

The WIC Policy-Making Process and Current Issues

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National WIC Association

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At Its Core, WIC is about Changing Behavior and Improving Health

Nutrition
Education

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Breastfeeding
Education and
Support

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Referrals to
Healthcare and
Social Services

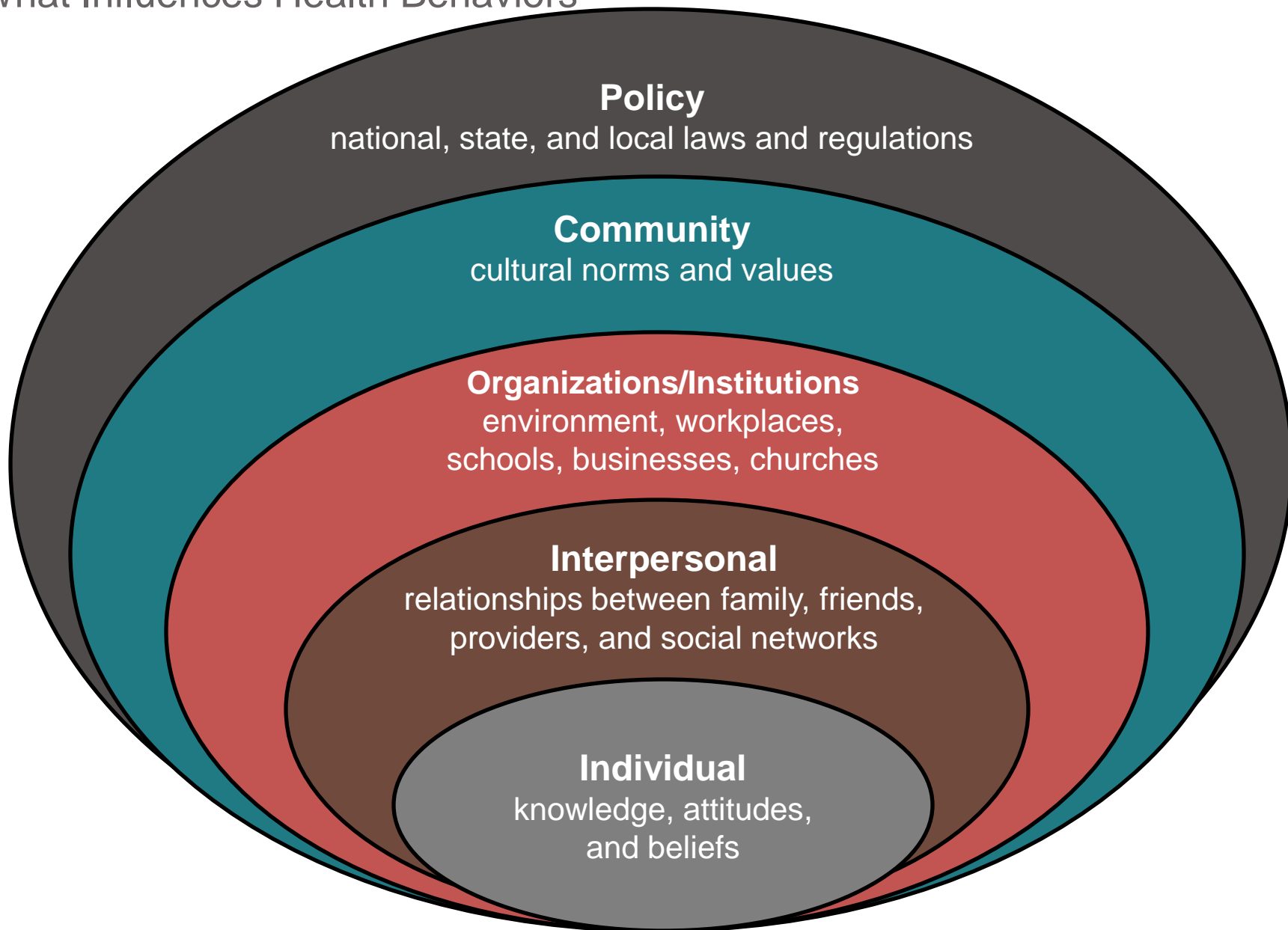
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Healthy Foods



Social-Ecological Model:

What Influences Health Behaviors



Changes to WIC Policy can Help or Hinder Your Ability to Help Clients Achieve Their Goals.

3 Main Policy Areas

- Appropriations (legislative)
- Reauthorization (legislative)
- Food Package (regulatory)



WIC Appropriations

WIC Appropriations

- Also known as “WIC Funding”
- WIC is a discretionary program
- Congress must fund WIC each year
- Funding is not guaranteed

Why is the yearly WIC Appropriations process important?

Committees of jurisdiction

- These are the committees with the power to fund or not fund WIC
- House Appropriations Committee; Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, & FDA
- Senate Appropriations Committees; Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, & FDA

Committee Leadership

House

- Robert Aderholt (R-AL),
Chair, Subcommittee
- Sam Farr (D-CA), Ranking
Member, Subcommittee
- Harold Rogers (R-KY),
Chair, Full Committee
- Nita Lowey (D-NY),
Ranking Member, Full
Committee

Senate

- Roy Blunt (R-MO), Chair,
Subcommittee
- Dianne Feinstein (D-CA),
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee
- Thad Cochran (R-MS),
Chair, Full Committee
- Barbara Mikulski (D-MD),
Ranking Member, Full
Committee

We want them to know about how great WIC is and make them our best friends.

Steps in the Appropriations Process

- **President's Budget Request** <---currently here in the process
- Congress's **Budget Resolution** or Not and the **302 (a)**
- House and Senate Appropriations Committees determine Subcommittee allocations **302 (b)s**

Steps in the Appropriations Process

- House and Senate Agriculture, Rural Development, and FDA **Subcommittee markup** their versions of the bill, including the WIC program allocation
 - **Vote** by Subcommittee
- If passed by Subcommittees, **Full Appropriations Committees markup** their versions of the bill, including the WIC program allocation
 - **Vote** by Full Committee

Steps in the Appropriations Process

- If passed by Full Committee, **House and Senate floor** debate and amendment on their versions of the bills
 - **Vote** by House and Senate on the different versions of the bill

Steps in the Appropriations Process

- If both versions of bill are passed, a **Conference Committee** is formed
- Conference Committee **irons out differences** between 2 versions of the bill
 - **Vote** by House and Senate on same conferenced bill
- If passed by House and Senate, bill goes to President Obama for **signature or veto**

Keep informed about where Congress is in the process!

- Weekly Legislative Updates NWA's Monday Morning Report
- All Legislative Updates are posted on NWA's blog to get up to speed on the latest issues



National WIC Association

NWA is the non-profit education arm and advocacy voice of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).



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NEWS & BLOG

WASHINGTON UPDATE

Weekly WIC Policy Update

February 9, 2015

2016 Budget Update: House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (R-KY) has scheduled several hearings this week on President Obama's FY 2016 budget request. Hearings on the president's budget will also take place before other committees in the House and Senate this week.

Affordable Care Act Update: Last week, the House passed H.R. 596 by a vote of 239-186. H.R. 596, if enacted, would repeal the 2010 Affordable Care Act and direct three House committees to draft replacement legislation. Senate Majority

SHARE



WASHINGTON UPDATE

Get email updates on WIC policy news and action alerts.

SUBSCRIBE

Recent Appropriations Challenges

- Threats of funding cuts
- Funding uncertainty with numerous Continuing Resolutions
- The government shutdown

Continuing Resolutions (CRs)

- If Congress cannot agree on funding levels for government programs in the coming year, they may enact a Continuing Resolution (CR)
- Short-term funding to avoid a government shutdown
- Short-term funding makes program planning challenging



eating and health

Shutdown Leaves Program Feeding Women And Infants In Lurch

by ELIZA BARCLAY AND ALLISON AUBREY

October 01, 2013 3:49 PM

While CRs are not ideal, they are better than letting the government shutdown.

Shutdown threatens nutrition for mothers, children

By Steve Hargreaves @hargreavesCNN October 1, 2013: 9:37 AM ET

CNNMoney

Government shutdown could soon have impact on family WIC program in Cuyahoga County

WIC program for women, children could soon be hurt

BY: Joe Pagonakis, newsnet5.com

POSTED: 4:16 PM, Oct 8, 2013

UPDATED: 11:08 AM, Oct 9, 2013

WIC Appropriations

FY2015

- Funding to meet all caseload needs
- \$60 million: breastfeeding peer counselor program
- \$55 million: MIS/EBT
- \$14 million: Infrastructure
- \$16 million: Program Initiatives and Evaluation

FY 2016 President's request

- Same as FY2015
- Level funding request

FY 2016 NWA Appropriations Asks

NWA ASKS FOR
MORE
INVESTMENT IN
WIC!

- Funding to meet all caseload needs
- \$90 million: breastfeeding peer counselor program
- \$80 million: MIS (\$30 million)/EBT (\$50 million)
- \$14 million: Infrastructure
- \$16 million: Program Initiatives and Evaluation with \$5 million for rigorous research
- \$6 million for enhanced breastfeeding CVV

FY2016 Challenge: Sequestration

- Lower 302 (a) overall funding allocation
- Likely lower 302 (b) allocation for Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development and FDA in FY2016
- Each year through FY2021, the overall funding allocation will decrease
- WIC is the largest program for the Subcommittee, so it is prime for cuts as the Subcommittee's allocation continues to be squeezed

WIC Funding Outlook: Challenging



WIC Reauthorization

WIC Reauthorization

- Occurs every 5 years
- Changes WIC Policy
- Committees of jurisdiction
 - House Education and the Workforce Committee
 - Senate Agriculture Committee

Committee Leadership

House : Education and the Workforce

- Todd Rokita (R-IN), Chair, Subcommittee
- Marcia L. Fudge (D-OH), Ranking Member, Subcommittee
- John Kline (R-MN), Chair, Full Committee
- Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA), Ranking Member, Full Committee

Senate : Agriculture

- John Hoeven (R-ND), Chair, Subcommittee
- Bob Casey (D-PA), Ranking Member, Subcommittee
- Pat Roberts (R-KS), Chair, Full Committee
- Debbie Stabenow (D-MD), Ranking Member, Full Committee

We also want them to know about how great WIC is and make them our best friends.

Examples of Past Reauthorization Policy Change

- Language to review and update the food package every 10 years
- The establishment of the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program
- Mandate to get all states to EBT by 2020
- The establishment of the use of adjunctive eligibility in WIC
- Language that establishes funding levels for set asides like the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program, MIS/EBT, and Infrastructure

Steps in the Reauthorization Process: Similar to Appropriations process but with new committees

- Hearings
- Marker bills introduced
- House Education and the Workforce Committee / Senate Agriculture Committee mark-ups of their respective bills
- House and Senate Floor Debate
- House and Senate vote on their versions of the bill
- Once passed, the bills are conferenced to iron out differences
- House and Senate vote on conferenced agreement
- If passed, bill is signed into law, or vetoed and returned for more work or an override.

NWA Reauthorization Asks: Food Packages

Keep food packages based on science and with choice!



NWA Reauthorization Asks: Eligibility

Infant
certification for
2 years!

*

Moms until 2
years post-
partum!

*

Children to 6
years old!



NWA Reauthorization Asks: MIS/EBT

\$85 million for
management
information
systems (MIS)
and electronic
benefit transfer
(EBT)!



NWA Reauthorization Asks: Breastfeeding

\$180 million
per year for
breastfeeding
peer counselor
program!

*

Double the
current
amount!



NWA Reauthorization Asks: Cost Containment

Preserve the
integrity of
infant formula
cost
containment!



NWA Reauthorization Asks: Infrastructure and Research

\$40 million per
year for
infrastructure!

*

\$15 million per
year for
rigorous health
outcomes
research!



Reauthorization: Potential Challenges

- **Eligibility**
 - Adjunctive eligibility
 - Eliminating whole categories of clients, like “children”
 - Documenting Immigrations Status

WIC Food Packages

WIC Food Packages

- Regulatory process
- Reviewed every 10 years
- USDA seeks recommendations from 3rd party scientific body, the Institute of Medicine (IOM)
- At the beginning of the IOM review process

Food Package Rule-making Process

- USDA begins rule-making process and reaches out to IOM for their expert recommendations
- IOM reviews food packages
- IOM releases report of its recommendations to USDA and the public
- USDA publishes interim rule and accepts public comments
- **USDA responds to all public comments and makes any changes to food packages rule, considering comments**
- **USDA publishes interim final rule and accepts public comment**
- USDA responds to all public comments and makes any changes to food packages rule, considering comments
- USDA publishes final rule
- Process repeats every 10 years

Essentially, there are opportunities for anyone to provide input throughout process.

Food Package Challenge: Congress deciding to put whatever they want in the food packages rather than go through the rule-making process.

Advocacy

It becomes increasingly important to tell the WIC story to policymakers!



National WIC Association
WIC for a Healthier America



Advocacy vs. Lobbying

As the nation's premier public health nutrition program, WIC is a cost-effective, sound investment—insuring the health of our children.

NWA'S MISSION
NWA Inspires and empowers the WIC community to advocate for and promote quality nutrition services for all eligible mothers and young children, and assure effective management of WIC.

Advocacy

Advocacy refers to speaking out on issues or supporting a proposal or a cause.

Lobbying

Lobbying is one type of advocacy legally defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS defines two types of lobbying - direct lobbying and grassroots lobbying.

Direct Lobbying

A direct lobbying communication is any attempt to influence legislation through communication with any member or employee of a legislative body or any other government official or employee who may participate in the formulation of the legislation through communication that refers to specific legislation and reflects a view on that legislation.

Grassroots Lobbying

A grassroots lobbying communication is any effort to influence legislation by attempting to affect the opinions of the general public or any segment of the public through communication that refers to specific legislation, reflects a view on that legislation, and encourages the recipient to contact a legislator, employee of a legislative body, or any other government official or employee about the legislation.

Examples of Direct Lobbying	Examples of Grassroots Lobbying
Emailing a member of Congress to vote yes on H.R. 2112 while on paid work time	Sending an action alert to a listserv to encourage them to email their Congressmen and telling them to vote yes on H.R. 2112
If a bill is introduced that contains a provision that cuts WIC funding, speaking out against that funding cut measure to a Congressional staff member	If a bill is introduced that contains a provision that cuts WIC funding, telling people in your email address book to speak out against that funding cut measure to a Congressional staff member
Telling a member of Congress to support the President's budget proposal for WIC	Requesting friends and colleagues to urge a Member of Congress to support the President's budget proposal for WIC

Advocacy vs. Lobbying

Advocacy

- Advocacy refers to speaking out on issues or supporting a proposal or cause.

Lobbying

- **Lobbying is one type of advocacy** legally defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
- A lobbying communication:
 - Refers to **specific legislation or measures** in a piece of legislation
 - **Reflects a view** on that legislation, and
 - **Involves a communication** with any member or employee of a legislative body or any other government official or employee who may participate in the formulation of the legislation (direct lobbying) **OR encourages the recipient to contact** a legislator, employee of a legislative body, or any other government official or employee (grassroots lobbying)

Non-lobbying Advocacy

- **Educating** the public and members of Congress about WIC
- **Highlighting** the achievements of WIC clinics in the media
- **Hosting** events that promote, celebrate, or inform about WIC

Activity: Lobbying vs. Advocacy

- The House is voting on a budget bill that would harm WIC, so you call your Congressman and tell him to vote against the bill.
- You get an NWA action alert to sign a letter stating the benefits of WIC, so you click to email your member of Congress.
- You do an interview with the local radio station on how funding shortfalls are influencing client services.
- You host your district's member of Congress at the clinic, explaining all the wonderful aspects of WIC. The Congresswoman ends up talking with a WIC client who is aware of a bill to cut funding for WIC. The client expresses her disapproval.
- There's a bill to restore funding to WIC, so you tell your friends to call their Congressmen and request support of the bill.

You are Permitted and Encouraged to Lobby

- It is your democratic right
- Each state has specific laws for state employees about lobbying efforts while on the job
- Private money can be used on lobbying, federal funds generally cannot
- If you are confused..
 - Limit lobbying efforts to coffee breaks, lunch breaks, after hours and other times not considered “work time”
 - Focus your time on educating about the value of WIC

During NWA's Leadership Conference
you will be
educating and
doing non-lobbying advocacy.



Now more than ever, we need your voice for
WIC families!

Questions? Comments?