March 3, 2021

**ATTENTION:** Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); Home Visiting Programs including: Universal Home Visiting (UHV), Parents as Teachers (PAT), Early Head Start (EHS), Infant-Toddler Early Intervention Programs (Part C), and Healthy Families America (HFA).

**RE:** Cross-program Collaboration Between Kansas WIC and Home Visiting Programs

**Background**

The common goal of improving maternal and child health outcomes is shared across many programs, including WIC and Home Visiting. In Kansas, home visitors meet regularly with expectant parents and families with young children living in at-risk communities. Home visitors play an important role in evaluating families’ strengths and needs, connecting families to resources, and partnering with parents/guardians to set and attain goals for their family. Kansas WIC programs provide nutrition and health education, breastfeeding information, and healthy food, as well as connect families to community resources that can benefit the whole family. WIC programs also offer immunization screenings, referrals, and educational classes on topics such as meal planning, maintaining a healthy weight, picky eaters, caring for a new baby, shopping on a budget and more!

**Recommendation**

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) with support from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the US Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) are committed to recommending and supporting cross-program collaboration between WIC and Home Visiting programs at the state and local levels. Cross-program collaboration encourages local sharing of resources and use of referrals to enhance participant-centered services.

State and local WIC and Home Visiting programs are well positioned to collaborate as both programs share a common goal of improving health outcomes for similar populations. WIC and Home Visiting program collaboration provides an opportunity to augment nutrition education and breastfeeding support messages and to connect program participants with other important health and social services. Together, shared program efforts increase the number of resources and services available to the vulnerable participants served and have meaningful impact on participants.

The KDHE Bureau of Family Health [Interactive Map](#) provides contact information for local home visiting sites to help you connect your WIC participants with home visiting services in your community. PAT program contact information can be found here: [Kansas PAT programs](#). Early Head Start program contact information can be found here: [Kansas EHS Programs](#). Infant-Toddler Services/Part C program contact information can be found here: [Kansas Part C Programs](#). The Interactive [WIC Programs map](#) provides contact information for each local program to help home visitors connect their families to WIC services.

We encourage Home Visiting programs and WIC service sites to reach out to each other to discuss how collaborating across programs can benefit families in your local community. Some examples of cross-program collaboration include:

- Shared staffing models (Home Visitor/Breastfeeding Peer Counselor)
  
  *Reach out to KDHE WIC or Home Visiting staff for details on shared staffing models.*
- Cross-program referrals
- Shared community resource guides
- Shared community events
• Shared marketing materials
• Joint visits

Thank you for your partnership and commitment to improving maternal and child health outcomes. If you have any questions or would like to receive assistance with facilitating conversations between your local home visiting or WIC service site, please feel free to reach out to the state contacts below.

• Carrie Akin, KDHE – UHV & MIECHV-funded sites Carrie.akin@ks.gov
• Cassandra Florea, KDHE – WIC Cassandra.florea@ks.gov
• Nis Wilbur, KSDE – PAT nwilbur@ksde.org
• Peggy Kelly, Kansas Head Start Association – EHS pkelly@ksheadstart.org
• Heather Staab, KDHE – Part C heather.staab@ks.gov

Be on the lookout for a training webinar coming in Summer 2021 focusing on collaboration between WIC and Home Visiting programs. The training will include a short didactic presentation about WIC and Home Visiting, as well as time for discussion and a question-and-answer session.

Sincerely,

Rachel Sisson
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