

*The Spectrum of Retention: Using Data to Identify Different Types of Retention Issues in WIC*  
Pre-Conference Workshop: Participant Retention Strategies  
2019 NWA Annual Education and Training Conference & Exhibits

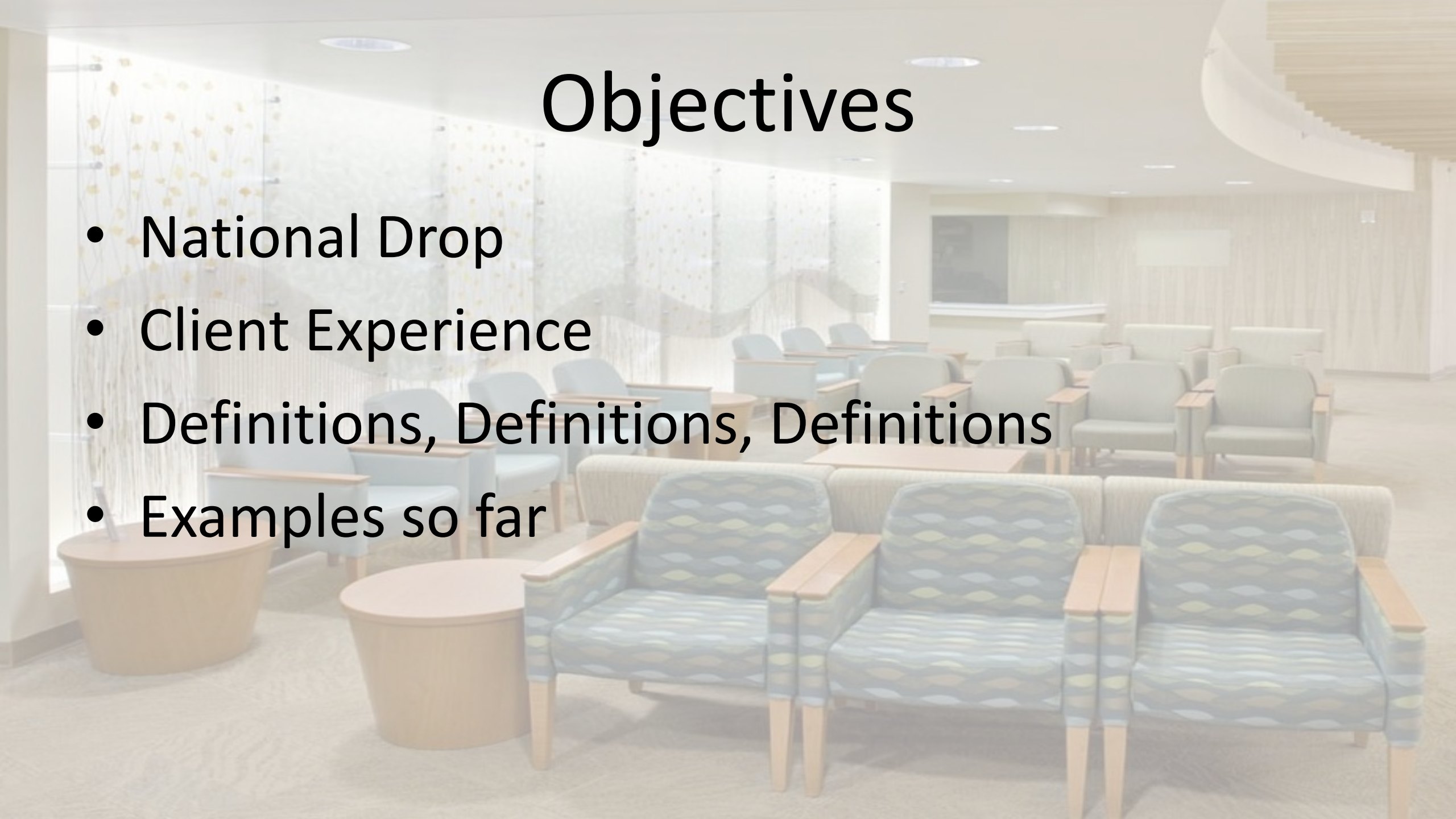
# Landscapes of Retention & Participation: An Evaluation Perspective

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April 6, 2019

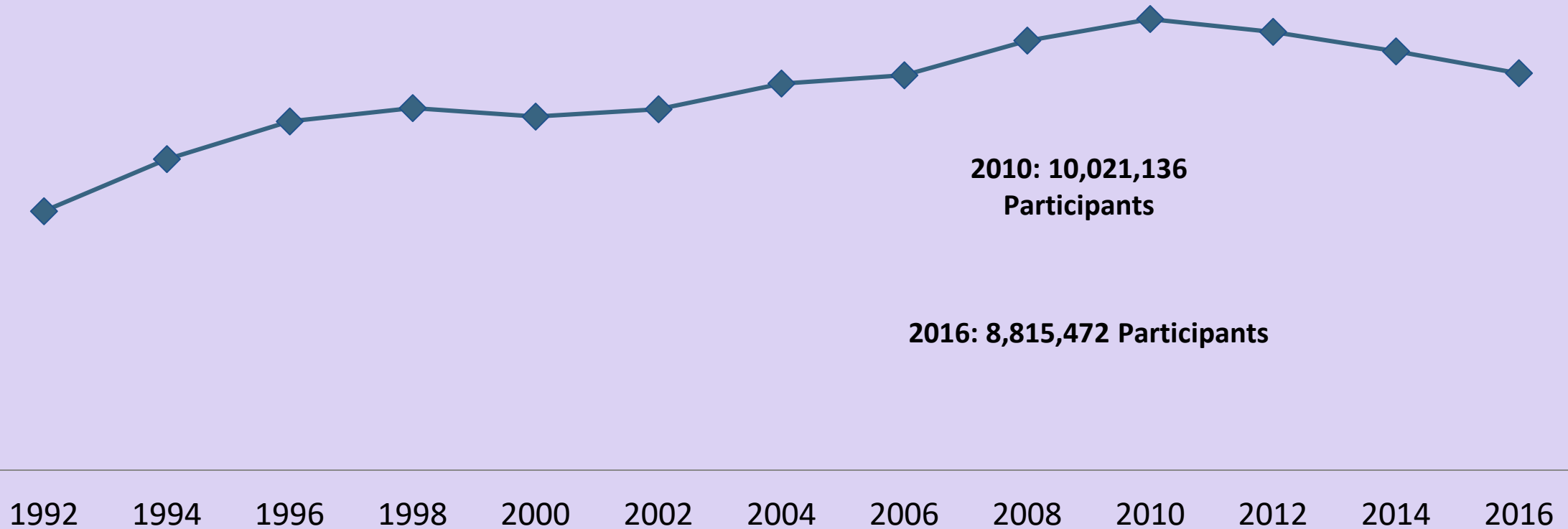


# Objectives

- National Drop
- Client Experience
- Definitions, Definitions, Definitions
- Examples so far



# Participation Drops Nationally



Thorn, B., Kline, N., Tadler, C., Budge, E., Wilcox-Cook, E., Michaels, J., Mendelson, M., Patlan, K. L., & Tran, V. (2018). *WIC Participant and Program Characteristics 2016*. Alexandria, VA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

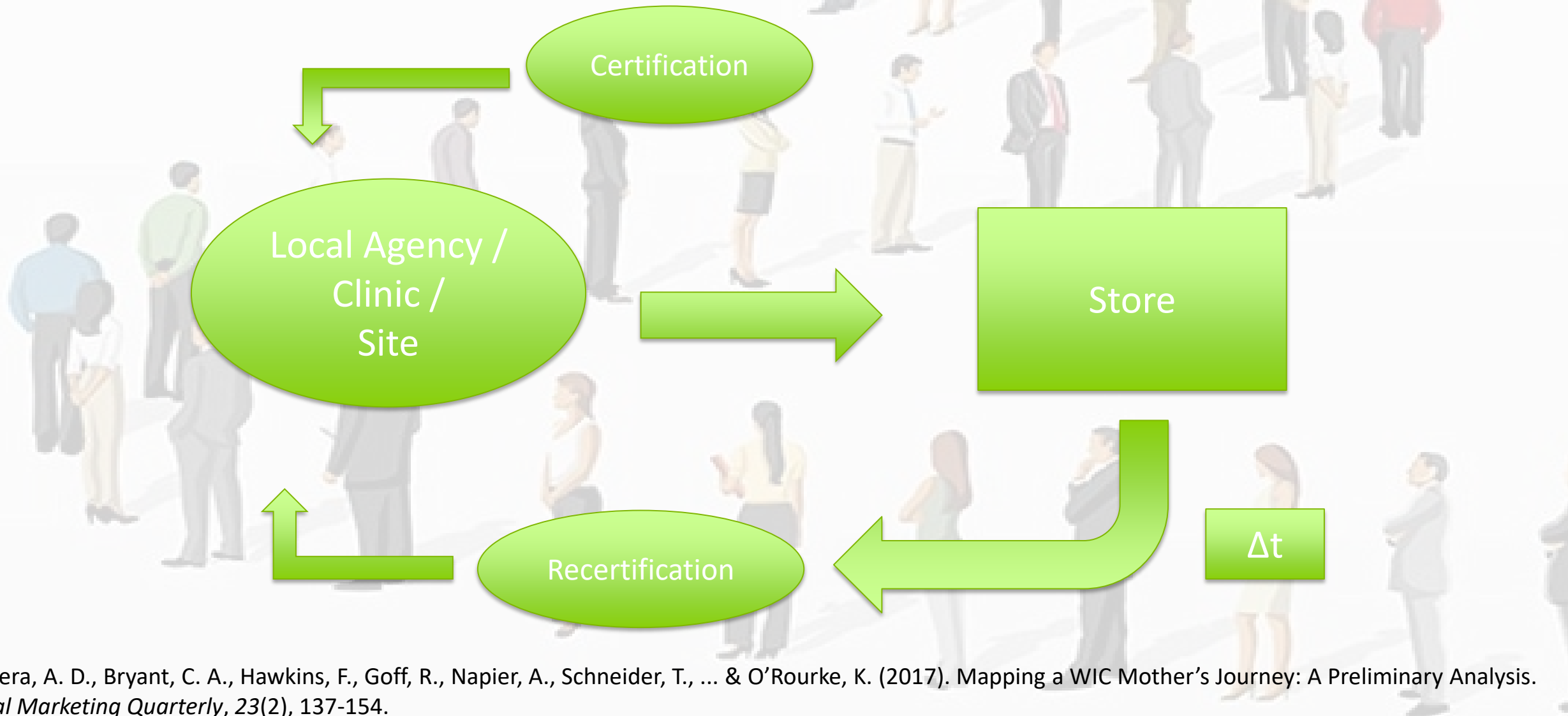
# Estimated Room to Grow

**Table 4.1. WIC National-Level Coverage Rates by Participant Category: CY 2016**

| <b>Participant Category</b>  | <b>Number Eligible</b> | <b>Number Participating</b> | <b>Coverage Rate (Percent)</b> |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Infants                      | 2,159,041              | 1,853,735                   | 85.9                           |
| Total children aged 1–4      | 8,907,712              | 3,926,307                   | 44.1                           |
| Children aged 1 <sup>a</sup> | 2,317,916              | 1,371,604                   | 59.2                           |
| Children aged 2 <sup>a</sup> | 2,222,568              | 1,052,609                   | 47.4                           |
| Children aged 3 <sup>a</sup> | 2,215,120              | 931,748                     | 42.1                           |
| Children aged 4 <sup>a</sup> | 2,152,108              | 570,345                     | 26.5                           |
| Pregnant women               | 1,408,119              | 707,748                     | 50.3                           |




Trippe, C., Tadler, C., Johnson, P., Giannarelli, L., & Betson, D. (2019). *National- and State-level Estimates of WIC Eligibility and WIC Program Reach in 2016*. Alexandria, VA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. Project Officer: Grant Lovellette.

# Client Experience



# Systematic Literature Review

Identify and describe local- and state-level efforts to:

1. Recruit new participants, 
2. Retain certified participants; and/or, 
3. Enhance the experience of current participants in WIC. 

Peer  
Reviewed  
Literature  
(2009 - )

Grey  
Literature  
(2009 - )



Set of Items  
to Abstract  
&  
Summarize

# Definitions

## Retention

- “Keep those who are certified”
- Recertification
- Completion of a certification period
  - Early drop
  - Early exit

Timing

## Participation

- Attends scheduled appointments
- Receiving referrals to other health and social services
- Redeems food benefits
- Completes nutrition education
- Receives breastfeeding support
- Use of Implemented Tools & Resources (Digital)



## Recruit New Participants



**THE WIC OUTREACH PROJECT**  
A Partnership between Delaware WIC and the  
Food Bank of Delaware



- Strategic collaborations with programs serving similar population
- Outreach Coordinator, the role of a champion
- Meeting potential clients where they are
  - Head Start, child care facilities, farmers markets





# Retain Certified Participants

- Targeted messaging for *particular* situations
- Multiple kinds of measures for getting at retention
- Clear operational definitions

## Texting for Retention Program

Childhood

WIC Special Project Grant

### 2014 WIC Special Project Mini-Grant

The Colorado WIC Program identified retention of children older than one year of age as a significant problem throughout the State. WIC loses nearly 50 percent of infants enrolled before they turn 2 years old. The Texting for Retention Program (TFRP) aimed to decrease some of the barriers to child retention, specifically remembering to schedule and attend appointments, and also the availability of simple information about the benefits of WIC participation for children over age one. The TFRP introduced a number of texting interventions that aimed to improve child retention in Colorado's WIC program. The texting innovations specifically address some of the primary barriers to retention for children over the age of one by sending reminders to schedule and attend appointments and by delivering simple information about the benefits of WIC participation to targeted WIC participants.





# Enhance the experience of current participants


- “[...] increasing retention in the program, by enhancing participants’ shopping experiences.”

Evaluation and Program Planning 63 (2017) 7–17

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

 **Evaluation and Program Planning** 

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/evalprogplan](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/evalprogplan)

**Use of a mixed-method approach to evaluate the implementation of retention promotion strategies in the New York State WIC program** 

Jackson P. Sekhobo<sup>a,\*</sup>, Sanya R. Peck<sup>a</sup>, Youjung Byun<sup>a,b</sup>, Marie A.K. Allsopp<sup>a,b</sup>, MaryEllen K. Holbrook<sup>a</sup>, Lynn S. Edmunds<sup>a</sup>, Chengxuan Yu<sup>a</sup>

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**ABSTRACT**

This research assessed the implementation of strategies piloted at 10 Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clinics aimed at increasing retention in the program, by enhancing participants’ shopping experiences. Under WIC Retention Promotion Study: Keep, Reconnect, Thrive (WIC RPS), clinics were recruited and assigned to implement one or a combination of strategies: a standardized Shopping Orientation (SO) curriculum, a Guided Shopping Tour (GST), and a Pictorial Foods Card (PFC) from November 2012 through August 2013. This paper presents results from the process

- Based solutions on formative research
- Clear framework for evaluation
- Focused on a particular part of the participant journey

# Take-Away

- Where to begin?
  - Talk with your colleagues
  - Talk with participants
  - Go beyond barriers
  - Make a plan
- Measurement
  - Clear
  - Consistent
  - Practical

# Other Resources

- If digital tools are your thing...

<https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/launching-new-digital-tools-for-wic-participants#p1PreparingToAssessImpact>

- National WIC Association's Research Activities

<https://www.nwica.org/research-activities>

- Colleagues here today

# Thank you!



7/22/2017

| Term Date | Term Reason                         | Comment |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|---------|
|           | Categorically Ineligible            |         |
|           | Moved Out of State                  |         |
|           | Temporary Furlough                  |         |
|           | Request/Not Interested              |         |
|           | Deceased                            |         |
|           | Duplicate Enrollee                  |         |
|           | Failure To Pickup Checks Two Months |         |
|           | Violated WIC Program Rules          |         |
|           | Clerical Error Made                 |         |
|           | Failure To Recertify                |         |

change

Save Cancel

PANZERAA 161603 Hyattsville

