



December 2023

WIC Needs Assessment Report

Why did we gather input?

We wanted to talk directly with participants about WIC to help us learn what's working well and what could be better.

How did we get feedback?

- **104** interviews with WIC participants.
- **182** survey responses through the WIC-Shopper App.

Who did we talk to?

We reached out to WIC participants who:

- Live in rural areas
- Primary parent is age 23 or younger
- Speak Spanish, Vietnamese, or an East African language
- Identify as Native Hawai'i'an or Pacific Islander

In their words: *“What I love the most, the education (wonderful information). The wonderful client, customer relationship I've had. Wonderful people, they give a lot of care towards mothers and children. It's something I really admire and believe every community needs... WIC program has been its own healthy, vibrant service to the community and every community I've lived in.”*

Overall...

We heard that participants are busy, and we should make it as easy as possible to access and use WIC services.

- **95%** said they appreciate, and use, the fruit and vegetable benefits.
- **86%** said the WICShopper App helped them find and use benefits.
- **62%** said they dislike or don't want a particular food WIC offers them.

What kind of experience do participants have in WIC clinics?

"Feel very supported by people I've talked to - feel cared for."

Participants talked about positive experiences with WIC staff, and said they had opportunities to provide feedback. They also liked the flexibility of virtual and phone appointments, and appreciated rescheduling options and appointment reminders.

Nutrition Education

"I don't think I would have paid the money/ amount for fresh foods. Before I was in these programs, I tended to eat pretty unhealthy. Since joining I've eaten healthier."

84% reported making a change since participating in WIC nutrition education.

Most prefer to receive education 1-on-1 over the phone with staff so that it can be tailored to their family.

Breastfeeding and Chestfeeding Support

"The different resources offered. Lactation consultant. Referred us to a tongue tie specialist. Referred us to a nutritionist for formula sensitivities. Helped us with finding answers to anything we might have had questions about."

In general, participants said they felt their breastfeeding or chestfeeding needs were being met by clinic staff and peer counselors.

What changes could make it easier to spend WIC benefits?

"I always buy everything. It's a little hard to find it, sometimes the WIC item option is not the one I like as much, as the one that isn't covered by WIC."

WIC items should be easy to find and available in the stores that participants shop at. Product information and signage should be available in participants' language. The WICShopper App is helpful, but wi-fi is not always available at stores.

Participants want more...

- Bread and grain options.
- Substitutions for particular items in the food package.
- Organic options.
- Recipes for cooking with beans.

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