

## **Utilizing VENA Through VISION**

### **Background:**

VENA stands for Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment. It is a federal requirement of USDA, Food and Nutrition Services (FNS). It is used to set standards for assessment of participants to help personalize services offered to WIC participants. VENA is used to broaden the purpose of the nutrition assessment to focus more on individualized nutrition education instead of focusing all on eligibility determinations. The Utah WIC Program VISION computer system was implemented in 2011 across the state of Utah. It was developed with VENA in mind; VENA has been incorporated into the nutrition interview section of the computer system to ensure that staff are utilizing the VENA process with each participant.

### **Goals:**

To provide more personalized nutrition assessments with targeted care to the participants on the WIC program. This VENA process was designed to help ensure that nutritionists have the best tools available to provide WIC participants with better service and care. The VISION computer system is being used to enhance the nutrition assessment process. It provides staff with the computer support needed for a complete and comprehensive nutrition assessment. It does improve the satisfaction of staff as well as participants served.

### **Methods:**

The VISION computer system is part of a State Agency Model which involves 3 states: Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming. Each of these states use this Mountain Plains Computer Consortium system. The system was in the development phase from 2004 until 2011 when it was implemented in Utah. State and local staff from all 3 states participated in functional design and joint application sessions during the development phase. The staff was asked how they liked the new system to perform and ways the nutrition assessment process could be improved.

### **Results:**

Nutrition staff reported that having VISION makes conducting a nutrition assessment more beneficial. By incorporating VENA it has helped staff improve their assessment skills. It has provided more personalized interviews and better care to the participants.

### **Discussion:**

The implementation of this new computer system has changed the way that nutritionists and dietitians assess participants and has improved the care provided to our participants. VISION is a model computer system for the WIC program. It is a program that is leading the way for WIC programs across the nation.