What is WIC?

- Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)
- Pilot established in 1972, Permanent program in 1975 (The War on Poverty)
- Provides food security and health education to low-income women/families
- United States Department of Agriculture – Food and Nutrition Services
- WIC serves 53% of all US born infants
- Eligibility means tested (185% FPL)
- Targeted to healthy food items
- Benefits must be used in month allotted
- Electronic Benefits Transfer System (EBT)
- Adopted in WI 2016 (not yet nationally)

SNAP, WIC, Low-Income Families, Fruits & Vegetables and Food Security: An Investigation of Food Purchasing Behaviors III

Students: Jared Fogarty, Nathan Gilger, Emma Halverson, Ben Miller, Rivin Perinchery, Kelly Schneider, Levi Soboorrow, Shelly Stephani & Nevada Sweitzer

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Eric Jamelske

WIC Benefit Usage Analysis & Comparison to SNAP Usage

Conclusion & Discussion

Study I - Overview of Results
- SNAP purchase less FV compared to non-SNAP
- SNAP purchase more Spt Bev compared to non-SNAP
- SNAP and non-SNAP Vegetable purchases greater than fruit
- SNAP and non-SNAP purchase more fresh FV compared to canned/frozen
- SNAP and non-SNAP juice purchases similar (fruit juice mostly 100% juice)

Study II - Overview of Results
- Allowing SNAP/EBT payment at the farmers market increases access to healthy food for SNAP participants
- The Market Match program further incentives SNAP participants to shop at the farmers market
- The number of SNAP shoppers and tokens/money spent at farmers market has increased
- More needs to be done to increase the reach of this program which will require more sponsors/resources

Study III - Overview of Results
- WIC redeemed at much lower rate than SNAP
- Infant formula most used WIC food
- FV for mothers and children used next most
- Infant FV unused much more
- Nearly $30,000,000 of WIC benefits unused
- More education and awareness for WIC
- Perhaps allow longer period for WIC use
- Should be cautious in restricting SNAP foods allowed

Future Work
- Continue SNAP store data analysis (one year, month)
- Work with UW-Extension Nutrition expert
- More complete/accurate characterization of food purchases
- Healthy/unhealthy (especially juices, other beverages)
- Continue analysis of SNAP farmers market - market match data
- More survey data (food security, what is purchased)
- Continue WIC and SNAP program usage analysis
- Learn more about data and data sources
- Continue/find new local and state partnerships

Research Project Objectives
- Work and share with community partners, researchers and policy makers and general public
- Improve eating habits and health/wellness of children/families by informing public discourse on this issue
- Model of excellence in student/faculty collaborative research that should be celebrated and shared

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