TO: Parent and Sub-Agencies

FROM: Dave Thomason  
Nutrition & WIC Services Director

DATE: November 29, 2021

RE:
Breastfeeding Peer Counselor December Meeting  
No Automatic Batch Issuance for December FUD, “Retailor” Use and Tailor for Preference Only  
Formula Shortage Issues – EleCare Infant, Similac Total Comfort, and Others  
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Updated COVID Guidance and FAQs Around Vaccination & Booster Dose for Pregnant and Postpartum Individuals  
WIC Advisory Committee – Minutes (10/26/21) & Call for Agenda Items (1/25/22)

BFPC December Meeting
The next BFPC and BFPC Supervisor meeting will be on Wednesday, December 1, 2020 1-2pm. This webinar will be on Zoom.

ACTION REQUIRED: All BFPCs and BFPC Supervisors, please save the date for the meeting. A meeting link was emailed out last week. Contact Casey Florea at cassandra.florea@ks.gov with any questions.

No Automatic Batch Issuance for December FUD, “Retailor” Use and Tailor for Preference Only
• Due to unanticipated complications for local agencies, there will be no automatic batch issuance of non-tailored food benefits with FUD in December like there was for October and November. (Refer back to mass emails of October 10 and 29.)

• Realize that if benefits are voided in the “Mass Void” process and then new benefits are issued, the “Retailor” functionality cannot be used on the new benefits. Be careful to issue correctly.

• **Repeat Special Note for Benefits for January 2022 and beyond:** As you all know, Kansas WIC offers tailored food packages based on client preference. However, it is not known if Congress will extend the temporary benefit increase starting in January. Remember that tailored food packages are not able to be batch issued. Therefore, we offer Local Agencies the option to tailor only for health reasons, such as lactose free milk, or for cultural reasons and to not offer tailoring for simple client preference. Local Agencies should be prepared to offer ideas for using food items, such as beans, that clients have not usually received.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Continue to work with clients to issue correct December food benefits, as appropriate. For benefits in January, 2022 and beyond, work with clients to consider accepting the standard, base food package unless tailoring for health/cultural reasons.

**Formula Shortage Issues – EleCare Infant, Similac Total Comfort, and Others**

This message is mostly a repeat of a mass email sent to all staff identified in KWIC to receive I & P Memos on November 19. *Text added to that email is in italic font.*

We have been alerted from Abbott that EleCare Infant and Similac Total Comfort are having supply issues currently. There is no estimated date of resolution, but they have assured us that they are working diligently to get these products back on the shelf. Currently, the shortages seem to only be affecting certain areas of the state. If clients report issues purchasing these formulas in the local stores, see guidance below. *The mass email of November 19 included attachments of lists of clients on both formulas with FUD of 11/1/2021 through 11/30/2021 for local agencies to use as they desire. We recognize this might not pull all the clients that have these formulas assigned. Contact Emily Brinkman at emily.brinkman@ks.gov if you would like a report pulled with a different date range.*

EleCare – we recommend that you have the client work with their doctor to identify an alternate WIC allowable formula. *For staff information, the mass email of November 19 included a document that lists some of the other free amino acid and/or milk allergy options. In lieu of obtaining a new special issuance authorization, local agencies may just document a temporary formula change by providing details that either the client or the clinic staff have spoken to the client’s doctor. If the client will be staying on this formula longer than a month, you will need to request an updated special issuance authorization form.*
Similac Total Comfort – we recommend offering one of the other standard contract formulas, *if available in your area* (Similac Advance, Similac Fussiness & Gas, Similac Spit-Up, or Similac Soy Isomil).

*Similac Sensitive or Similac for Spit-up* – We’ve only had one report (from the Liberal area) where Similac Sensitive was getting hard to find. We recommend offering Similac Advance. Especially if the original complaint was reflux, many infants will do fine on regular Similac Advance as they mature some.

If there is an available supply of formula in a form normally not issued by policy (e.g. Ready-to-Feed), staff may make an exception to the policy, although it is not likely that this can be a widespread solution.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Follow the guidance above if formula supply issues are reported by clients. Make sure to document formula substitutions thoroughly in KWIC Notes. Remember to advise clients to redeem only 1 or 2 cans at a time when trying a new formula so there is less formula returned, if the substitute formula is not well tolerated. Please keep your State Agency lead contact informed about supply issues. Refer back to the October I-Memo for additional information. Realize the Customer Service number in the October I-Memo is not really meant to be a hotline that will provide formula.

**Contract Signed by Secretary**
Contracts for FFY2022 have been signed by the KDHE Secretary and have been emailed.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** If your agency has not received a signed copy of the contract, please contact Linda Speirs at linda.speirs@ks.gov.

**Kansas Local Agency National WIC Association 2022 Membership Dues**

As in the past, the Kansas State Agency is paying the local agency membership dues for the National WIC Association (NWA). All parent, stand-alone and designated coalition agencies have organizational accounts with NWA. **Sub-agencies do not have organizational accounts of their own.**

In order to receive e-mail and other member benefits from the NWA each individual staff member must create an **individual account** and have that account **linked** with the **organizational account** of the Local Agency under which dues were paid. Staff members of sub-agencies and agencies within coalitions are NWA members by virtue of their “Parent” Agency or the Agency in the coalition with the paid membership.

If you do not wish to create individual accounts for all employees, you may designate one or more individuals with an account to receive e-mails and then have those individuals forward e-mail messages to all appropriate staff.
If you wish to and are not receiving e-mail from the NWA, please follow the attached NWA Website Log-in Instructions to create and link your individual account.

Once you have created an individual account, call NWA at (202) 232-5492 and say, “I need to be linked to my organization.” NWA must link you in order for you to receive member benefits.

If you are not sure if you have an individual or organizational account call NWA at (202) 232-5492 and they can check for you.

NOTE: Staff members in sub-agencies must have NWA link their individual account to the Parent Agency’s organizational account. Sub-agencies do not have organizational accounts of their own. Please be careful. If a sub agency does inadvertently create an organizational account, that sub-agency will be charged NWA dues of $50.00.

NOTE: For purposes of paying dues for the three existing regional coalitions (NEK, SEK, and SCK), the state agency designated Atchison of NEK, Allen of SEK and Kiowa of SCK as surrogate “Parent” Agencies with an organizational account. Individual staff members in local agencies within these coalitions should notify NWA to link their individual account information to either Atchison, Allen or Kiowa County’s organizational account.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** If necessary, individuals should go to the NWA web site www.nwica.org and click on “Login” at the top right of the page to verify individual account information. Create individual accounts as desired and verify your subscription choice to receive e-mails, etc. (See the attached NWA Website Log-in Instructions)

**Apply for a USDA WIC Breastfeeding Award of Excellence for Your Breastfeeding Peer Counselor**

(This is a repeat of an email sent on 10/28)

The USDA has opened the application period to local WIC agencies for the WIC Breastfeeding Award of Excellence, formerly the Loving Support Award of Excellence. **The 2022 application period opened on October 12 and closes on December 17.** This award recognizes and celebrates local WIC agencies that provide exemplary breastfeeding programs and support services. Local WIC agencies that have operated a peer counseling program for at least one year, which meets all of the required core components of the WIC Breastfeeding Model for Peer Counseling, are eligible to apply. Find criteria and application information [here](#).

The state agency plans to reward any agency who receives the award with a significant gift of appreciation (details pending). We encourage all LAs with a BFPC Program who meet the criteria to apply for a Gold award.

**These are the Kansas LAs eligible for Premiere awards based on BF data (there may be other factors that could cause them to be ineligible for the Premiere award, but may be eligible for Gold):**
• Linn County Health Dept (SEK) 25%
• Riley County Health Dept 29.1%
• Barton County Health Dept 20%-2019; 21.9%-2020
• Crawford County Health 16%-2019; 16.8%-2020
• Douglas County Health Dept 19%-2019; 21%-2020
• Marshall County Health Dept 19%-2019; 24.3%-2020
• Leavenworth Co. Health 18%-2019; 18.5%-2020
• SEK Multi-County Health Dept 17%-2019; 18.6%-2020
• Stevens County Health 16%-2019; 21.6%-2020

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Review the criteria and other application information. Share with applicable staff. Contact Casey Florea at cassandra.florea@ks.gov with any questions. Deadline for application is December 17, 2021.

**Updated Outreach Brochure from Brush Art**

The Kansas WIC Outreach brochure has been updated with the current income guidelines. This updated brochure is now available to order through brushartwicmaterials.com. Please recycle the inventory you have on hand and order the updated version to begin using with participants. Feel free to reach out to Jodie or Jake at Brush Art if you have any trouble placing an order. jbeisner@brushart.com or jakebrush@brushart.com

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Effective immediately, recycle old brochures and replace with updated brochures to reflect the most up to date income information.

**Required USDA Breastfeeding Training – coming in 2022**

This item is a repeat of the information emailed to WIC Coordinators and BF Coordinators on November 3rd. *New information added is in italics and underline below.*

It’s been coming for a long time, but the USDA Breastfeeding Training is now ready! We have been working with other states in the region on plans to disseminate the training to local agencies. Montana will be hosting virtual training opportunities led by Cathy Carothers (co-Director of Every Mother, Inc.). Details for those dates are listed below and registration information will be coming in the near future. Each state in the region will be allotted a certain number of “seats” so if we exceed that number, we may have to prioritize who is able to attend the live sessions. We are working on options for doing either “replays” with other states or hosting additional live sessions in the last half of the year, so if the dates listed below won’t work please know that there will be other opportunities!

As a reminder, the Kansas State Agency team made the decision to cancel this year’s statewide conference knowing that this training platform would be coming out soon. It is a requirement from USDA that all WIC staff complete this training. There are 4 levels of the training. The breakdown of who needs to attend which level(s) is below with the training dates. Notice that the trainings build upon each other, so those in the “level 3” group will need to attend all sessions for
levels 1, 2, and 3. Also note that levels 2, 3, and 4 have multiple parts which have been broken into 4 hour chunks of time, so the dates listed are all of the dates needed to cover the material in that level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Level</th>
<th>WIC Staff Required to Take This Level</th>
<th>Dates for Live Virtual Training (times for all dates will be 10 am – 3 pm CST with a 1 hour lunch break)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ALL WIC Staff (don’t forget this also means part time staff including BFPC and consultant RDs)</td>
<td>Wednesday, January 19th</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Breastfeeding Peer Counselors, RNs, and RDs (including consultants)</td>
<td>Monday, January 31st AND Wednesday, February 2nd AND Monday, February 7th</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>RNs and RDs (including consultants)</td>
<td>Thursday, February 10th AND Tuesday, February 15th</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>WIC Designated Breastfeeding Experts (please note that at this time in Kansas, we only have this</td>
<td>Thursday, February 17th AND Wednesday, February 23rd AND Friday, February 25th</td>
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<td>designation for clinics with a BFPC program; however we will be developing a system for DBEs so that</td>
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<td>every clinic will have this support available. Details have not been worked out on that, but if you</td>
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<td>are interested in being a DBE for your clinic or possibly even for a group of clinics, please reach</td>
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<td>out to us and we would love to have you attend this training and be a part of the discussion!)</td>
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**ACTION REQUIRED:** Watch for registration details and additional information that will be coming over the next few months. Consider if staff is able to attend the live virtual sessions above or will plan to attend future sessions. If you have questions please reach out to Emily Brinkman at emily.brinkman@ks.gov or 785-291-3161.

**Updated COVID Guidance and FAQs Around Vaccination & Booster Dose for Pregnant and Postpartum Individuals**

The KDHE COVID Response page has updated the FAQs for Pregnant, Postpartum and Infant Populations (also available in Spanish) as well as the updated Interim Guidance for Maternal and Child Health Services in the Prenatal Period. Updates have been made to include pregnancy as a qualifying “underlying health condition” for the COVID-19 vaccine booster. These documents, along with many other helpful resources, can be found on the KDHE COVID-19 Resource Center.
ACTION REQUIRED: Please share with your colleagues, community partners, clients, and patients as desired.

**WIC Advisory Committee – Minutes (10/26/20) & Call for Agenda Items (1/25/21)**
The minutes of the October 26, 2021 WIC Advisory Committee meeting are posted here.

The next WIC Advisory Committee conference call is Tuesday, January 22, 2022 at 9:00 AM. **Please submit agenda items to your WAC representative or Patrice Thomsen by January 18** You can find your representative name and contact information on the **WIC Advisory Committee** page of the Kansas WIC website. As a reminder, questions about policy implementation should be directed to your agency’s assigned state staff member. Alternates are also invited, but may choose not to attend, unless notified that your Representative will not be attending. The facilitator for the January call is Mookie Holmes, from Wyandotte County. This meeting is the changeover meeting in which departing and new members both participate.)

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Read minutes. Submit any agenda items by January 18, 2022.

If you have any questions regarding this memo, please contact the state staff member assigned to your agency.

**Items included below and/or provided as separate documents:**

NWA Website Log-In Instructions