

Assessment and Planning 9: Peer Counselor Program Self-Evaluation

Based on the FNS *Loving Support*® Model for Successful Peer Counseling Programs and best practices among successful WIC State and local agency peer counseling programs.

Agency _____

Date _____

| Program Components | Consistently Provides | Does not Consistently Provide | Enhancements Needed (Who/What/When/How) |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Program Management | | | |
| Required | | | |
| Standardized breastfeeding peer counseling program policies are in place as part of nutrition education plans. | | | |
| The program is managed at the State and/or local level by designated breastfeeding peer counseling program managers and/or coordinators. | | | |
| State and/or local WIC managers have been trained in how to manage a successful peer counseling program. | | | |
| Local WIC clinic staff are trained on supporting the peer counseling program. | | | |
| A WIC designated breastfeeding expert is identified for each WIC clinic. | | | |
| Community partnerships have been established with the local hospital, providers, and other community groups to enhance the program's effectiveness. | | | |
| Recommended | | | |
| Local clinics conduct an internal and external assessment to determine gaps in breastfeeding services within WIC and the community that can be addressed through peer counseling, e.g., early contacts after delivery, prenatal contacts. | | | |
| Local clinics have examined clinic policies and practices that ensure program success, including social media policies and clinic environment logistics. | | | |
| Peer counselor documentation is kept simple. | | | |
| Program successes are tracked to determine effectiveness and improvements needed. | | | |

| Program Components | Consistently Provides | Does not Consistently Provide | Enhancements Needed (Who/What/When/How) |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Best Practice | | | |
| Peer counselors are provided space for counseling WIC mothers in the clinic. | | | |
| Peer counselors are permitted to bring their breastfeeding infants in arms to the WIC clinic to “model” breastfeeding in public. | | | |
| Peer Counselor Staffing | | | |
| Required | | | |
| Agency follows defined job parameters and job descriptions for peer counselors. | | | |
| Peer counselors are recruited and hired from the target population group served by WIC. | | | |
| Peer counselors are paraprofessionals. | | | |
| Peer counselors are available to WIC clients outside usual clinic hours and outside the WIC clinic environment. | | | |
| Peer counselors are given adequate compensation and reimbursement. | | | |
| Recommended | | | |
| A recognition program is in place to acknowledge peer counselor accomplishments. | | | |
| Best Practice | | | |
| A career path program exists for upward mobility of peer counselors. | | | |
| Peer Counselor Training | | | |
| Required | | | |
| Peer counselors are trained with a standardized curriculum based on the FNS “ <i>Loving Support</i> © Through Peer Counseling: A Journey Together.” | | | |
| Ongoing continuing education is provided through regularly scheduled staff meetings and other educational opportunities. | | | |
| Peer counselors have timely access to breastfeeding coordinators and other lactation experts for assistance with problems outside their scope of practice. | | | |

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|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Recommended | | | |
| Peer counselors observe and shadow experienced lactation experts and experienced peer counselors. | | | |
| Peer Counselor Supervision | | | |
| Required | | | |
| Adequate supervision of peer counselors is provided through designated supervisors. | | | |
| Peer counselors have regular, systematic contact with their supervisor. | | | |
| Supervisors provide regular staff meetings with peer counselors. | | | |
| Peer counselors participate in WIC clinic staff meetings and breastfeeding in-services as part of the WIC team. | | | |
| Recommended | | | |
| A systematic supervisory program is in place to mentor and guide new peer counselors in the early weeks of their job. | | | |
| | | | |
| The work of peer counselors is monitored (spot checks, chart reviews, etc.). | | | |
| Supervisors regularly review the peer counselor contact forms and provide opportunities to discuss case studies. | | | |
| Peer Counselor Practice | | | |
| Required | | | |
| Peer counselors make timely contacts with new mothers following established contact guidelines. | | | |
| Peer counselors give basic education and support within their defined scope of practice and yield to the WIC designated breastfeeding expert for situations beyond their scope. | | | |
| Recommended | | | |
| Peer counselors document all contacts with WIC participants, and complete weekly or monthly activity logs. | | | |

| Program Components | Consistently Provides | Does not Consistently Provide | Enhancements Needed (Who/What/When/How) |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Peer counselors are taught and practice professional etiquette (such as coming to the clinic on time, returning phone calls promptly, etc.) | | | |
| Best Practice | | | |
| Peer counselors who exit the program are encouraged to provide feedback that can improve the program. | | | |

Adapted from Michigan State University Cooperative Extension "Mother to Mother" Program