

NLN 2015 Abstract Submission from Arizona

Title: Incorporating PCS into a WIC Computer System (HANDS)

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Leads: State Program Staff, MIS/QA, WIC IT, CMA, Local Agency Staff, State Partners

Background Information and Project Goals:

The development of the internet-based Health and Nutrition Delivery System (HANDS) began in 2008 with design sessions to capture state and local agency input. In 2009, the development contract was awarded to CMA to begin technical design sessions with the local agencies and partners. The goals for the new system were not only to streamline WIC services, but also to be Participant Centered and in line with our ABCDE conversational assessment method. In the previous computer system, Arizona in Motion (AIM), there was a questionnaire that would be reviewed with clients in a script format.

In 2011, AZ WIC developed the ABCDE conversational approach to screen for WIC risks during the certification process. Topics are categorized by Anthropometric, Biochemical, Clinical, Dietary and Environmental and coincide with USDA risk criteria. The ABCDE approach, along with the use of “Getting to the Heart of the Matter” tools, allows staff to have a conversation that is tailored to the participants’ concerns and needs.

Methods:

The ABCDE approach was implemented in 2012 to all WIC staff prior to rolling out HANDS in order to make the transition easier. Since staff had to continue to utilize the AIM system for another two years, workarounds were used to bypass the scripted questions. WIC staff were also trained on documenting their conversation by using an Arizona WIC specific note format, “TGIF,” which includes Getting to the Heart of the Matter tool used during the appointment, goal(s), important information, and follow up.

Rather than including a questionnaire in the new system, the ABCDE guide was incorporated into the program which allows staff to have a conversation that is participant-led and focus less on the computer screen. For new staff that are not as experienced in conversational assessment, examples of open-ended questions are available within the system for each section of ABCDE. Once the assessment is complete, the WIC counselor is able to manually assign WIC risks based on the conversation and then document using the TGIF format.

Results/Summary/Discussion:

Statewide rollout of HANDS was completed by December 2014 and staff have already reported that it has been easier to conduct the ABCDE assessment with the new computer system. Rolling out the ABCDE approach prior to implementation of HANDS did assist in a smoother transition for staff. Reports can be more difficult to run because the majority of the assessment information is now located in the staff notes. However, it was found that often questions and information were not always answered accurately in the AIM system.