

SBAR WIC Confidentiality

1. Situation: (Brief description of the current issue or situation requiring project/program.)

Medicaid recently explained that during its LPHA billing audits, WIC records (i.e. hemoglobin, height/weight) will need to be included. WIC Administration responded, although HIPAA exempt, that WIC records cannot be included. WIC Admin also explained that LPHAs will need to take steps to accommodate their decree. Even if this means saying and documenting that the client was referred to health department then referred back to WIC clinic. LPHAs are also in a position to take liberty with work-arounds for this circumstance that could subsequently impair trust and openness with billing auditors.

2. Background: (Relevant background data about current situation and current and past approaches to the situation)

This may be WIC's response to the Medicaid response due to a recent USDA oversight matter. Otherwise, this is considered a new circumstance.

3. Assessment: (Your assessment about the situation and description of project or program that might address the situation.)

For those health departments operating a WIC clinic, signing the contract, managing the employees, and performing the billing; it would stand to reason that, in compliance with HIPAA's continuity of care, LPHAs are within their rights to provide such record to Medicaid. For WIC offices not under the control of a health department, perhaps this would not apply.

4. Recommendation/ Request : (policy, personnel, other resources needed to accomplish the project or program)

LPHAs operating WIC clinics should be allowed to operate within continuity of care and provide records accordingly. WIC should develop policy accordingly and/or obtain an MOU with oversight agency(s) to recognize this continuity of care.