**PARTICIPANT IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE**

### Background on WIC What Matters to You Project

In 2019, Public Health Solutions received funding from the [Hopkins/USDA Participant Research](https://www.jhsph.edu/departments/population-family-and-reproductive-health/projects/hopkins-usda-participant-research-innovation-laboratory-for-enhancing-wic-services/) [Innovation Laboratory](https://www.jhsph.edu/departments/population-family-and-reproductive-health/projects/hopkins-usda-participant-research-innovation-laboratory-for-enhancing-wic-services/) (HPRIL) to implement **WIC What Matters to You** (WMTY) a participant-centered WIC retention project that focuses on participants with the highest risk of dropping out of the program (children turning ages 1 and 2), identifies the highest priority needs of the parents and caregivers of enrolled children coming up on their first and second birthdays through a [“what matters to you”](http://www.ihi.org/Topics/WhatMatters/Pages/default.aspx) approach and connects them with services to address those needs by making closed-loop referrals to coordinated, accountable network of community-based partners. By connecting participants to services and benefits to address their highest priority needs we hope to reduce barriers to WIC participation, increase utilization of issued benefits, and improve rates of recertification for WIC.

### Project Goal

Evaluate a participant-centered approach to co-location and service coordination as a retention strategy, with a focus on the developmental stages where families are most at-risk for loss to follow-up.

### Project Objectives

**Objective 1:**

Systematically identify participant barriers to recertification and uncover social needs using a “what matters to you” approach by screening a minimum of 500 mothers or caregivers for all enrolled infant at 6-9 months and child at 18-21 months at intervention sites throughout the intervention.

### Objective 2:

Facilitate access of families with an identified need to available resources from a network of local services using a closed-loop electronic referral system.

### Objective 3:

Analyze improvement, through pre-post performance at intervention sites, as well as between intervention and control sites; analyze participant retention by level of engagement with other services and explore how the patient-centered approach and targeted referrals may both address barriers to participation and enhance the overall value of WIC after infancy

### Evaluation

The evaluation for this project will involve a quasi-experimental, mixed-methods approach. The two intervention sites for our project are **WIC-Corona** and **WIC-Ocean Avenue**. The comparison site for our project is **WIC-Ridgewood**.

### Diagram of Arms for In-Depth Interviews

DIAGRAM OF ARMS

Boxes highlighted in green indicate categories of individuals we want to do IDIs with.

The n’s indicate target number of individuals we want to conduct IDIs with each category.

Referred to out of WMTY network resource

No referral (refused) n = 5

Shared info, but made no referral n = 5

Referred to Unite Us resource

No identified need

Identified need

Receive WMTY conversation

Don't receive WMTY conversation (shouldn't happen)

Show for appointment

No show / could not contact

Identified eligible for intervention (6-9 or

18-21 months at Corona and Ocean)

Did not enroll in services

n = 10

Enrolled in services n = 10

### Interviewer Role

* *Recommendation:* Check out this [Toolkit for Conducting Focus Groups](https://ctb.ku.edu/sites/default/files/chapter_files/toolkitforconductingfocusgroups-omni.pdf)
* Introduce self
* Keep the interview on time
* Record the interview in at least 1 way (preferably 2)
* Thank interviewee for time at the beginning and end
* Review the purpose of the interviewer
* Elicit opinion, don’t judge it
  + Summarize what you think you heard, and ask if the interviewee agrees
  + Phrase the same question in a different way, use probes
  + When all your questions have been asked, and before the group ends, ask if the interviewee has any other comments to make
* Keep the interview on topic (but balance that with allowing the interviewee to tell their story in their own way at their own pace)

# \*INTRODUCTION\*

**INTERVIEWER:**

Hello, my name is [INTERVIEWER NAME] and I will your interviewer today. *Interviewer should also feel free to mention role at PHS in intro.*

Is it okay with you if I record this call?

### [Wait for an audible “yes” or “okay”]

I am going to start recording the meeting now. The notetaker is also recording the meeting so we have a backup. **[START RECORDING THE MEETING]**

Hello, my name is [INTERVIEWER NAME] and I will your interviewer today. *Interviewer should also feel free to mention role at PHS in intro.*

The purpose of this interview is to learn more about your experiences with WIC, and any community services you may have been referred to and/or enrolled in.

This interview is being recorded so that it can later be transcribed and analyzed. No identifying information will be included any presented results.

Your participation is completely voluntary; you can revoke your consent to participate at any time with no impact on your WIC benefits. If you want to stop the interview at any time, let me know, we will immediately stop, and I will delete the recording.

Would you like to proceed with the interview at this time?

### [Wait for an audible “yes” or “okay”]

A couple of things to note before we get started:

* The interview will run for about an hour.
* I might ask you to explain a little more or give examples, so just we all really understand your perspective. It is not a reflection on what you shared.
* There are no right or wrong answers here. All perspectives are welcome.
* You don’t have to turn on your camera if you don’t want to.
* You can leave at any time. Your participation is encouraged, but completely voluntary. Are there any questions before we get started?

## [PAUSE FOR QUESTIONS FROM THE INTERVIEWEE]

### Interview Questions

1. How long have you been participating in WIC (with Public Health Solutions at Corona or Ocean)?
2. How does the WIC Program affect your family?
3. For you, what is the most valuable thing about WIC?
4. What do you like best about the program? Least?
5. What, if anything, has made it difficult to participate in WIC appointments?
   1. Probe with examples: this can include things outside of WIC like: transportation, lack of childcare, sickness, etc.
6. Did any of those things, or any additional needs, come up when WIC staff asked you about your needs outside of WIC? This conversation may have taken place during your WIC appointment or someone may have called you separately to discuss.
7. How did the **conversation** make you feel about what WIC can do? This conversation may have taken place during your WIC appointment or someone may have called you separately to discuss.
   1. (If needed, clarify: the conversation with WIC staff about your needs outside of WIC)

**If client received in-network referral and enrolled in services, proceed to Question 8.**

**If client received in-network referral and did not enroll in services, proceed to Question 11. If client received information, but no referral, proceed to Question 14.**

**If client did not consent to referral, proceed to Question 17.**

**Enrolled**

1. How did the **referral and enrollment process** make you feel about what WIC can do?
2. Can you tell me about your experience with the referral and enrollment process?
   1. Probe: What do you think about the process where the organization reached out to you instead of you contacted them?
   2. Probe: What did you like most about the experience? What did you like least about the experience?
3. How does having access to additional services affect your plans to remain in WIC?

### Referred, but DID NOT enroll

1. How did the referral process make you feel about what WIC can do?
2. Can you tell me about your experience with the referral process?
   1. Probes:
      1. What do you think about the process where the organization reached out to you instead of you having to reach out to them?
      2. How far did you get in the process?
      3. Can you tell me about any barriers or challenges you faced during the enrollment process?
      4. **If client decided not to enroll:** can you tell me more about why you decided not to enroll in available services?
3. How does having potential access to additional services affect your plans to remain in WIC?

### Shared info, but made no referral

1. During a recent visit, WIC staff shared information with you on resources that would help address the needs you mentioned (either verbally, via email or text message). How did that experience make you feel about what WIC can do?
2. Can you tell me about your experience using that information to access services?
   1. **Probe:** If unable to access services – can you tell me more about the barriers or challenges you faced during the process of trying to access services using the information you received?
3. How does having access to this information affect your plans to remain in WIC?
   1. **Probe:** Was it the conversation, the access to the information, or potential access to the services that made an impact?

### Client did not consent to referral

1. Before the WIC staff made the referral for you, they asked for your consent to participate. What do you remember about that?
   1. Explain: Someone might have read the form to you, or a texted you a link, or emailed the form that has the Unite Us logo.

### Probes:

### We saw that you chose not to be referred/didn’t respond to the referral consent form that was sent to you through text message or email to the service that the nutritionist identified.

* + 1. People have lots of reasons not to accept referrals. Do you mind telling me what yours were?

1. What could WIC have been done differently so that you would feel open to accepting the referral?
2. How did the option to be referred for additional services in the community make you feel about WIC can do?
3. How did having the option to be referred to additional services in the community affect your plans to remain in WIC?

## \*WRAP UP\*

**INTERVIEWER:** Any final comments on anything we discussed before we wrap up the meeting?

## [PAUSE FOR FINAL COMMENTS]

Thank you for your time and feedback today. Your comments are critical to understanding the impact of WIC services.

I will now stop the recording, but please stay on the line so I can confirm your address and we can mail you a gift card in exchange for your time today.

## [STOP THE RECORDING]

The address I have down is [address]; is that still the address you want the $25 Visa Gift card mailed to?

You should expect to receive your gift card in the mail within 8 weeks, if not sooner. If you still haven’t received your gift card by [date 8 weeks from now] please feel free to follow up with me and we will look into it.

Thank you again for your time today. The interview is officially done!