

# **VENA (Oregon WIC Listens) Local Agency Training Plan (6/11/08)**

Our training plan uses the term “participant centered counseling” (PCC) to encompass the three core areas identified for VENA. The training plan is based upon the concept that we will gradually build staff competence in these areas. The result will not be an immediate shift to new behaviors, but rather a gradual change and improvement in staff’s ability to provide participant centered services. Therefore, training activities will build on each other, reinforcing and refining previous skills. Training will be designed in three levels: Level 1 for all WIC staff, Level 2 for staff who certify participants, and Level 3 for state and local staff who will be trainers, coaches and “champions” for Oregon WIC Listens. All training will be based on a positive health outcome approach.

## **Definitions**

**Participant Centered Education (PCE)** – Nutrition education which focuses on people’s capacities, strengths and developmental needs – not solely on their problems, risks, or negative behaviors.

**Participant Centered Counseling (PCC)** – The use of counseling skills which are participant centered, including critical thinking and a focus on positive health outcomes

**Participant Centered Services (PCS)** – The warm and respectful collaboration between all levels of WIC staff and participants, giving them the freedom to choose options that work for them.

**3 levels of training** (*each higher level includes content and competencies of levels below it*):

**Level 1: All State staff and all Local Agency staff**

**Level 2: All certifier staff (CPA) and State staff going on to Level 3**

**Level 3: All local staff who are “champions”**

### **Level 1: All Local Agency Staff**

This will focus on staff understanding the “spirit” of Participant Centered Education. Will include: What is PCE? What are benefits of PCE for staff and clients? What is the reality of the setting in the local agency for providing nutrition education? How is NE currently delivered and what will be changes in a PCE approach?

#### **Level 1 Goals or outcomes:**

##### **All Staff:**

- ◆ Change in focus from knowledge transfer to assisting with behavior change.
- ◆ A conversation rather than a lecture, with staff acting as the facilitator rather than the expert.
- ◆ Idea exchange rather than knowledge download.

- ◆ Staff and clients will have better, more effective interactions.
- ◆ Relieves staff of feeling responsible for client's behavior change, since client is best person to find and implement solutions or changes.
- ◆ Focus on the positive: looking at improving health outcomes, not focusing on deficits and what is wrong
- ◆ Trust in themselves and the client that they will be able to arrive at a positive solution

### **Level 1 Competencies**

1. Practices active listening and observation skills.
2. Collects information without interrupting or correcting the applicant.
3. Checks for understanding by paraphrasing or reflecting what was heard.
4. Uses an effective balance of open-ended and closed-ended questions.
5. Affirms participants' feelings, beliefs and efforts.
6. Asks additional questions to clarify information or gather more details.

### **Level 1 Objectives for local staff**

1. Staff will identify benefits for local agency, participants and themselves with using new PCE approach.
2. Staff will be able to compare and contrast traditional approach to nutrition education with PCE approach.
3. Staff will be able to apply "OARS" skills in the work or home setting.

### **Level 1 Training methods:**

#### **A. Introduce PCE concepts at May 2008 WIC Statewide meeting**

Meeting focus will be "Oregon WIC Listens".

- Keynote speaker discussing participant centered education as a viable method of motivating behavior change.
- Breakout sessions introducing active listening skills (OARS) and the "spirit" of participant centered education for all CPA's
- Breakout sessions for clerical staff on how participant centered services are relevant to their job (e.g. shopper education, answering phone calls)
- All speakers encouraged to incorporate components of PCE into sessions to model skills.

#### **B. On-site facilitated discussion**

Coaches will lead a discussion with all staff at the first on-site visit focused on what it means to have a participant centered clinic.

#### **C. Local Agency Champion follow-up**

Champions will be given ideas of ways to continue the discussions of PCS in the agency and to facilitate a culture change within their organization.

## **Level 2: CPA Training**

### **Level 2 Goals or outcomes:**

- Staff will be able to use PCE skills when performing certifications and will recognize the skills in others when observing.
- Using identified VENA competencies, staff will learn skills to apply PCE approach in client education interactions.

### **Level 2 Competencies**

*All of Level 1 plus:*

1. Uses appropriate techniques to establish a relationship and begin a conversation.
2. Compares participants' verbal responses to non-verbal behaviors to assess participants' attitude, feelings, and readiness for change.
3. Expresses empathy for the participants' situation.
4. Completes nutrition assessment tasks before providing nutrition counseling.
5. Collects all information before drawing conclusions and deciding upon the best next steps (course of action).
6. Recognizes superfluous or tangential information and disregards it.
7. Considers the applicant's point of view regarding their needs, concerns, and nutrition and health priorities.
8. Prioritizes nutrition concerns to be addressed.
9. During a given visit, selects with the participant, a limited number of issues to discuss from all the potential nutrition issues.

### **Level 2 Objectives**

To be developed, using strategies identified in state staff Level 2 training

#### **Topics for Training:**

- Active listening
- O - Open ended questions
- A - Affirm/Feedback
- R - Reflect / Responsibility
- S - Summarize/neutral feedback
- Menu of options: Help participant prioritize; address 1 or 2 concerns/topics

#### **Key Skills:**

- Talk time balance
- Empathy
- Advice/Education
- Ask Permission

- How to recognize resistance and prevent it
- Participant centered not driven
- Health outcome based (positive health goals vs. risk identification)

## **Level 2 Training Methods**

The Training Team is developing the Oregon WIC Listens (OR WL) training plan based on feedback we have received from the self evaluations local agencies participated in Fall 2006, the three Fruit and Vegetable study agencies, and the Participant Centered Education study commissioned by Western Region USDA. The proposed plan is designed to support local agency staff as they develop and refine the skills needed to provide participant centered services. This plan provides a combination of skills training, continuing staff development opportunities, on-site support, and follow up. The plan builds on skills introduced at previous training (Critical thinking at Nutrition Risk Module training, Open-ended questions at Dietary Risk Module training) and at the 2008 statewide meeting.

The plan includes dividing agencies into regional cohorts in order to provide regional training and to encourage local agency-to-agency support. All agencies will be included in one of five cohorts, with a new cohort starting the training process every three months beginning May 2008. Two agencies will start training prior to the statewide meeting in order for state staff to pilot test training curriculum and support process. State staff will provide this support over a 6 to 9 month period for each local agency, depending on their needs. Specific training methods include the following:

- A. Intensive certifier training** – 8 hours of face-to-face interactive training on Level 2 information and skills.
- B. Observations and positive feedback** – Individual certifiers will be observed and provided with positive constructive feedback. This has been shown to be critical towards the long term behavior change necessary to providing participant centered counseling.
- C. Group discussions and practice activities** – Discussions and practice facilitated by state coaches or LA champions where staff are encouraged to voice concerns, hear others solutions and enhance or practice new skills.
- D. Continuing education lessons** – State provided in-service packets that allow champions to facilitate activities where skills are enhanced or practiced.

## **Training Plan (Steps repeated for each cohort)**

- 1. Participant centered counseling training for all CPA's**
  - a. Regional training - two half days (p.m. day 1, a.m. day 2 – allows for travel)
  - b. Large cohorts will have multiple training sessions to keep training group size reasonable

- c. Provide guided practice to take home and work on
- 2. State phone call #1 with cohorts**
  - a. Conference call with the champions from each agency
  - b. Check-in to see how things are progressing and provide support
- 3. On-site visit #1 with each agency one month after CPA training**
  - a. Meet with all staff in each agency to debrief on concerns, and to check in with clerical to see how it is going and how they can be involved in the process, practice open-ended questions and affirmations
  - b. Observe individual certifiers and provide positive feedback
  - c. Provide Continuing Education lessons
- 4. Champion and peer-to-peer observations**
  - a. During time between on-site visits
  - b. Guided observations (using state developed guidance and observation tool)
  - c. Practice giving constructive, positive feedback
- 5. State phone call #2 with champions**
  - a. Check in to see how things are progressing and provide support
- 6. On-site visit #2 with each agency**
  - a. Observation and feedback with individual certifiers and check in with clerical staff
  - b. Debrief with staff as a group, practice completing a full assessment, providing anticipatory guidance, and dealing with resistant clients
  - c. Leave another practice activity/lesson
- 7. State phone call #3 with champions**
- 8. On-site visit #3 with each agency**
  - a. Observation and feedback with individual certifiers and check in with clerical staff
  - b. Debrief with staff as a group, practice reflections and avoiding judgments
  - c. Leave another practice activity/lesson
- 9. Evaluate progress and develop support plan**
- 10. State phone call #4 with champions**
- 11. On-site visit #4 (if needed)**
- 12. Celebrate completion of Phase 1 of OR WIC Listens!**
- 13. Continue to send reinforcement practice activities/lessons.**

***Level 3: LA Champions who will support peer to peer training (coordinators or training supervisors)***

- Champions selected by each agency.
- These local agency staff champions will help provide on-site support and help make the changes sustainable within their agency.
- Guided practice will be given to go back and discuss with other staff in agency

### **Level 3 Goals or outcomes:**

Staff will have the opportunity to prepare for their role as “champions of Oregon WIC Listens”.

### **Level 3 Competencies**

- Uses coaching concepts to create a trusting environment
- Provides positive feedback

### **Level 3 Objectives**

Upon completion of this training, staff will:

- Understand their role as an Oregon WIC Listens champion in their agency;
- Be familiar with the training process for their cohort for OR WL;
- Apply the use of coaching concepts to create a coaching culture in a supportive environment;
- Practice the steps and skills of providing positive feedback after observations;
- Develop a plan for continuing a conversation about PCE in their agency prior to CPA training; and,
- Be able to identify the advantages of collaborating with the champion team from their own agency and networking with teams from other agencies in their cohort.

### **Level 3 Training Methods**

#### **A. Oregon WIC Coordinator Association meeting presentations**

Provide skill building presentations at quarterly meetings.

- October 2006 – Doing staff observations and providing positive feedback
- January 2007 – Cohort training plans
- Ongoing updates.

#### **B. Regional training for cohort Champions**

- Appreciative inquiry visioning exercise
- Provide an overview of what’s to come: Training Plan, key concepts of PCE, what is the “spirit” of OR WIC Listens, skills to be learned in future
- Champion team building – encouraging communication between agencies
- What is your role as a champion: what it is and what it is not
  - How to be a catalyst for change, stages of change
  - Facilitate opportunities for growth among staff - Develop a plan for their agency to allow time for activities needed to implement Oregon WIC Listens, Starting or facilitating discussion among staff
  - Keeping the Spirit alive - How to coach or mentor staff as they develop new skills
  - Observing others and providing positive feedback
    - Practice doing observations using state provided tools(similar to OWCA training)

- How to provide positive feedback and model participant centered education

### **C. Conference calls with state staff**

These calls will provide support for local agency champions and encourage them to develop peer-to-peer support among their cohort. (See Level 2 for timing of calls.)

### **D. On-site debriefs**

State coaches will meet with LA Champions during each on-site visit. During these visits coaches will answer questions and provide support. They will also discuss the local agency progress towards completing continuing education lessons and doing observations.

- On-site #1 – Continuing Education lessons will be distributed to champions and guidance provided as to how they can be used.
- On-site #2 – Review the plan for peer-to-peer observations
- On-site #3 and 4 – Review transition plans for when state coaches are no longer visiting and champions will be providing ongoing support for sustaining the change to Oregon WIC Listens.

### **E. Leadership Academy (Proposed for 2009)**

Possible topics to include:

- Self Evaluation
- Doing staff observations effectively
- Promoting peer-to-peer interaction as a way to enhance staff knowledge and skills
- Profitable Dialogue - Using Emotional Intelligence (EQ) to Communicate
- Providing effective feedback from staff observations
- Using critical thinking for decision making and program planning
- Using new observation tools
- WIC as a public health program (participant centered services as the future of public health – CLHO-MCH presentation)