

McCreary County: WIC Back-to-Clinic Transition

Lake Cumberland District Health Department
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Quality Improvement Story Board

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PLAN

Problem Statement

If the emergency declaration due to covid is not signed again all WIC clients will have to start returning to the clinics for WIC certifications.

Aim Statement

To increase the number of WIC patients presenting to McCreary County clinic for in-person services to at least double from present weekly average of 1-2 per week of those contacted or requesting appointments by June 1st, 2022.

Process Outline & Relevant Data

The WIC program provides quality nutrition services for women, infants, and children through nutrition counseling, healthy foods, breastfeeding support, and referrals to healthcare. WIC is a federal assistance program of the Food and Nutrition Service, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). WIC is operated locally by the Lake Cumberland District Health Department under the umbrella of the Kentucky Department of Public Health. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an emergency order is in place that allows all WIC services to be completed over the phone. If this waiver is not resigned then clients must present to the clinic for WIC certifications and recertifications. Right now, only 1-2 patients a week report to the clinic in-person for WIC services. We would like to make sure that client's transition back to clinic services smooth, that we have the needed staff, supplies and willing participants to do so.

Identify Potential Causes

Potential barriers: Patients will not want to come in because they will have to miss work, transportation issues, scheduling conflicts, may not really need these resources now due to all the pandemic financial assistance, etc.

Identify Potential Solutions

Flexible scheduling options such as times available for walk-in appointments.

Make appointments for people who work or need a certain time slot to enable them to come in.

Services are still done over the phone if transportation or scheduling conflict issues are reported.

Assure no long waits for clinic visits by ensuring adequate staff and supplies are available.

Improvement Theory

If appointments are provided at participants discretion is done, then an increase of in-person clinic visits will be seen resulting in improvement of services for participants.

DO

Test the Theory

Project was implemented in McCreary County within our 10-county district. Office staff worked the "WIC Actions Due Report" for the county weekly, calling all participants and offering them walk-in times or provided an in-person appointment if preferred. If clients presented to the clinic for their WIC services, incentives were offered.

CHECK

Study the Results

The McCreary County WIC clinic averaged seeing approximately 23 clients per week for in-clinic WIC services over a 5-week period from April 27, 2022 to June 1, 2022. AIM statement was achieved for the McCreary County clinic.

ACT

Standardize or Develop New Theory

Since the project was successful in this pilot county, it will be rolled out district wide next month.

All counties will work the "actions due report" weekly, calling participants and offering walk-in times or appointments if preferred. A standard script of how the call should proceed will be developed and sent to all counties so that a consistent message is relayed across our ten counties. Copies of the worked reports will be kept on hand for the WIC coordinator to review monthly. Notations should be made regarding called attempts and results.

Future Plans

Plans for WIC promotional mailing is underway to increase awareness in WIC services and monetary value. Alterations in staffing, scheduling or needed process improvement efforts will be initiated as needed.