EBT Development and Implementation in West Virginia

Speed Bumps on the Crossroads

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Session Objectives

- Project Background
- Preparing State Staff for eWIC
- Preparing Local Staff for eWIC
- Preparing Vendors for eWIC
- Summary of Lessons Learned
West Virginia WIC Program

- Piloted eWIC March 29, 2013
- Rolled out Statewide June 24 – October 21, 2013
- 2014 caseload average 43,783/month
- 8 local agencies, 57 clinic sites
- 295 authorized stores
- $31.3 million redeemed food benefits in Fiscal Year 2014
- Separated eWIC from Crossroads rollout due to delay in Crossroads
State Staff

- Develop communication plan and obtain stakeholder input.
- Prepare not only WIC staff, also EBT Office, Treasurer’s Office, Auditor’s Office, DHHR Fiscal Office.
- Identify policies that need updated for eWIC (include forms and monitoring).
- Order equipment early; get extra for testing and unanticipated needs.
- Anticipate increased demand for State Help Desk and technical support during pilot and rollouts.
- Design, print and distribute eWIC cards.
- Develop UPC/PLU database.
- Assess selection criteria and revise eligible food list.
Local Staff

- Anticipate changes in clinic flow, staff duties.
- Develop training – new/updated policies, how to generate and read balances, issue/replace cards and change food packages, PIN numbers, aggregate family food benefits.
- Engage local staff with state staff on educational buys so they know participant experience at store.
- Outline procedures for trouble shooting – common problems, who and when to call.
- Use lessons learned from pilot to update training and materials before rollout.
- Use staff from other sites/agencies to help with rollout.
Vendors

• Revise policies and addendum to vendor agreement.
• Revise Minimum Stock Requirements.
• Sign contracts early so EBT equipment can be shipped in a timely manner.
• Hold meetings to prepare vendors for change.
• Train face-to-face with functioning equipment.
• Give State Office same training to provide technical assistance.
• Perform on-site educational buys to ensure store readiness.
• Avoid holidays!
• Know your vendor mix – 45% stand-beside pilot, 59% rest of rollout.
Summary

• Communications – clear, frequent, detailed.
• Training – can’t have enough, as close to live (both function and timing) as possible.
• Anticipate increased complaints with eWIC from prior purchasing habits with paper Food Instruments.
• Make sure UPC/PLU database ready.
• Assess during process (pilot, rollouts, post implementation) and be ready to change what is not working.
• There will be problems; do not panic!
Contact

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