

## **POLICY**

The (WIC Agency) Breastfeeding Peer Counselors (BFPCs) will be available to answer basic breastfeeding questions and provide support for mothers and babies at participating hospitals.

## **SCOPE**

Breastfeeding Peer Counselors

Breastfeeding Coordinator

Competent Professional Authority (CPA) with breastfeeding support credentials

## **PROCEDURE**

1. The WIC program Breastfeeding Coordinator will establish relationships with hospitals to enable qualified BFPCs to provide basic breastfeeding support for new mothers and babies in the hospital and connect them with the WIC program during the early postpartum period.
  - a. An agreement will be created (as needed) to explain the expectations of the WIC program and the participating hospital.
  - b. To participate, breastfeeding peer counselors must obtain an advanced credential in breastfeeding support (i.e. Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC)) or have been working as a peer counselor for at least 1 year.
  - c. BFPCs will complete any hospital-required paperwork, training, screenings, etc. to allow them to work with patients in the hospital in a timely manner.
2. The Peer Counselor will:
  - a. Check in with designated hospital staff on arrival to determine eligible families.
  - b. Prioritize seeing active WIC families before seeing WIC-eligible families
    - i. BFPCs will only work to the extent allowed by the hospital and/or their credential (whichever is more conservative). An agreement would need to be developed in writing between the WIC Agency and the hospital if the BFPC is allowed by the hospital to provide support beyond basic education (i.e. treatment).
      1. Certification appointments will also be set for active WIC families and review documentation needed.
    - ii. The BFPC will assist clients seen in the hospital with obtaining a breast pump, as appropriate.
    - iii. The BFPC will provide WIC outreach materials to each WIC-eligible client and complete an initial eligibility screening for families. The BFPC may enroll new clients into the WIC program as time allows, following procedures to avoid creating duplicates.
      1. Any clients that the BFPC was unable to schedule appointments for should be encouraged to call the WIC Agency to schedule their appointment.
  - c. Document contacts made in the hospital.
    - i. The BFPC will track hospital contacts each day to be shared with their supervisor and point person at the hospital.
    - ii. The BFPC will document any client contacts in the WIC medical information system per agency documentation policies.
  - d. Manage their time and absences:
    - i. BFPC will use downtime at hospital efficiently, completing documentation or additional contacts by cell phone if there aren't patients available to be seen.
    - ii. BFPC will stay at the hospital during assigned hours unless dismissed by the hospital point person. If leaving prior to scheduled end time at the hospital, BFPC will report to the assigned clinic for that day and notify the supervisor.
    - iii. If the BFPC needs to miss a scheduled day at the hospital, it is their responsibility to contact the point person to inform them they will not be present.

3. Laptop use and security:

- a. BFPCs visiting hospitals will use an assigned WIC Agency laptop to facilitate enrollment of new clients, schedule appointments for existing clients, and document contacts. The laptop will not be used for non-work-related tasks.
- b. The laptop will be kept with the BFPC when at the hospital or in a secure location determined in conjunction with hospital staff.
- c. WIC Agency policies for password and cyber security will be followed.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_