

2021 NWA Annual Pre-Conference Agenda

Monday, June 14 – Pre-Conference (additional Registration Fee)

11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Pre-Conference Session 1 – NWA Public Policy Session Description TBA
12:00 pm – 12:30 pm	Break
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	Pre-Conference Session 2 - Leveraging Annual Participant Experience Data to Inform Advocacy for WIC Enhancements in the COVID-19 Era In July 2020, Public Health Solutions, the largest provider of community-based WIC services in New York State, issued a digital survey to 25,223 WIC participants to assess COVID-19 impact to which 1,161 (4.6%) responded. Survey findings informed advocacy activities demanding increased protections for WIC participants and recommending a hybrid approach to future service delivery to optimize quality and participant experience.
1:30 pm – 2:00 pm	Break
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Pre-Conference Session 3 - Experiences Supporting Infant and Young Child Feeding in New Orleans Post-Hurricane Laura The New Orleans Breastfeeding Center's (NOBC) Infant Ready program promotes breastfeeding as the safest feeding option in emergencies through training, educational materials, and distribution of emergency infant feeding kits. Beginning on August 26, 2020 NOBC mounted its first local IYCFE response to support pregnant and parenting people with children under 2 years affected by Hurricane Laura. Hurricane Laura occurred around the same time as a resurgence of COVID-19 infections in Louisiana. NOBC launched an emergency parent-infant hotline; collected donations of diapers, wipes, and menstrual products; assessed feeding histories; and distributed innovative emergency infant feeding kits. The experiences and observations of lactation professionals from NOBC providing support post-hurricane show that city and state entities were not adequately prepared to respond to the infant feeding needs of evacuee families. Further, the low rates of breastfeeding observed among the evacuee population drove us to readapt our response as we went.
3:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Break
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Pre-Conference Session 4 - Assessing the impact and feasibility of WIC remote services and expanded food options The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated barriers to WIC participation. At the same time, the outbreak created economic conditions that increased food insecurity. Washington State (WA) WIC has been re-tooling service delivery since the outset of the pandemic to overcome participation barriers. In spring of

2020, WA WIC began offering remote WIC certifications, nutrition education, breastfeeding support and expanded the allowable foods list. Trends in participation, unmet need, food benefits issuance, and use of WIC services were examined in secondary quantitative data. Focus groups with state-level and local WIC staff and semi-structured interviews with WIC clients were conducted. Changes in participation, client and staff satisfaction, food purchasing, and food security as well as processes, facilitators, and challenges involved in the implementation of the programmatic changes will be presented. WA WIC is interested in continuing these program flexibilities after the pandemic. Evidence regarding the impact and feasibility of these changes could inform decision-making.

