



Memorandum

#15-108

TO: WIC Regional Directors
WIC Local Agency Directors

FROM: Amanda Hovis, Director
Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit
Nutrition Services Section

DATE: October 16, 2015

SUBJECT: WIC Innovation Center

Do you have passion for touching participant's lives in a meaningful way? Would you like to see the impact of behavior change with your WIC families? Do you keep up with the latest techniques in nutrition education? If so, read on...

The State Agency (SA) is looking to develop three WIC Innovation Centers to highlight best practices and implementation of innovative approaches in nutrition education with a focus on behavior change and retention. The centers will be determined through an application process, which is outlined below. We encourage you to apply to this exciting opportunity to showcase and share your clinic's innovation and passion for the latest nutrition education approaches!

The State Agency will provide funding to selected clinics up to \$150,000 for the first year and \$100,000 for the following two years. The additional funding available for the first year is to accommodate clinic augmentation or infrastructure needs, if required. Plans to allocate direct costs must be completed on the budget portion of the application. Funding provided as part of this project must be used to support Innovation Center activities in accordance with WIC accounting policies and on a separate reimbursement voucher.

The Innovation Center must:

- Be a fully functional clinic site, completing all aspects of participant certification.
- Agree to participate as an Innovation Center for a period of 3 years.
- Embrace change and be open to trying new ideas that are both your own ideas and ideas from the state agency.
- Be willing to implement innovative concepts provided by the State Agency, potentially including but not limited to:
 - Counseling techniques such as Heart Button style counseling; this is an emotion-based method currently under development with Chickasaw Nation.
 - Power of Influence principles.
 - Creative classroom techniques, including parent support groups and parent-child activities.
 - Telecommunication health and nutrition support.
- Have a designated Innovation Lead for the Innovation Center, who will:
 - Provide training, support, and evaluation on innovative concepts for clinic staff.

- Have at least 1 year of WIC experience with a Bachelor's degree in Nutrition or a related field. Registered Dietitian preferred.
- Attend training on Heart Button techniques in February or March 2016.
- Visit the DSHS State Offices up to four times per year for workgroup meetings.
- Be willing to train and/or host other agency and clinic staff interested in learning innovative techniques.
- Participate in additional activities as requested by the State Agency, including but not limited to:
 - Online sharing sessions.
 - Providing reports to the State Agency, including budget status and results.
 - Writing or collaborating on *WIC News* articles as requested.
 - Participating in evaluation activities to determine effectiveness of innovative techniques. The State Agency will secure an outside contracted entity for evaluations.
 - Presenting activities and progress at the Texas WIC Nutrition and Breastfeeding conference as needed.

To qualify you must:

- Complete an application online through the link below.
- Have completed the initial Texas Power of Influence training.
- Demonstrate proof of having implemented innovative nutrition education and behavior change techniques.
- Have a satisfactory previous monitoring review without Accelerated Monitoring status

To apply, visit the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WICinnovation>

The application will be open through October 30, 2015. Selections will be determined after review of applications. We look forward to receiving your application!

For questions about the WIC Innovation Center details or application process, please contact Kaylene Thompson at Kaylene.thompson@dshs.state.tx.us or (512) 341-4560.