

**Title of Project:** Revisions to Diet Assessment Tools and Protocols---Pilot

**Agency Name:** Minnesota WIC Program

**State:** Minnesota

**Key Word Descriptors:** 24-Hour Food Records; Pictorial Food Frequency; Nutrition Questionnaire

**Description of Project:**

The MN WIC Program has for many years utilized 24Hour Food Records for assessing diets. With significant changes in the state's demographics (with an influx of Hmong, Somali, and Hispanics), and cultural and lifestyle changes impacting food security & feeding practices, it was clear we needed to offer local agencies (LA's) more flexibility to better accommodate the different needs of families and diverse cultural groups. Our goal was to develop an assessment process that would be easy to use, more meaningful to both participant and staff, culturally appropriate, result in a more comprehensive assessments, and lead to more meaningful education.

We are piloting a protocol in which every assessment begins with a brief screening of the adequacy of the family's housing and food & food-preparation resources. In cases of homelessness and/or severe hunger or food insecurity, the participant is immediately referred to other health and social services, including, for example, food shelves. If it is determined that the family is "relatively secure", the WIC staff begins diet assessment. Staff have three assessment tools from which to choose: a 24-Hour Food Record, a Pictorial Food Frequency tool, and/or a Nutrition Questionnaire. The Food Frequency utilizes *photographs* of food groups (including, in addition to the basic food groups, high sugar foods; high fat snacks; vitamin A-rich foods; vitamin C-rich foods; etc). This tool is likely to better assess the diets of participants who speak languages other than English and/or have low - literacy skills. The Nutrition Questionnaire assesses not only the "diet", but feeding practices and caregiver attitudes toward their child's weight and eating patterns, as well. The tools can be used independently or in combination.

**Results of the Project:**

We are beginning our evaluation. Following that, we intend to revise the tools as needed, develop a training and implementation plan, and release the new protocol statewide.

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