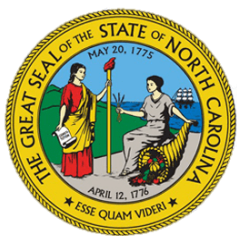


NCALHD Update from DCFW

October 19, 2023

Madhu Vulimiri, Deputy Director



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**



AGENDA FOR DCFW UPDATES

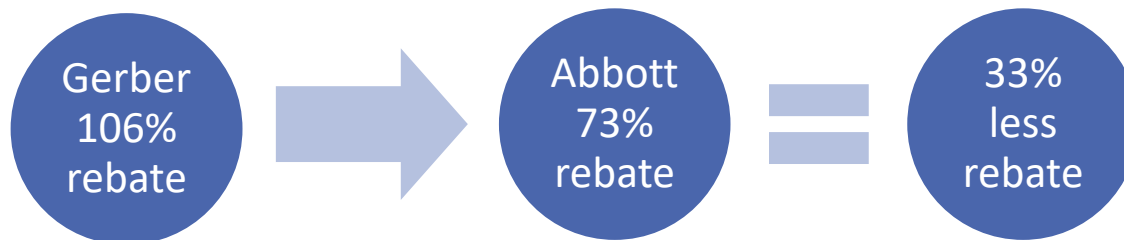
- WIC Updates
- DCFW Agreement Addenda (AA) with Substantive Updates
 - AA 403: WIC
 - AA 803: School Nurse Funding Initiative
 - AA 876: Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)
- DCFW Agreement Addenda Timeline

WIC UPDATES

Current Funding Situation: In the absence of a federal budget, we are operating under a Continuing Resolution through November 17. This week, USDA has informed us that states will receive additional WIC funding that we anticipate will sustain WIC through at least December 31.

Other factors contributing to funding concerns for WIC:

- Rising food and administrative costs
- Anticipating WIC participation declines as PHE flexibilities ended August 1, 2023 and workforce challenges
- Reduction in infant formula rebate coming to NC:
 - New infant formula provider effective 10/1/23



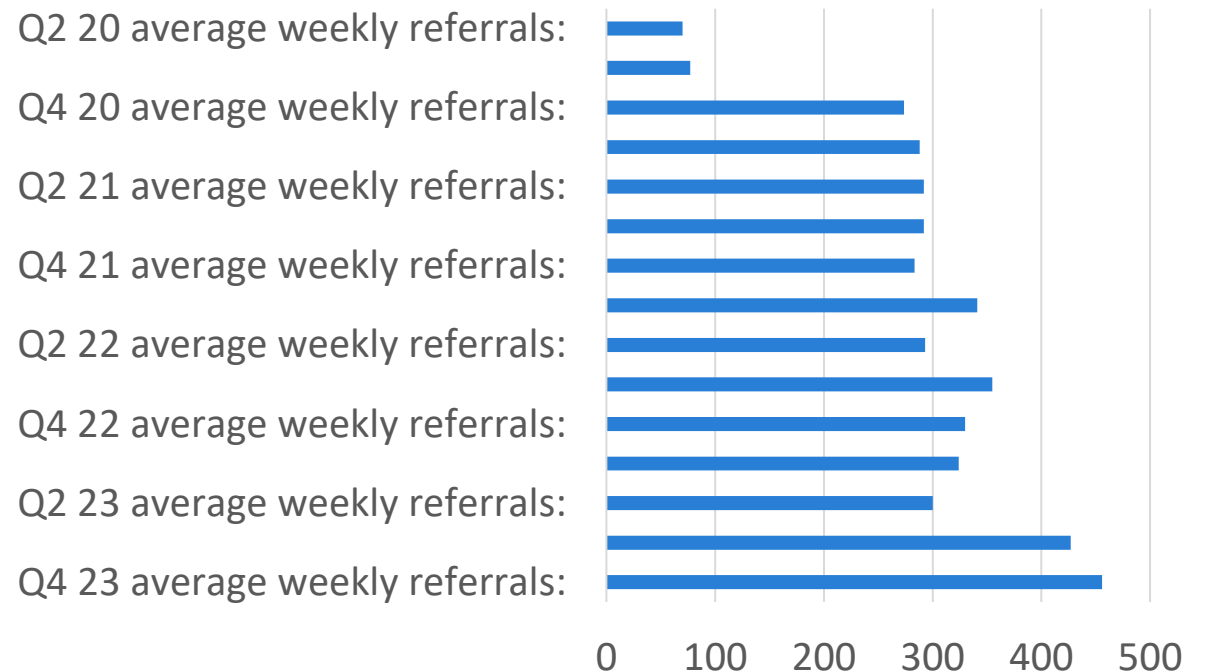
WIC UPDATES

Uncertainty in National Political Environment: Congress may not fully fund the WIC program nationally – could lead to states needing to move to wait lists or make other cuts to WIC programs.

WIC participation rates are dropping (largely due to end of federal flexibilities with PHE), but referral rates (new demand) remains high:

Month	Total WIC Participation
May 23	270,154
June 23	268,692
July 23	268,549
August 23 (preliminary)	231,426
September 23 (preliminary)	226,944

Avg Weekly WIC Referrals 2020-2023



Anticipated substantive changes:

- **Deliverable # 10 - WIC Program Staffing**
 - Adding language that is already in the NC WIC Program Manual
 - Designate a **WIC Director** who has responsibility for clinical and administrative management of the WIC program activities.
 - Designate a **Breastfeeding Coordinator** who meets the qualifications of a CPA as outlined in the North Carolina WIC Program Manual to oversee breastfeeding promotion and support activities.
 - Identify at least one **WIC-Designated Breastfeeding Expert** who meets the qualifications of a CPA as outlined in the North Carolina WIC Program Manual

- **Anticipated Changes in Rules that Require A Four-Year Degree to work as a School Nurse**
 - The State Board of Education adopts the rules to establish qualifications for school nursing in North Carolina
 - Language in current § 115C-315. Hiring of school personnel. (d1) Certification for School Nurses. – Notwithstanding any other provision of law or rule, school nurses employed in the public schools prior to July 1, 1998, shall not be required to be nationally certified to continue employment. School nurses not certified by the American Nurses' Association or the National Association of School Nurses shall continue to be paid based on the noncertified nurse salary range as established by the State Board of Education.
 - Language in new appropriations bill: SECTION 7.27.(c) G.S. 115C-315 is amended by adding a new subsection to read: "(d2) School Nurses. – The State Board of Education, in accordance with subsection (d) of this section, may adopt rules to establish the qualifications and training required to be hired or contracted for as a certified school nurse except the Board may not require or impose a requirement that would require a nurse to obtain a four-year degree as a condition of employment."

DCFV WHOLE CHILD HEALTH SECTION, SCHOOL NURSE FUNDING INITIATIVE – AA 803

Sections of AA 803 Likely to be Impacted by Rule Change as it relates to “National Certification”

Section of AA 803	Current Language Likely to Be Impacted by Rule Changes
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Funds will be used to employ one or more nationally certified school nurses or registered nurses working toward national certification”
Scope of Work and Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Employ or assure the employment of nationally certified school nurses or registered nurses working toward national certification” “Notify the Regional School Health Nurse Consultant (RSHNC)...including information about nursing education and certification.” “Work plan shall also outline the certification plan the SNFI nurses will use toward completing degree and certification requirements, if not already certified. It shall describe the plan to achieve certification, including timelines for achieving education and certification goals. This certification plan must be updated at least twice annually and show progress towards the goals. The SNFI nurses must be certified no later than three years from the date of employment as a school nurse in North Carolina.
Performance Measures/Reporting Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Employ or assure the employment of nationally certified school nurses or registered nurses...”
Performance Monitoring and Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Monitoring vacancies, recruitment, hiring and certification state or progress towards certification...” “Scope of Work and Deliverables...will be monitored via work plan progress, including certification for non-certified school nurses during annual site visits” “Service is provided by nationally certified school nurses. If the nurses hired with these funds are not nationally certified, service is provided by registered nurses working towards certification...no later than the date of three years of employment as a school nurse in North Carolina.”

- **Potential Substantive Change**

- Discussions at the Triple P Partnership Strategic Governance Meeting on September 26, 2023, included a **potential** change to AA FY25:
 - Host an ***annual leadership meeting***, including funded Triple P Local Implementing Agencies Health Directors to address:
 - Turnover/Retention of Triple P Staff;
 - Increase awareness of Triple P system strengths/challenges among Health Directors; and
 - Ongoing support/capacity challenges for Triple P across the funded regions.
- DCFV welcomes feedback on this proposed idea.

DCFW FINANCE - AA PROCESS UPDATES

- **Process Improvement** – all DCFW AA's will be distributed to local health directors via the centralized DCFW.LHDAgreements@dhhs.nc.gov email by the February 2024 deadline.
- **Process Improvement** - local health directors will receive one email from DCFW.LHDAgreements@dhhs.nc.gov with all DCFW AA's by the February 2024 deadline.
- **Process Improvement** – local health directors will return executed copies of DCFW AA's to the centralized DCFW.LHDAgreements@dhhs.nc.gov email to facilitate timely releasing of funds.