

COVID19 Webinar Notes – 8/6/20

These notes capture what was shared on this webinar. Information is changing quickly. We'll share updated information during the webinars and in future webinar's notes as it becomes available.

Topic/Question	Information/Answer	State Staff Follow-up
Opening remarks		
	<p>Caseload trends during COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Starting in March caseload rose and showing a slight decline in June - Increase mostly in children – significant increases - Planning to meet with the Research, Analysis and Evaluation unit (RAE) to see what the trends mean to our state and what we can learn from them <p>6 months into the pandemic is taking a toll on everyone; many people feel fatigued and losing hope. Important to focus on our wellness.</p> <p>Behavioral Wellness report key takeaways include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stress and drug overdose lowest since April, but disparities among racial and ethnic minorities are more evident in recent weeks. - The latest U.S. Census Bureau estimates suggest that approximately 200,000 more Washington adults felt depressed at least most days than they did in the prior week. Moreover, a majority of adults identifying as Black (non-Hispanic) reported feeling depressed at least most days. - Support includes calling 833-681-0211 and connecting online. Several other links also provided. It is very important to support everyone as well as ourselves. - See slides 15 – 17 for support and warm lines and resources 	
Can state staff email us Paul's resource list?	Yes, the resources Paul shared are included on slides 15-17.	
Announcements		

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Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) Benefits	FMNP has additional benefits in the form of check packs. Complete the form (attached) to request FMNP benefits with the total number of check packs you want for your agency/clinic. Use pack increments of twenties (20/40/60). We'll send on a first come first served basis. Email the completed form to the state office at FMNPTeam@doh.wa.gov	Farmers Market Benefits form is attached to Memo 2020-97.
Nutrition First Participant Survey Update	Over 500 participant responses to remote services survey. Very few people taking the Spanish version – please encourage Spanish speakers to complete as well! Added an option so any WIC staff can assist the participant with other languages via direct translation or via interpreter. Thank you for your assistance and let's keep it going!	
Time Studies	Previously, we let agencies know they could postpone the April time study and do the spring quarter in May or June. Some agencies misunderstood and thought they didn't have to do a time study for last quarter. The new quarter for time studies was July so agencies needed to do time studies in July. Some agencies may not have done them in July, so we are asking you to complete them for August, beginning immediately. Don't try to re-create the first couple of days in August, just start today or tomorrow and make sure to include them on the Revenue-Expenditure report with the August A-19. Also, waiting to complete the time study in September is not an option. Connect with your LPC if you need additional information.	
Separation of Duties report	Cascades SOD report isn't working as expected. Please hold off on completing file reviews. We're working to get accurate information to you. Thank you for your continued patience.	State staff will be working on a more accurate SOD report and will notify you when we have something to share.
Breastfeeding Excellence Award	Congratulations! Because of your great work helping participants with their breastfeeding goals, WA State received the USDA Breastfeeding Excellence Award. Thank you and the BF team for all your hard work!	
Topics		

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<p>Re-opening clinics update</p>	<p>What happens when the waivers expire on Sept 30, 2020? No language in current bill in Senate to extend WIC waivers which waived the need for ht/wt/hgb/physical presence.</p> <p>Question state office is grappling with, how to apply services equitably and safely? Have two options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Option 1: Limited face to face services <p>Pros –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Best” data as our staff are trained to do excellent lengths, heights, weights and hemoglobins. 2. Gathering ht/wt/hgb via face to face then meets the physical presence requirements. <p>Cons –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statewide re-opening doesn’t sync with Governors phased approach 2. Inequitable access as some clinics open, others not. 3. Local agencies have their own policies about re-opening 4. People won’t come in, it’s not worth the risk. We might see a decline in caseload. Even if overall caseload didn’t decline b/c new people were signing up, some will choose not to come and therefore miss out on WIC benefits. 5. Increased risk of C-19 spread to staff and clients 6. Guidance on PPE changes all the time/too hard to keep current. Getting PPE can be difficult, puts us in competition with medical/first responder staff who need PPE. 7. Clinic closure if one person, staff or participants gets COVID-19. 8. Requires two cert appointments, one for the face to face part, a second one for the rest of the cert. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Option 2: Obtain data remotely <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get height, weight and hemoglobin from health care provider 2. Exploring the possibility of accepting self-reported height and weight (controversial) 3. Video chat for physical presence (FNS has indicated does not meet regs) 	

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	<p>4. Drive by for physical presence if necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updates weekly at this webinar - We will give 60 days advance notice to implement new approach - State office will provide and implement a communication plan 	
<p>Just to be clear, does the federal waiver that allowed us to not obtain ht/wt/hgb and meet physical presence requirement still expire on Sept. 30?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
<p>So, keep remote until at least Oct 30th ... Correct?</p>	<p>State office will give 60 days for local agencies to implement; if have guidance out August 15th, would have until October 15th, etc. Intention is to have guidance out sooner rather than later.</p>	
<p>Would like to know how other clinics are communicating the different appointment types? Our clinic is seeing some participant face-to-face and we are trying to find a good way to keep communicating which appointments can be remote and which are in person.</p>	<p>Good question</p>	<p>State staff will share more about this topic next week.</p>
<p>Our sites are located within medical clinics and we have participants wanting to conduct their WIC appointments when they come in for their Well Child Exams (WCE), because we are encouraging them to do their WCE.</p>	<p>State office will provide guidance on ways to get ht/wt/hgb data. Local agencies may decide to do more face to face services, that will be up to them, as long as they follow Governor's phased in approach. If the caregiver is coming in for the WCE, and the local agency wants to gather the ht/wt/hgb data from a face to face encounter, and/or the local agency wants to do the entire WIC cert face to face, that is a local agency decision.</p> <p>The state office is working on providing guidance that would not require a face to face encounter.</p>	

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How many days provided with notice of re-opening and is Nov 1 possible open date?	Yes. Some agencies may choose to open earlier, and we encourage you to do so if you can, but bottom line is Oct 1 is not the re-open date because we haven't provided the guidance yet and today is August 6 th . It is our intention to get guidance out as soon as possible but we also want to give time to agencies to be ready.	
If some appointments will require physical presence, we will need to schedule appointments that are in the office while others are by phone from home. I have tried to figure out how that would work in the Master Calendar and just can't think of a way to separate those different types of appointments. Can we switch to asset based appointment book?	Unfortunately, no. This has not been tested in Cascades. We would have to figure out a different way to address this.	State to figure out guidance on this...Jody added this is something that will be addressed during next webinar.
Which appointments are physical presence required?	Only cert appointments; mid cert HA do not require ht/wt/hgb data collection or physical presence. We want to minimize face-to-face contact between participants and staff if at all.	
If waiver unlikely, and given 60 days notice, how does that work? Timeline doesn't work.	The state office will be temporarily out of compliance. We know some agencies won't need the full 60 days to implement, but others may. We believe FNS will understand as we cannot be only state in country with this issue. We will be working towards being in compliance as soon as we can.	
Should we plan for all NE appointments to be done over the phone in October?	Yes, that is a great plan	
What about Health Assessments?	HA should be done remotely too.	
Clarification on date – will waiver now expire Oct 31?	No, waivers at federal level expire Sept 30, 2020. USDA does not have the authority to extend them beyond that date.	
Will clinics get letter of 60-day notice?	If that is helpful, yes, we will provide. Send email to Cathy.franklin@doh.wa.gov if this is something you want and she will send notice to you. It is our intention to have something for all in the net week so you can begin to plan but things are quickly evolving.	Letter to include which appts require physical presence.

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		Update: Cathy will write a memo to all.
Which are remote and which in person?	<p>The only in person requirement is the requirement for physical presence; we are still working on what this might mean, e.g. is seeing the child in the car adequate?</p> <p>Obtaining ht/wt/hgb data may be done remotely if we can get them from the health care provider. We realize the challenges of getting hgb b/c not all providers believe it's necessary to test children on the schedule in the WIC federal regs. We are also looking at obtaining ht/wt from the participant/caregiver.</p> <p>All other services may be done remotely also.</p>	
If we are still in phase 2, do we remain remote without physical being present in the clinic?	<p>Yes, we will not ask you to do something that the Governor says you cannot do. So if your county is in phase 2 you continue to do services remotely</p> <p>Even though phase 3 allows government services face to face, we are trying to come up with strategies to get the ht/wt/hgb data remotely. But if your county is in phase 3 and your agency wants to provide face to face services, that is a local agency decision.</p>	
Communication – We've been telling CT's to assume phone appts for October and November, and we will call them if we will need them face to face	This is a good plan, that is, to assume only remote services in October and November.	
To clarify the policy, is the requirement for physical presence for all appointments/benefit issuance or just for certifications? What appointments does the physical presence requirement apply to? Is it just certifications?	According to federal regulations, physical presence is required only at certifications.	
If we continue doing most services remotely past 10/1 will we still be	No – once waivers are over use normal grace or other options to obtain proofs.	

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able to use Covid-19 as an option when proofs cannot be obtained?		
Would we be able to ask assessment questions via phone and just come in for ht/wt/hgb to minimize contact?	Yes, but even that may not be necessary if we can get the information from the provider or the participant/caregiver. We still have to figure out what to do about the physical presence requirement.	
Pandemic-EBT update	You might be hearing from participants and caregivers that they applied for the P-EBT card and were told they did not qualify. Unfortunately, many eligible families were told this as there was a miscommunication with this new program and how the two agencies administering it. Please encourage the family to reapply before August 31, no matter how many times they previously did. If the next attempt is a denial, ask them to call OSPI – the number is on the bottom of the parent flier. Please continue encouraging families to apply. Nutrition First has step by step guide to applying for P-EBT is posted to their website: https://nutritionfirstwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Step-by-Step-guide-to-applying-for-P-EBT-1.pdf .	
Comment: Just thought I would share this....one of the hats that I wear is that I help people apply for SNAP benefits. Yesterday I helped 10 families complete these applications. It is frightening how many families are struggling to buy groceries for their families.	Thank you for sharing – it is very frightening.	
Can we add a banner about P-EBT on WICShopper App?	Great idea.	We'll look into this.
I thought that if they were enrolled in ECAEP preschool they would be eligible	It depends on the structure of how they are set up with the school they are located in. Need to check with the school/district. Best to encourage family to apply for P-EBT.	

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Where can we find the parent flyer? Would be interested in sending to our WIC families.	The English and Spanish P-EBT flyers on the Nutrition First website with other COVID resources.	We attached the English and Spanish parent flyers for P-EBT with Memo 2020-97.
Has this P-EBT info gone out to Medicaid clients? Is word of mouth the only way clients are getting this info?	The two agencies administering the program – OSPI and DSHS – have been working out the communication of this program and have told us all adjunctively eligible programs have been informed and asked to spread the info to all participants of those programs.	
Only a small portion of our state has received this, 30% or less. Many of our participants are still eligible and haven't been enrolled.	Part of that is due to the miscommunication error and families being told they are not eligible when they actually are. WIC is trying to get the word out by keeping you informed and asking you to spread the word.	
Equipment mail out pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Background – DOH IT staff will not be traveling to replace equipment. ● Objective – Safely replace & remove WIC equipment. ● Key Points – DOH will mail out WIC equipment and partner with local agencies competing set up remotely. Local agencies will be asked to mail back old equipment. ● Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aug – Pilot (4 agencies) - Sept – Connect (coordinators, IT staff, Innovations team, LPC and HTS) - Oct – Mail & Set Up <p>If successful, we will consider for all future equipment updates. We'll include prepaid packaging to return equipment.</p>	
Who are the pilot agencies	Todd will announce at next update after he checks in with those agencies. If you are one of the pilot agencies, Todd will be reaching out in the next few days.	
World Breastfeeding Week	<p>Happy WBW – Aug 1-7 – Supporting Breastfeeding for a Healthier Planet</p> <p>Key messaging includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable and clean energy - Sustainable cities and communities 	We'll share more about this topic on the next webinar.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible consumption <p>Links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WBW materials – coming into fulfillment center soon; we will let you know when available ● Sharing WBW Ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nutrition First WBW discussions ○ Share your events or photos with State and Nutrition (get client consents and send with photo) ○ First by emailing to Jessica.Armstrong@doh.wa.gov and info@nutritionfirstwa.org ● Promoting #WBW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National WIC BF Week Social Media Kit ○ National WIC Association ● Breastfeeding Webinars <p>We're sorry we had limited time for this topic, we'll share more next week.</p>	
<p>From LA staff: Happy World Breastfeeding Week!!! We had 26 participants attend our drive through activity. I will be sharing some pictures. Stay safe!</p>	<p>Thanks for sharing – this is great. We can't wait to see the pictures!</p>	
<p>I wanted to verify that we can mail breast pumps to clients? If so is there a certain label we need to use?</p>	<p>Send question to wicbreastpumps@doh.wa.gov and we can help you with this.</p>	
<p>Close meeting</p>		
<p>COVID-19 Resources for WIC Staff and Participants</p>		
<p>Who to Contact for Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State COVID Assistance Hotline: 1-800-525-0127 ● Text the word "Coronavirus" to 211-211 for updates on your phone ● Ask a question: DOH.information@doh.wa.gov 	
<p>Multilingual Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coronavirus.wa.gov ● Health education materials in 26 languages 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOH-Novel Coronavirus Outbreak (COVID-19) 	
Stress due to COVID-19	<p>Washington Listens – talk to someone about stress due to COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call 1-833-681-0211. Language services available. • Available Monday-Friday 9 am to 9 pm and weekends 9 am to 6 pm 	
A Healthy Dose of Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health Connection – DOH blog posts • WA WIC Memos posted on the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Agency SharePoint page ○ Nutrition First website 	
Contact us with your questions:	<p>Policy Support phone: 1-800-841-1410, press 3, then press 1 or Email at wicpolicysupport@doh.wa.gov</p> <p>Clinic changes/closures - call your LPC or email Your Local Program Consultant (LPC) or Email at wiclpc@doh.wa.gov</p>	