

California WIC Local Agency Linkages: Electronic Health Records

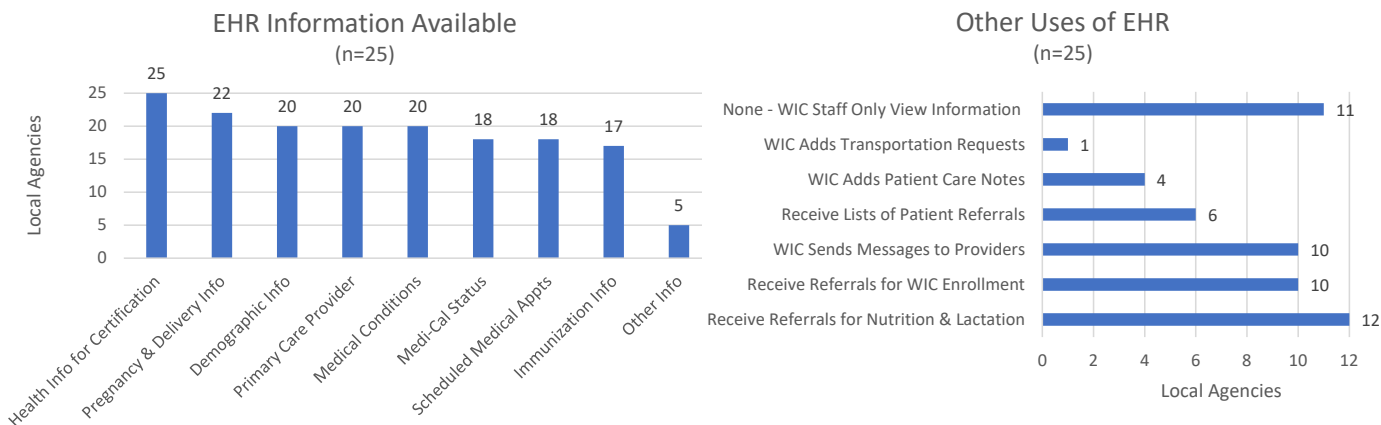
California WIC local agencies partner with healthcare and community programs to facilitate access to WIC services and coordinate care for program participants. The 84 local agencies shared information about their partnerships and linkages in a survey conducted during 2023. This fact sheet summarizes linkages that provide WIC with access to electronic health records (EHR) of WIC-eligible patients and program participants.

Key Findings

- **25 local agencies** (serving about 23% of eligible participants) have access to EHRs.
- **8 different EHRs** are in use at local agencies with Epic used most often, followed by OCHIN Epic and NextGen.
- **All local agencies** with access to EHRs are part of organizations that provide healthcare, e.g., county health agencies/systems, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Native American clinics, hospitals. Gaining access to EHR is more challenging for local agencies unaffiliated with healthcare (which serve 35% of California WIC participants).

For FFY 2023, California WIC caseload, the number of eligible women, infants, and children who could participate in WIC and receive benefits, was 1,017,450. Source: California Dept. of Public Health

Available EHR Information and Other Uses



Implementation

- Most (18) local agencies have data privacy/security agreements or other requirements for authorized staff to access the EHR.
- All WIC staff can access the EHR in 12 local agencies. In other agencies, access is limited to Registered Dietitians, Lactation Consultants or staff designated by a supervisor.
- WIC staff are trained to use the EHR by WIC or agency personnel, the EHR vendor or provider/clinic trainers.

Benefits

- Improved care coordination and communication between WIC and healthcare.
- Aligns with the goals of CalAIM to improve data sharing and access to healthcare and social drivers of health.
- Shorter WIC certification appointments.
- Reduced burden on WIC applicants/participants to provide information for certification.
- Provides opportunity to conduct certification appointments by phone or videoconference.
- Increased referrals for WIC enrollment, lactation support and nutrition services.