

WIC Learning Reflection

For this module, I chose to complete the WIC 101 course, which was approximately two hours long. The objectives included the history and mission, eligibility, and services and benefits of the program. While learning about this topic, I recalled that WIC is administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), a part of the USDA, but I had forgotten this detail. I was already aware that, while WIC is a large program, SNAP is larger. I have significant familiarity with WIC because my sister participated in this program in her early 20s when I was still living at home, and I assisted with the paperwork and managing the benefits that came with it. I always highlight in each module that I am passionate about statistics and history, and learning about the history of this program helps me understand its origins and potential future. I knew that WIC operates within the U.S., but I was unaware that it also operates in Indian Tribal Organizations, American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This is an extraordinary feat and a logistical accomplishment, and I find it remarkable to not only serve within the U.S. but also in all these territories. I am curious whether they have different standards in each territory. Additionally, serving eight million women, infants, and children across these regions, with diverse needs, is significant, and they release these figures every two years. Although I have some background in this program, I needed a refresher on eligibility criteria, and, as with most government programs, there are numerous standards and practices associated with their benefits. Eligibility includes pregnant women from six weeks of pregnancy to six weeks after delivery, breastfeeding women up to one-year, non-breastfeeding postpartum women up to six months post-delivery, infants up to one year of age, and children up to their fifth birthday. I am pleased that this program covers both prenatal and postnatal periods because children need support during both, and without addressing one or the other, it may not

be as effective. In addition to income requirements, participants must be at nutritional risk. While I believe this is important, I think income eligibility should be sufficient on its own, but I cannot change these standards, and I am glad I completed this module because I would not have otherwise known. The food packages offered by the program are exciting because they provide a nutritionally sound package. I would not have expected that the type of formula allowed varies from state to state, but I understand this due to each state's varying interpretations of laws and regulations. When learning about WIC, I initially focused on food, but I am pleased that they include nutrition education at no additional cost and present it in an easily understandable way. This reinforces my belief in trickle-down education, preparing parents to set a strong foundation for their children's future. While the U.S. has a relatively low life expectancy, we excel in life expectancy beyond early childhood through innovations in medicine, and this should apply to WIC. The program reduces risks associated with pregnancy and child-rearing, alleviating stress from uncertainties and providing parents with the support needed to successfully raise their child. This course was a valuable addition to the course requirements and incorporating it before our internships provides us with an advantage before encountering these concepts in the field.