

Loving Support Through Peer Counseling: A Journey Together

Webcast #2 – Program Planning



Welcome/Introduction: Patti Mitchell

[USDA Logo Slide on the screen as the webcast begins)

- Welcome to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service webcast on program planning for peer counseling programs. I'm Patti Mitchell with the Food and Nutrition Service WIC Program. This is webcast #2 from our series of webcasts from the FNS Peer Counseling curricula: *Loving Support Through Peer Counseling: A Journey Together*. We invite you to view webcast #1 for additional background and also for contact information that will be helpful for you.

[show PC Management Curriculum Title Slide]

- Webcast #2 is for those involved in implementing, managing, or providing oversight to peer counseling programs. .
- This webcast provides a summary of key highlights from Sections 1, 3 and 4 of the management curriculum. It's not possible to go through two entire modules in this webcast, so we'd like to remind you to please refer to the *detailed* speaker notes handouts for these modules. State agencies will need to use the information provided in the detailed speaker notes to develop their policies and also to train their local agency managers.



Loving Support Model:

The “*Loving Support*© Model for a Successful Peer Counseling Program” is the framework for State agencies to use to establish policies and practices under each of its required components. The Loving Support Model addresses program support in two areas:

- Adequate program support from State and local management
- Adequate program support of peer counselors

The entire management training is structured around each component of the *Loving Support*© Model, and it provides State agencies with research-based strategies, ideas and best practices for managing peer counseling programs. FNS recommends that State agencies to routinely assess their current peer counseling programs against the *Loving Support*© Model, determine where gaps exist, and implement any needed changes to ensure that the support and management of peer counselors is strong in all local agencies that have peer counseling programs. The *Loving Support*© Model allows for flexibility based on State policy as long as the core components of the *Loving Support*© Model are met.

[show Every Mother slide]

I am going to turn over the next portion of the webcast to Cathy Carothers and Kendal Cox from Every Mother, Inc. who will go through a summary of key points of the curriculum on program planning.

Introductory Comments: Cathy Carothers

- Successful peer counseling programs don't just "happen." They occur when State and local agencies plan for success. That's going to mean examining the research and the "Loving Support Model" that Patti mentioned, assembling a supportive team, and fashioning a program that addresses the needs of WIC mothers and support for peer counselors.



- We have much we can learn from the original research that was conducted, as well as best practices from the State and local WIC agencies that have been implementing peer counseling programs.
- So let's begin by examining the findings from the original research in 2004 that helped drive the development of the "Loving Support Model."
- More than 125 in-depth interviews were conducted with WIC programs that provided peer counseling programs, those that did not, and those whose programs had been discontinued.

- We also conducted interviews with WIC peer counselors, as well as non-WIC programs that provide peer counseling services.
- The research phase included a thorough review of all known curriculum programs being used in both WIC and non-WIC settings.
- According to the 2004 findings, agencies that provided successful peer counseling programs had several factors that contributed to their success. They included:

<p>Agencies With Successful Programs</p> <p>Program Leadership</p>	<p>Program leadership and support from management and local level WIC staff.</p> <p>Dedicated supervisors and program managers with designated time allocated to provide program and staff oversight.</p>
<p>Agencies With Successful Programs</p> <p>Standardized Training</p>	<p>Standardized training programs that include the local WIC clinic staff.</p>
<p>Agencies With Successful Programs</p> <p>Cross-training</p>	<p>Familiarizing peer counselors with WIC issues and policies, and educating WIC staff on breastfeeding support.</p>
<p>Agencies With Successful Programs</p> <p>Clear Scope of Practice</p>	<p>Clear guidelines on peer counselor scope of practice and referral networks.</p>
<p>Agencies With Successful Programs</p> <p>Designated Experts</p>	<p>Access to designated breastfeeding experts for situations that are beyond the peer counselor's scope of practice.</p>
<p>Agencies With Successful Programs</p> <p>Funding</p>	<p>Adequate funding to maintain the program.</p>

<p>Agencies With Successful Programs</p> <p>Retention Strategies</p>	<p>Methods to retain peer counselors for program stability.</p>
--	---

AGENCIES WITHOUT PEER COUNSELING PROGRAMS

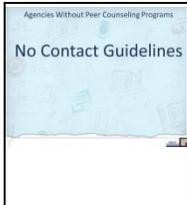
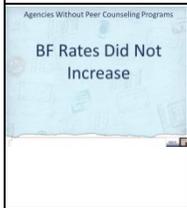
Agencies that did not offer peer counseling programs shared common concerns.

<p>Agencies Without Peer Counseling Programs</p> <p>Concerned About Adequate Staff</p>	<p>Having the staff to manage the program.</p>
<p>Agencies Without Peer Counseling Programs</p> <p>Concerned About Finding Peer Counselors</p>	<p>Finding peer counselors within the community.</p>
<p>Agencies Without Peer Counseling Programs</p> <p>Concerned About Community Support</p>	<p>Gaining support needed among local staff.</p>
<p>Agencies Without Peer Counseling Programs</p> <p>Concerned About Lack of Training</p>	<p>Not having a training curriculum.</p>
<p>Agencies Without Peer Counseling Programs</p> <p>Concerned About Community Partnerships</p>	<p>Forging partnerships in the community.</p>

AGENCIES THAT DISCONTINUED PEER COUNSELING

WIC agencies that had discontinued their peer counseling programs shared common issues that contributed to their demise.

<small>Agencies Without Peer Counseling Programs</small> Lack of Funding	Lack of funding to sustain the program.
<small>Agencies Without Peer Counseling Programs</small> Volunteer Peer Counselors	Relying on volunteer peer counselors who did not stay with the program for long, causing many issues with turnover.
<small>Agencies That Discontinued Peer Counseling</small> Breastfeeding “Champion” Only	Programs that were implemented by a single breastfeeding “champion” without full buy-in from other WIC staff. If the champion left the program or moved from the area, programs often crumbled without the support from other WIC staff.
<small>Agencies That Discontinued Peer Counseling</small> No Buy-in from WIC Clinic	Failure to train local WIC staff in breastfeeding support and secure their buy-in for peer counseling.
<small>Agencies That Discontinued Peer Counseling</small> Lack of Training	Lack of systems in place to train and supervise peer counselors, including lack of standardized training for peer counselors.
<small>Agencies That Discontinued Peer Counseling</small> No Designated Supervisors	Lack of dedicated supervisors specifically focused on providing mentoring and oversight to new peer counselors.
<small>Agencies Without Peer Counseling Programs</small> Lack of Referral System	Lack of referral systems for peer counselors who encounter concerns outside their scope of practice.

	<p>Lack of consistent contact guidelines for reaching new mothers.</p>
	<p>Breastfeeding rates did not improve with peer counselors, leading to a perception that peer counseling did not work.</p> <p>Many of these programs stated they would like to reinstate their peer counseling program because they believed in its value in supporting WIC mothers.</p>



- In 2010-2011, feedback sessions were conducted with WIC State and local leaders and staff to gather information about how WIC peer counseling programs are working, lessons learned, and best practices.
- This feedback included an **EXPERT PANEL** representing varied levels of WIC managers and direct service providers in every FNS region; **BEST PRACTICE INTERVIEWS** with 13 State and local agencies from all FNS geographic regions that have experienced successes with their peer counseling programs, along with site visits to local clinics; a **SURVEY** with 9 State WIC agencies representing each of the FNS region; and lots of **GENERAL FEEDBACK** from postings to WIC-Talk and WIC BF-net electronic listservs, and communications submitted by State agencies to FNS regional offices.
- One of the most important things we learned is that the Loving Support© Model, which was based on the 2004 research, is still a strong framework for establishing and expanding peer counseling programs.
- We also learned some new things from this comprehensive feedback, including:
 - The need for mentoring opportunities for new programs
 - The importance of buy-in from all staff in the local agency
 - Establishing a referral network with IBCLCs to handle high-risk breastfeeding problems that may occur
 - Training peer counselors on their scope of practice and reinforcing this throughout the period they are working for us
 - Minimizing paperwork and documentation
 - Establishing career path programs to improve retention of peer counselors
 - Need for guidance for using social media



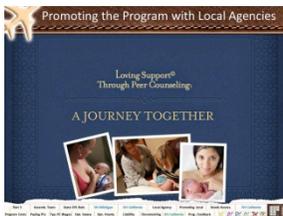
- One of the components of the Loving Support Model is to: *“Designate breastfeeding peer counseling program managers and/or coordinators at State and/or local level.”*
- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- Another key part of planning involves looking at realistic costs for funding the program.
- You'll want to consider both the costs of managing the program, as well as the costs of the peer counselors. Those costs include:
 - *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*

Salary Range	# Hours Worked
\$10.20	16%: <10 hrs/wk
to	51%: 10-20 hrs/wk
\$11.75	19%: 21-30 hrs/wk
	13%: >31 hrs/wk

- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- There are many options WIC agencies have found for hiring peer counselors.
- Some hire them as regular salaried employees.
- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- Some hire peer counselors as part-time contractors.
- There can be some good advantages to this, as well as some disadvantages.
- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- Many WIC agencies have wondered about liability coverage for peer counselors.
- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- Finally, I want to remind you to PLAN for feedback. Hearing back from the peer counselors themselves, and the moms and babies they help, will give you great sense of how well things are working, and changes you will want to make moving forward.
- Many agencies include questions about peer counselors as part of their participant feedback forms, and ask for feedback from peer counselors on an ongoing basis.



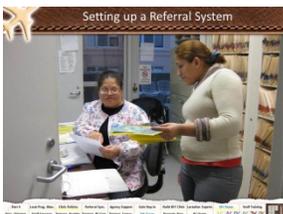
- Now I would like to **INTRODUCE KENDALL COX**, who will share highlights from Section 4 on developing and implementing the program at the local agency level.



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*

-
-



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- Be sure to address any concerns that staff may have. For example:
- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*



- *Review highlighted areas of the speaker notes*

Now, I'd like to turn this webcast back over to Patti Mitchell at FNS for final comments.

PATTI:

- Thank you Kendall. As Cathy stated at the beginning, successful peer counseling programs do not just “happen.” They occur when State and local agencies plan for success by assembling a supportive team and developing a program that addresses the needs of WIC mothers and the support of peer counselors. Again, today’s webcast was a brief summary of key highlights of Modules 1 and 3 and 4 of the management curriculum. I remind you to please refer to the detailed speaker notes and all of the resources available to you in the management curriculum.
- We hope you found this webcast useful, thank you for listening. And thank you for all you do for peer counselors and WIC mothers.