

## **WIC Visual Collaboration/Telehealth Project Update**

### **Report for June 15, 2016 – District Nutrition Services Directors’ Meeting**

All WIC District Nutrition Services Directors were interviewed either by video conference, telephone, or in-person meetings. Highlights of the information gathered during the interviews follows.

#### UTILIZATION

Ten districts currently use video conference for providing breastfeeding services (either group classes, individual consultations, peer counselor meetings, and/or a combination of the above). Four districts provide nutrition education via Telehealth, and three districts have used video in the past but are not currently doing so due to equipment issues, staff shortages, or other reasons. Nutrition education varies from high-risk to low-risk to group classes. In addition, three districts report using Telehealth for on-demand WIC services on a regular basis. All districts utilize the video conference network for State-hosted meetings and training (with the exception of Grady, who currently has no video conference equipment onsite). Fourteen districts also use the network for district and local meetings and training.

Some of the highlights regarding utilization from the interviews include:

- The Gainesville district uses video conference daily for High Risk Nutrition Education. Two Registered Dietitians provide approximately 800-900 individual encounters each month with WIC participants.
- Nutrition classes are held four times per week via video conference in the Lagrange district. Two morning and one afternoon class are English and one afternoon class is Spanish. All counties in the district have the schedule and all sites are connected to the calls. Class sizes vary with up to ten participants per class.
- Both Columbus and Valdosta are interested in using mobile video conference in order to enhance WIC services provided on the military bases within their district.

#### TRENDS/IDEAS/CONCERNS

The following summarizes some of the information mentioned during the interviews:

- Every district expressed the ability to complete Certifications and Recertifications for WIC was key to increasing the use of video conference and maximizing staff coverage, particularly during times of staff shortages.
- Many districts expressed being able to record, catalog, access, playback, and store content from the visual collaboration network is crucial to efficiency and effectiveness of services. One district suggested having a database with all video content available and accessible to increase capacity and prevent duplication of efforts.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the information provided by during the district interviews, as well as knowledge of the video conference network history and operations, the following may be beneficial to increase the utilization and/or effectiveness of the Telehealth network.

- If it has not been done already, an individual or group should be identified to work toward allowing districts the ability to use video conference for WIC Certifications and Recertifications, and report back to the NSDs on a regular basis as to progress towards this goal.
- If time allows, a brief session added to the agenda of the NSD meetings could prove very beneficial for the purpose of sharing and training regarding Telehealth. Districts could share a brief overview of innovative ways they’re using video conference, or demonstrations or training on technology could be offered. Technical topics could include some of the following ideas gleaned from the interviews: Basic Troubleshooting; Video Etiquette; Effective Presentations over Video; Recording and Playback Options; Options for Screen Views during Calls and How to Request; etc. Programmatic presentations could include How to Provide Clinic Coverage via Video; Test Kitchen Demonstrations; Video for Mobile Clinics; etc.
- Many of the technical training needs identified by the NSDs for staff are actually covered in the content developed by the Waycross team that was offered to sites a couple of years ago. Due to increased use of the network and staff turnover, it would be beneficial to offer the training to districts again.