WIC QUALITY IMPROVEMENT STORY BOARD 8/15/13

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|  | **WHATCOM COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT** | **QI Team:** Kelly Molaski, Nutrition Services Supervisor |
|  | 509 Girard Street, Bellingham, WA, 98266 | Judy Ziels, Parent Child Health Supervisor |
|  | (360) 676-6724 | Susan Sloan, Performance Management Specialist |
|  | 75 employees, serving a | Allison Williams, WIC Certifier |
|  | population of 201,140 | Astrid Newell, Community Health Manager |
|  |  |  |
| **qi project:** | ***improving wic scheduling efficiencies*** |  |
|  | ***using quality improvement techniques*** |  |

**DEFINITIONS:**

**WIC:** A supplemental food and nutrition education program for eligible low-income women, infants, & children.

**Second Education Contacts (2C’s):** Required nutrition education provided to WIC participants.

**No show:** A missed appointment.

**PLAN**

Identify an opportunity and

Plan for Improvement

**1. Getting Started**

Our overall goal was to increase the number of WIC-eligible clients served by maximizing use of available appointment time. As of July 2013, there were 1,966 WIC-eligible individuals on Medicaid in Whatcom County who were not participating in a WIC program. These individuals miss out on $600 worth of food each year plus the nutrition education benefits of WIC.

**2. Assemble the Team**

Our diverse team included WIC supervisory staff, a WIC certifier, and our QI facilitator. We received monthly technical support from DOH’s Centers for Performance Management Excellence as part of a $10,000 QI grant.

**3. Examine the Current Approach**

We focused our efforts on process improvements to increase scheduling efficiencies and improve customer satisfaction.

**AIM STATEMENT:**

By August 1, 2013, increase the number of eligible WIC clients served by maximizing use of available appointment time.

The team conducted a detailed

review of

the VFC

* The team identified the root cause of missed client appointments: 52% forgot the appointment (13 of 25).
* Of all clients, 2C’s had the highest “no show” rate of 32%.

**4. Identify Potential Solutions**

The following potential changes were identified:

* Improve our client appointment reminder system by calling two days before the appointment rather than the current practice of calling one day before.
* Provide 2C clients with additional options for nutrition education that do not require a formal one-on-one appointment with a WIC certifier.

**5. Develop an Improvement Theory**

* ***If*** *we reduce no show appointments* ***then*** *our overall caseload will go up.*
* ***If*** *we have fewer 2C clients needing 15-minute one-on-one appointments with a WIC certifier, then we will have additional appointment time available for new clients.*

**DO**

Test the Theory for Improvement

**6. Test the Theory**

* For a period of 3 weeks our clerk called clients two days before the appointment as a reminder.
* A client Education Room was created to accommodate clients preferring this option to a 15-minute in-person meeting. Clients were surveyed regarding their experience.

**CHECK**

Use Data to Study Results of the Test

**7. Study the Results**

* Calling clients two days prior to an appointment did not improve “no show” rates. Unfilled time increased for certifiers from 11% to 15%.
* We estimate that between 360-720 clients will use the Education Room annually (15 minutes of certifier time saved per client) for an annual cost savings in the range of $3,500-$7,000.
* 61% of the clients surveyed appreciated the convenience of the Education Room option.

**ACT**

Standardize the Improvement and Establish Future Plans

**8. Standardize the Improvement**

**or Develop New Theory**

The Education Room option will expand to serve WIC clients who have missed their appointment as well as scheduled 2C’s. An at-home online education option will be offered also.

**9. Establish Future Plans**

* Improve the accuracy and efficiency of WIC data collection.
* Explore the feasibility of text messaging appointment reminders to clients.
* Create an effective marketing plan to attract new WIC-eligible clients.