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Nutrition Science and Policy

USDA/Tufts Telehealth Intervention Strategies for WIC (*THIS-WIC*)

Unpacking Evaluation Webinar

February 24, 2020
4-5pm EST



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THIS-WIC Project Director

What will the Evaluation Process look like with *THIS-WIC*?



Evaluation Goals



Our goals are to **(1)** generate evidence of effective strategies for implementing telehealth solutions in WIC and **(2)** show that telehealth can improve health behavior and diet-related outcomes



SAs participating in *THIS-WIC* will take a leadership role in providing high-quality programming and enhance their capacity for conducting evaluation.



***THIS-WIC* will disseminate research findings** to help all WIC SAs and local agencies to meet program needs of the evolving WIC participant population.

Collaborative Evaluation

- Applicants do not need to be research or evaluation experts.
- WIC SAs can use grant funding to support current or new staff needed to carry out evaluation activities and usual WIC care or resources.
- *THIS-WIC* will lead the evaluation in collaboration with the funded WIC SAs.
- WIC SAs propose an evaluation design from several options.
- *THIS-WIC* and WIC SAs will work together to decide final evaluation designs, which will be submitted to USDA FNS for final approval.
- SAs will provide data necessary to evaluate intervention outcomes (e.g., impact, process, cost).

Evaluation Support & Expectations—Design

THIS-WIC Team

Work with grantee to refine evaluation design, troubleshoot challenges, and create final evaluation design, including cross-cutting outcomes to measure

Select a sample for a provider and/or participant surveys

Obtain IRB approval

WIC SAs

Work with the *THIS-WIC* team to finalize implementation and evaluation plans and hire additional staff needed to support the evaluation process

Provide data for sampling frame

Support *THIS-WIC* in obtaining IRB approval

Evaluation Support & Expectations—Preparation and Training

THIS-WIC Team

Provide training and support to grantees including the provision of valid data collection instruments (i.e., surveys)

Establish data reporting requirements and timing for grantees

Provide support and guidance to grantees on staff training required to collect and track data for evaluation

WIC SAs

Support key WIC staff attendance at any required workshops/webinars on evaluation

Train staff to track required data outcomes and provide high-quality data to *THIS-WIC* for use in evaluation

Evaluation Support & Expectations—Data Collection

THIS-WIC Team

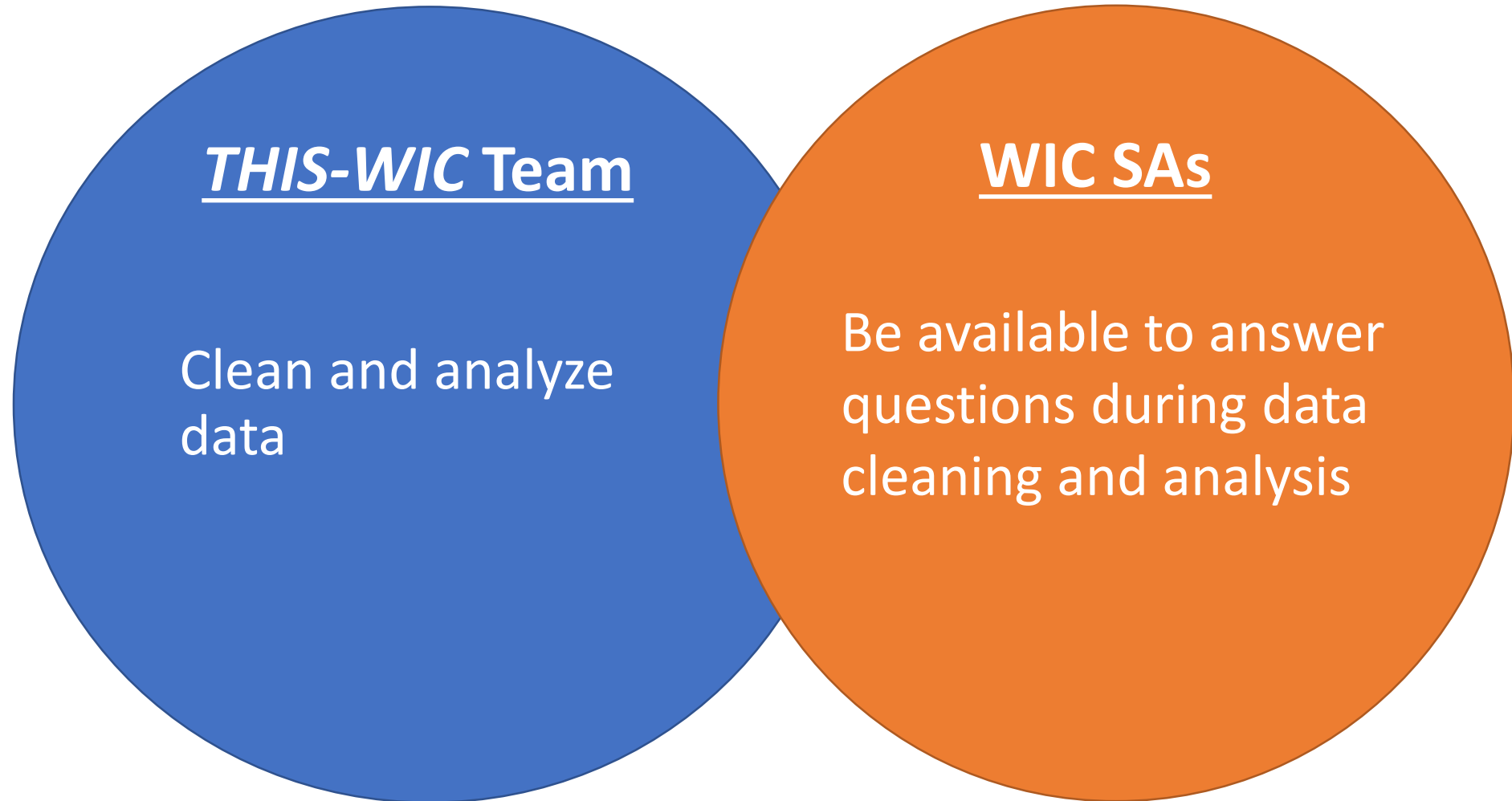
Conduct key informant interviews

Administer surveys to providers and or participants

WIC SAs

Assist with arranging provider and/or participant contact for potential interviews and/or surveys

Evaluation Support & Expectations—Data Management



THIS-WIC Team

Clean and analyze
data

WIC SAs

Be available to answer
questions during data
cleaning and analysis

Evaluation Support & Expectations—Reports and Dissemination of Evaluation Results

THIS-WIC Team

Develop WIC SA-specific and overall evaluation reports for FNS

Prepare abstracts for scientific and practitioner-oriented meetings

Publish peer-reviewed manuscripts

WIC SAs

Submit all required reports (draft, final)

Create short video summarizing key elements of the project and notable results

Collaborate with *THIS-WIC* to develop presentations and manuscripts, if desired



Possible Evaluation Designs

1. **Random Assignment** (coin toss).
 - A. Participants have an equal chance of being assigned to the intervention (telehealth) or control (usual care) arm
 - B. Sites have an equal chance of being assigned to the intervention (telehealth) or control (usual care) arm. All participants at a site receive the same type of care.
2. **Non-random Assignment.** Participants (or sites) are assigned to the intervention (telehealth) or control (usual care) arm through a non-random process (e.g., self-selection).



Possible Evaluation Designs

1. Repeated Measures

- A. Measure health and diet-related behaviors before the intervention and again after the intervention
- B. Impact is the change in one group (telehealth) compared to change in the other group (usual care)

2. Post-intervention Only

- 1. Measure health and diet-related behaviors after the intervention
- 2. Impact is the simple difference between the two groups

Evaluation Outcomes

- Applicants propose outcomes of interest for the proposed telehealth intervention. Specific outcomes may vary.
- Funded projects must have some outcomes at each of the following levels:
 - **Process** – Have intervention activities been implemented as intended?
 - **Intermediate** – Are there short-term impacts (i.e., changes in knowledge and attitudes of participants) of the intervention?
 - **Impact** – Are there longer-term changes (i.e., dietary intake, infant feeding practices, retention in WIC) that can be attributed to the intervention?
 - **Cost** – What are the costs associated with the telehealth intervention at various levels, including participant, provider, and WIC agency (SA, local agency/clinic)?

Examples of Outcomes for WIC Telehealth Intervention Research

Required Outcome	WIC Participants (<i>i.e.</i> , mothers, infants)	Qualified WIC Professional	WIC Program
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction and usage of telehealth solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience using the telehealth solution Changes in staff workflow related to telehealth solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to scale telehealth solution to other clinics
Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge about complex nutrition/Breastfeeding problems Attitude toward a nutrition-related behavior (<i>i.e.</i>, whole-grain consumption) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attitude towards using the innovation Readiness to use the innovation 	
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dietary intake (<i>i.e.</i>, Fruit and Vegetable intake) Breastfeeding duration Appropriate weight gain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequency of using the telehealth solution for complex problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach and retention
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial assessment for participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial assessment for providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial assessment for local agencies

THIS-WIC Data Collection



Data Sources & Procedures for Collecting Data

- Applicants propose how they will collect and share data with *THIS-WIC*
- *THIS-WIC* will conduct data collection with WIC providers and/or participants
- *THIS-WIC* will develop and provide grantees with the instruments (e.g., surveys, tracking logs) to use for data collection



Human Subjects Protection



Research activities involving human subjects, including WIC participants and WIC providers, must be carried out in alignment with federal and state regulations, institutional guidelines, and policies.



These exist to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects. All research and evaluation involving human subjects must be reviewed, approved, and overseen by an Institutional Review Board (IRB).



THIS-WIC will lead the IRB approval process and will submit protocols to the Tufts Institutional IRB.



Project implementation and/or evaluation cannot begin until approval from the Tufts University IRB is received.

WIC Administrative Data

- WIC SAs will provide data to *THIS-WIC* for developing sampling frame for the participant survey.
- WIC SAs will provide *THIS-WIC* with outcome data for WIC participants



Tracking Data from Telehealth Interventions



Data will include:

- ID field (capable of linkage to the WIC administrative data or staff characteristics)
- frequency and length of time on the telehealth solution
- selected outcome variables generated internally

Tracking documents will include:

- summary reports by time period for WIC administrative data
- cost data
- user-log data for the telehealth solutions

Budgetary Documents



SAs will collect cost data from the following using the templates provided by THIS-WIC:

- ✓ resource inventories
- ✓ stakeholder organizations (state agency, local WIC agency, data systems contractor, telehealth intervention contractor)
- ✓ task documentation (developing the telehealth solution, training agency and contractor staff, rollout, implementation, and evaluation) and time period

Data sources will include:

- ✓ key informants, implementation tracking documents, and administrative data
- ✓ staff time and salary estimates
- ✓ information for estimates as appropriate per participant, per participant month, or per contact occasion

WIC Participant Survey

- *THIS-WIC* team will conduct a WIC participant survey using either a web-based or telephone interview process
- *THIS-WIC* will work with grantees to identify a process and procedure for recruiting participants to take part in the survey



Key Informant Interviews



- Grantees must agree to make available key personnel involved in the intervention design and/or delivery for key informant interviews
- Interviews may also include WIC participants; *THIS-WIC* will ask for grantee's help in identifying and recruiting WIC participants for interviews

Evaluation Criteria: Brief Proposals



Indicates ability to implement intervention in a randomized fashion or with a comparison and treatment group



Indicates ability to collaborate with *THIS-WIC* on the evaluation including willingness to provide data and assist with data collection efforts

Evaluation Criteria: Full Proposal



Articulates whether the WIC SA is able to implement the intervention in a randomized fashion or with comparison and treatment groups



Demonstrates capacity and commitment to collaborate with the *THIS-WIC* team on all aspects of the evaluation including ability to collect and share data and/or capacity-building activities to allow the grantee to build capacity to collect and share data



Provides documentation of procedures used to maintain the quality and integrity of all data and analyses

Questions?

Thank you for attending today's webinar.

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