

## **Level 2 Job Description: WIC Peer Counselor in the Hospital**

### **Purpose**

A WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor in the hospital is a lactation support person who provides basic breastfeeding information and encouragement to pregnant and lactating WIC and WIC-eligible clients in the WIC clinic and hospital setting.

### **Qualifications:**

- Possesses all the qualifications of the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor and Senior Peer Counselor.
- Attends additional WIC training on providing breastfeeding support in the hospital.
- Has good customer service skills, relating to persons of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and communicating in a professional, courteous and tactful manner.
- Has reliable transportation and holds a valid driver's license.
- Able to remain calm and exercise judgment in unusual or stressful situations.
- Has a desire and is comfortable working in a hospital setting.
- Comfortable working in an interdisciplinary setting.

### **Experience and Skills:**

- Possesses all the experience and skills of the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor and Senior Peer Counselor.
- Possesses the ability to think critically and problem solve common breastfeeding challenges.
- Strong teaching skills.
- Experience working with lower socio-economic status breastfeeding clients and infants who experience common breastfeeding challenges.
- Experience providing breastfeeding/infant feeding education and classes.
- Demonstrates proficiency in computer communication skills and applications.

### **Duties:**

- Attends orientation or training required by the hospital.
- Shadows a lactation consultant or expert assisting new parents in the hospital.
- Makes hospital visits with WIC and WIC-eligible clients in the hospital at scheduled intervals as agreed upon by the hospital and WIC agency.
- Checks in with the hospital nurse or lactation consultant before visiting patient rooms.
- Visits pregnant persons to assess their interest in breastfeeding and to provide basic assistance.
- Observes a feeding in accordance with hospital policy to check positioning and latch.
- Assesses both parent and infant to devise a plan of care in uncomplicated breastfeeding situations.
- Assesses for audible milk transfer in uncomplicated breastfeeding situations.
- Reports any breastfeeding concerns that are beyond the peer counselor's scope of practice to the patient's hospital assigned nurse or lactation consultant and the WIC lactation consultant.

- Keeps accurate records for all contacts and submits them in a timely manner to the WIC supervisor and to the hospital nurse following agreed upon procedures.
- Becomes familiar with the hospital medical terminology.
- Adheres to the institution's and Michigan WIC's policies.
- Enters notes into the WIC data system and hospital system if allowed by hospital policy.
- Provides a breast pump or refers to the WIC agency to arrange for issuance of a pump following established protocols to clients who are separated from their infant, experiencing lactation problems, or whose insurance-pump fails. Appropriate referrals will be made to the WIC lactation care team when more complex problems arise.
- Arranges for follow-up contacts with WIC and WIC eligible clients after discharge if agreeable with the client.
- Makes sure WIC-eligible clients have been referred to lactation support after discharge.
- Assists clients with accessing WIC services.
- Gives breastfeeding literature provided by the WIC Program to WIC-eligible clients.

**Supervision:**

The WIC Hospital Peer Counselor is supervised by the \_\_\_\_\_