

**SECTION: Nutrition Services****SUBJECT: Online Nutrition Education Opportunities: WICSmart**

**Federal Regulations:** §246.11 (a-e)

**Nutrition Services Standards:** Standard 7: Nutrition Education and Counseling; Standard 14: Nutrition Services Documentation

See Policy: WIC 300-03 Nutrition Education

**POLICY**

The WICSmart online nutrition education system offers an alternative to in-office follow-up nutrition education (second contacts) for low-risk WIC infants 7 months to 1 year, children 12 months to 5 years of age and women participants. To reduce barriers for prenatal participants, pregnancy related topics have been added to the approved modules list. Please note that prenatal participants may only be offered a WICSmart module once during their prenatal certification period. Ideally, women pregnant for the first time should be followed closely for updates on pregnancy progression and weight gain. WICSmart can be offered to women who have experienced a previous pregnancy (who are not being monitored closely for high risk or to augment the counseling session. Additionally, staff should be thoughtful when assigning WICSmart modules for pregnant participants to ensure the topic(s) are relevant to the prenatal period.

WICSmart is optional for both nutrition staff to offer and participants to accept/utilize as an alternative to individual in person nutrition education. While it is encouraged for participants to take advantage of facilitated group and individual in-person education opportunities, online education may be better suited to the needs of some participants. WICSmart can be assigned up to two times per certification period. Completion of one WICSmart module fulfills the second nutrition education contact requirement.

Assignment of WICSmart modules to eligible participants must be documented in the Nutrition Education Notes or in the "P" section of the SOAP Notes/Care Plan in CT-WIC. **All high-risk participants must have an in-office follow-up.** WICSmart can only be assigned to high-risk participants as an additional/optional second nutrition contact.

Currently there are 30 WICSmart modules available in English, Spanish and Portuguese. The current selections include modules from Cooking Matters, topics on shopping, food safety, physical activity and other nutrition related topics.

## **Guidance**

Nutritionist or Nutrition Aides must provide participants with clear instructions on how to log in to WICSmart and what the participant is required to do upon completion of their assigned module. To facilitate this process, local agency staff should provide the participant with a WICSmart instruction card to provide basic directions on accessing the application.

Participants will be instructed to contact the local agency upon completion of the WICSmart module. If a participant completes a WICSmart module and there is no pending information required from the participant to receive benefits, the eWIC card may be loaded without the Authorized Person present at the local agency. **Benefits may be issued remotely.** Local agency Nutritionists or Nutrition Aides will document the secondary contact, issue benefits, schedule the next appointment and inform the participant of what is required for the next scheduled visit.

In the event the participant does not contact the WIC office when they complete their module, the local agency should assign a designee to monitor the WICSmart completed module report to determine who has finished assigned modules. If the participant is within the 2 week benefit issuance cycle the Nutritionist should contact the participant to issue benefits, schedule their next appointment and inform the participant of what is required for the next scheduled visit.

Lastly, staff should determine how the participant would like to receive information on their available benefits. This may include; referring to My Benefits tab on WICShopper, email a pdf of their Family Benefit List (FBL), utilize the Conduent website <https://www.connectebt.com/>, by calling the customer service number on the back of their eWIC card or doing a balance inquiry at the store. If none of these options work, local agency staff should consider mailing a hard copy to the participant.

**For families with multiple individuals participating in WIC, it may be necessary for some family members to participate in follow-up nutrition education at the WIC local agency.**

Local agency staff should utilize both the WICSmart Lesson Module History Report and the One Call WICSmart report to determine if a participant was assigned a module but has not completed it within the two week period. The local agency should contact the participant to determine if they would prefer to be scheduled an in office visit or if they plan to complete the module. This is an attempt to ensure participants receive benefits.

## **Text Message Reminders**

Participants who are assigned a WICSmart module should be scheduled a WICSmart appointment on a Sunday within two weeks of their BVT. The system will send out a reminder for the participant to complete the module within a two week time period and to contact the WIC office when they have successfully completed the module. We are using Sundays for WICSmart reminders because no scheduled WIC appointments are on Sundays.

## **Documentation**

Refer to policy 300-09 Nutrition Services Documentation

After verifying that a participant completed a WICSmart module; document the nutrition education in the Nutrition Education Screen in CT-WIC. Staff should select "Secondary Online" as the method and

the appropriate WICSmart module under topic. Completion of the WICSmart online nutrition education module must be documented no later than the date of benefit issuance.

Nutrition Education						
	Date	*Method	*Topic	Note	Draft	User ID
▶	10/31/2017	Secondary Online	WIC Smart-Fruits & Vegetables	completed fruit & v...	<input type="checkbox"/>	BOTELLOA
	10/6/2017	Primary Individual	Pica	Still eating dirt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BEAULIEUP
	7/18/2017	Primary Individual	Pica		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BEAULIEUP

In lieu of a signature on the Family Benefit List, staff must document remote benefit issuance in the Alerts screen. Documentation should include completion of a WICSmart module, benefit issuance and how the participant is obtaining a summary of their benefits (i.e. email, mail, IVR or Conduent portal). Documentation must occur on the date of benefit issuance.

	Date	Staff ID	Active	Alert Message
▶	1/26/2018	BOTELLOA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Completed WICSmart module 1/26/18, BI today, FBL sent via email.

## Quality Assurance

The Program Nutritionist should include a QA measure within the quarterly chart audit review process and observations when applicable. Items to consider:

- Was the nutrition contact documented appropriately (Secondary Online and WICSmart topic) and in a timely manner?
- Was the age group and risk assignment appropriate for WICSmart module assignment?
  - Was the infant 7-12 months old, child 1-5 years old or women category? If a first-time mom was assigned a module, was their documentation as to why?
  - If high risk, were they scheduled for an in-person office visit?
  - If other family members are active were they scheduled for an in person office visit?
- If the participant didn't complete the module what follow up occurred to ensure the participant didn't miss out on benefits?
- How well did nutrition staff explain WICSmart module assignment? Did they cover the following; how to log in, module completion, contacting the WIC office for benefit issuance and next appointment? Was there any follow up at their next scheduled visit?