

California WIC Local Agency Linkages: Hospitals and Home Visiting

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 WIC agencies have in place with hospitals and home visiting programs in their communities.

Key Findings

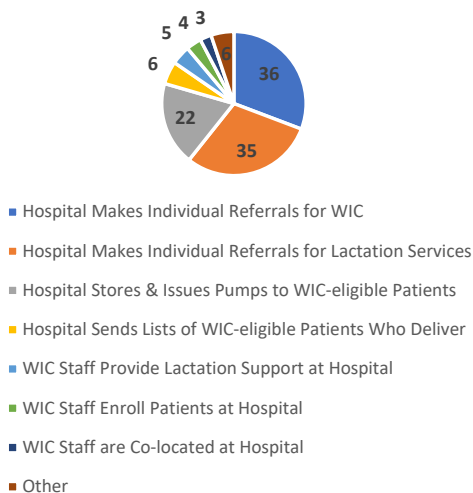
- **Over 80% of local agencies** have linkages with hospitals and/or home visiting programs.
- **57 local agencies** (serving about 82% of eligible participants) have linkages with hospitals to make referrals directly to WIC for program enrollment and lactation services, facilitate issuance of breast pumps to new parents, or other supportive services for patients.
- **45 local agencies** (serving about 67% of eligible participants) have linkages with home visiting program for cross referrals and care coordination.

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

Linkages

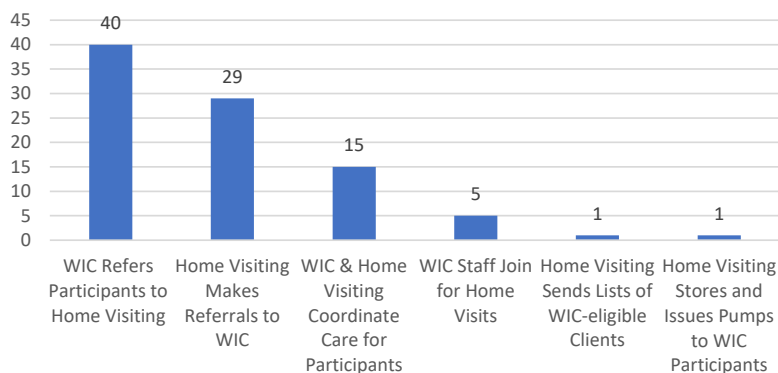
Types of Hospital Linkages

(n = 57 local agencies)



Types of Home Visiting Linkages

(n = 45 local agencies)



Implementation

- The hospitals and programs send referrals to WIC in a variety of formats including forms they create, or WIC referral forms, while others send lists of referred patients/clients. Some local agencies have set up online referral methods.
- Local agencies often have written agreements or a memorandum of understanding with hospitals and home visiting programs, especially when they store and issue WIC breast pumps or when WIC staff go into hospitals or on home visits for enrollments or to provide services.

Benefits

- Facilitates transition from hospital to primary care, a goal of CalAIM.
- Improves care coordination and communication between WIC and hospitals and home visiting.
- Engages WIC in supporting lactation during the early days/weeks.
- Ensures that high quality breast pumps are available to WIC-eligible parents without having to make a trip to WIC.
- Increases WIC referrals for prenatal, lactating and postpartum parents and infants.
- Promotes infant enrollment and access to services shortly after birth.