; you can view more on the California WIC Association Facebook page. And when you host a 40th Birthday Party at your local agency, be sure to let CWA know! Post photos to the CWA Facebook page or send your news and photos to Margaret at maumann@calwic.org.

Stefan Harvey, honored guest and long-time WIC advocate, shares a special moment with Yang Her, Lactation Consultant with Community Resource Project WIC.

CWA Executive Director Laurie True welcomes surprise guest Trish Jensen to the podium. Trish was the MCH Public Health Nutritionist tasked with establishing the WIC Program in California.

Staff from the Fresno EOC WIC Program – one of the first to issue food vouchers in California – gathered at CWA’s Annual Conference in San Diego to celebrate their agency’s 40th anniversary as well.
Legislative Update

Time to Schedule Congressional Visits!

Volatile party politics have once again stalled floor votes on the House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations bills originally slated to pass before the July break. While both bills fully fund WIC and set-asides for breastfeeding and MFS, the House bill, in particular, contains troubling language gutting school lunch nutrition guidelines and politicizing WIC food decisions, despite a threatened Presidential veto. A Continuing Resolution (CR) series, which would put off any final decisions until the end of the year, now looks more likely.

Most polling analysts are now predicting that the November mid-term elections are likely to put the Senate under GOP control. This spells major trouble for WIC during Child Nutrition Reauthorization scheduled for 2015. WIC advocates have already heard from GOP staff members in the relevant committees that “they aren’t going to let WIC off easy this time.” WIC will be facing a tough grilling on eligibility rules, program integrity and other issues as the Child Nutrition and WIC statute is reviewed and updated.

CWA is planning a fall-winter campaign to protect WIC during Reauthorization, to be launched at our Fall Conference. It is more critical than ever that every California member of Congress is fully briefed on WIC realities and policy issues.

Smooth Sailing for State Budget

California Legislative leaders and Governor Brown smoothly passed the 2014-15 State Budget on time this year. Democrats were able to wrest strong gains in child care and modest human service protections away from a substantial “Rainy Day” funds set aside for future economic downturns, but not much else. In a small but notable win, CWA worked with allies to restore $4 million to the Black Infant Health program.

The winnowing process on hundreds of state bills has begun. The soda labeling bill died in the Assembly, and attempts to repeal the CalWORKS family cap were narrowly defeated. For a full update, check the CWA State Bill monitoring chart on our website.

It’s Time to Act!

Please get started NOW by inviting your Member of Congress to visit your WIC program. This is the best way to educate and enlighten your members about WIC. We can help you – call Karen or Laurie at CWA today, or use our website toolkit for tips and talking points.

MORE WIC BIRTHDAY FUN: CWA’s Laurie True (in hat) cuts the cake with Daniel Kim (CDPH), Christine Nelson (California State WIC), Jesus Mendoza (USDA), and Diana Dooley (CA HHS). Go team!
Making Wellness an Everyday Habit

Here's a story for all the local WIC agency staff out there (you know who you are!) who aren’t sure whether Well WIC Worksite certification is worthwhile. Community Action Partnership of Kern CAPK WIC began their WWW efforts with enthusiasm nearly five years ago, but until this year hadn’t completed all 10 Steps to get certified. But their efforts are having a great impact in the long run. In their own words...

“Worksite wellness has become a part of the fiber of our activities at CAPK WIC. It is satisfying to think back to the early days of our wellness effort, when it was difficult to get staff to do physical activity during the workday, to now, when the idea of physical activity is embraced and many of our staff members plan it into their day.

Worksite wellness at CAPK WIC means:
• taking time for a walk during the workday
• packing a lunch
• reaching for water rather than a sweet drink
• going to Zumba class after work with a co-worker
• choosing to eat outside on the grass across the street rather than staying in the lunchroom
• sharing fresh fruit from our own fruit trees
• taking time for a stretch break
• participating in a fun run
• sharing healthy recipes.

We haven’t analyzed whether the adoption of healthier practices at work has reduced absences or helped with employee satisfaction on the job, but we’ve seen pant sizes dropping and employees losing pounds rather than gaining which had been the trend at our office. We see more water bottles in hand and more lunch bags lining the shelves of the refrigerator.

One of our very successful activities was a wellness walk to the quarterly staff meeting, one and a half miles from the main building. Staff arrived early and put on their walking shoes. Each employee participating in the walk received a water bottle and a granola bar. The funds for these snacks were earned from the wellness basket proceeds and the cardboard recycling proceeds. Staff liked it so much that we repeated it in the fall at our all-staff meeting.

We have appreciated the opportunity to focus on wellness and have benefitted from the great ideas and tools from CWA to promote a healthier lifestyle.” And CWA appreciates Ruth Bliss, Wellness Program Coordinator at CAPK WIC, and her staff for sharing their inspiration!
Three C’s of Wellness: Cooking, Changes and Compassion

Like CAPK WIC, Napa County WIC Program staff members experienced an enthusiastic start to their WIC Worksite Wellness program. Starting in late 2011, they enjoyed activity breaks at regular staff meetings and healthy food potlucks at least quarterly. By 2012, they were sharing healthy recipes to try at the potlucks and at home. This was so popular that they now share the recipes with the entire Napa Public Health division staff.

Soon, all WIC staff received pedometers and many participated in WIC Walks during breaks. All employees brought filtered water to drink instead of other beverages. And thanks to the County Gym membership and reimbursement program, more than half of WIC staff now goes to the gym regularly!

In less than nine months, they had completed seven of the ten steps to Well WIC Worksites certification. Then – you guessed it – change happened! “Our coordinator went out on maternity leave, then left WIC to attend nursing school. We had to regroup! Due to staff shortages and caseload challenges, we were unable to complete the last three Wellness steps until recently, although we continued with the ongoing activities we established,” reported Vimlan VanDien, WIC Program Coordinator.

Besides “regrouping,” they turned to more collaborative efforts. In July 2012, WIC staff joined forces with the Napa Children and Weight coalition to create the first annual county-wide Rethink your Drink campaign and kickoff event at the Napa Farmers’ market. The event included a Chef’s spa water contest with over 200 market participants tasting and voting on their favorite (see photo at right). This was so successful that they repeated it in 2013 and planned to do so again this summer.

During the campaign, staff displayed a Rethink Your Drink bulletin board in the WIC office (see photo below). This helped inspire staff as well as participants to kick the soda habit. One WNA admitted she used to drink between 6-8 cans of soda per day! Now she is drinking more water, and limiting soda to no more than 1-2 cans per week.

Over the past year, WIC staff participated in a Public Health fair, providing a tasty bean salad and participating in Zumba and hula hoop activities (see photo below). They also worked with health department administrators to include worksite wellness objectives on the Public Health strategic plan. And Napa County was the first Public Health program in the world to sign the Charter for Compassion, participating in meditation and other activities of the Compassion Games that, in promoting kinder communities, foster mental wellness.
There’s Nothing FISHy about Fun Fridays

The staff at Perris WIC in Riverside County started Fun Friday themes this year as a way to put FISH! Philosophy into action. If you attended CWA’s 2002 Annual Conference, a.k.a. Camp WIC, you know that FISH! Philosophy (www.charthouse.com) is an approach to motivate employees in making work more enjoyable while providing quality customer service.

Feeling a need for a staff pick-me-up, the Perris WIC staff created a calendar for the year, choosing a silly theme for every other Friday. You can see in the photos some of the creative fun they’ve had, dressing up according to each Fun Friday theme.

This kind of fun has proved to be contagious, as other Riverside County WIC clinics are following “suit,” so to speak, to make their work more enjoyable and positive. Sounds like a “FISH! Revival!”

As WIC Nutritionist Christina Ruvalcaba explains, “We spend a lot of time in our jobs, and although it can be gratifying it can also get too routine and draining. Fun Fridays are a great way to maintain enthusiasm in the workplace, building better relationships, communication, and teamwork among staff while engaging the participants we serve.” Employees also find that WIC participants feel more comfortable with staff that can be professionally goofy sometimes.

Staff said, “Play ball!” – no matter the team – in March.

Rockin’ out in early April with a Rockabilly theme!

Who’s your WIC Superhero? Participants got to choose in late April.
CNC Scholar
Jocceline Hernandez

The job Jocceline Hernandez loves is teaching nutrition to children and their families, claiming “It’s not just a job, but something I was meant to do.” Her bilingual Spanish-English skills and love for nutrition, teaching and learning, and serving others helps her excel in this calling.

Last May, Jocceline completed a Master’s Degree in Nutrition and Dietetic Internship at California State University, Northridge. As anyone pursuing a professional career knows, her road to that milestone has been paved with opportunities that build on existing skills to acquire new ones.

In Jocceline’s case, opportunities included: working as a Nutrition and Lactation Educator under a hospital Lactation Consultant as an undergraduate student; teaching community nutrition in Guatemala; facilitating breastfeeding support classes at the Northeast Valley Health Corporation WIC Program (NEVHC); and receiving a 2014 General Mills California Nutrition Corps Scholarship.

These are among the many opportunities that have prepared Jocceline to meet the needs of underserved communities. They’ve also inspired her to continue expanding her breastfeeding knowledge and clinical counseling experience toward becoming a Registered Dietitian (RD) and International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC). Witnessing the high rate of diabetes among low-resource families, she also wants to become a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE). Eventually, Jocceline plans to seek a Doctorate in Education so she can assess community needs through research and impact local, state and national policy.

“You can never stop learning and expanding your professional toolbox, so I continue to accept opportunities that challenge me to become a better nutrition professional,” says Jocceline. She’s currently gaining new skills providing Medical Nutrition Therapy to patients – many of whom are WIC participants – at NEVHC-Valencia Health Center.

Advanced Study in Maternal and Child Nutrition

This fall, UC Davis Extension will be accepting applications for the Master of Advanced Study in Maternal and Child Nutrition. Created specifically for working professionals who want to earn an advanced degree in this highly specialized area, this part-time program is one-of-a-kind. Learn from internationally known researchers and faculty members who have shaped both U.S. and international policy on maternal and child health.

“There is a growing need for maternal and child health professionals who are equipped to deal with some of today’s most serious health concerns: maternal malnutrition during pregnancy, inappropriate infant and child feeding practices, and childhood overweight,” says Jane Heinig, executive director of the UC Davis Human Lactation Center and program instructor.

The program trains professionals to design, implement and evaluate nutrition intervention programs for mothers and children from a variety of backgrounds.

Applications are due April 15, 2015 for the fall 2015 program. For more information, visit www.extension.ucdavis.edu/nutrition, call (800) 752-0881, or email lactation@ucdavis.edu.

“Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.”

– CONFUCIUS
Save the Date

FALL CONFERENCE
October 14-15, 2014
Tsakapolous Library
Sacramento

Contribute to the WIC Watch!

Share your best practices and success stories:

FALL 2014
Fall Management Conference Edition
Deadline:
September 5, 2014

WINTER 2015
Theme Edition
Deadline:
December 12, 2014

Over the past year, CWA assisted the
U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services’ Office on Women’s Health in
developing a new online searchable
resource: Supporting Nursing Moms at
Work: Employer Solutions. Businesses
and employers of nursing moms,
particularly those in hourly jobs or
settings that make pumping milk at
work more challenging, can search for
creative options to give mothers time
and space to pump at work. Check
out the hundreds of solutions, photos, and videos of simple and low-
cost ways to support nursing moms at work: www.womenshealth.gov/
breastfeeding-at-work. Then tell local businesses about it!