

Minnesota WIC Data Matching and Targeted Outreach

Minnesota WIC receives data quarterly from the state's Medicaid program and uses it to identify individuals who are eligible for WIC but not enrolled and conduct targeted outreach via text message. The outreach communications provide a link to the Minnesota WIC online application (see <https://thewichub.org/minnesota-wic-online-application/>).

To identify WIC eligible individuals, WIC obtains an "Outreach list" from Medicaid with information for individuals in WIC's target population and uses this to match with records of WIC participants. The steps in the match process are listed below.

- Obtain the Outreach list, including first name, last name, mailing address, date of birth and phone number.
- Identify any addresses or phone numbers that need to be excluded for outreach (e.g., address/telephone that belong to the county office).
- Prepare a list of current WIC participants, including first name, last name, mailing address, date of birth and telephone number. Several definitions of "current" have been explored. At this time, "current" is defined as being certified within the past calendar year.
- Make the format of the names and date of birth for the Outreach list and the WIC list the same. (e.g., if names are in all caps in the WIC list, make the format all caps in the Outreach list).
- Create a combination field in each list that combines last name, first name, and date of birth.
- Use Excel, SAS, Tableau or another program to match on combination field and remove WIC participants from the Outreach list. Note: If using Excel to remove the WIC participants, insert the matched participants at the top of the Outreach list and deduplicate on the combination field. Delete the inserted matched participants leaving only the "Outreach not on WIC" group.
- Sort the Outreach list from oldest to youngest by date of birth.
- Deduplicate the Outreach list by telephone number, selecting the oldest date of birth for each telephone number to make a list for text messages.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the targeted outreach, Minnesota WIC identifies the number of individuals who complete a WIC application within 2 months of receiving an outreach text or mailing. To do this, WIC matches the telephone numbers of participants who completed a WIC application with telephone numbers of individuals on the Outreach list. Individuals on the Outreach list that could not be contacted by text or telephone are omitted from the evaluation. While this outreach initiative is still in the early stage, the evaluation indicated that 4 percent to 5 percent of households that received text messages completed a WIC application. Future efforts will include testing different types of marketing messages, such as why WIC is of value, rather than just how to apply to WIC.

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