

WIC Local Agency Region 2 – Southwest Alaska Executive Summary  
January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012

The WIC Region 2 Teleconference was held on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012 for agencies currently providing WIC services, or interested in providing WIC services in Southwest Alaska. Currently, three agencies provide WIC services in Southwest Alaska: Aleutian Pribilof Island Association (APIA), Bristol Bar Area Health Corporation (BBAHC) and Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA).

Each of the agencies providing services had one representative that participated in the teleconference. Karen VanWingerden, WIC Coordinator, APIA; Suzie Nunn, WIC Coordinator, BBAHC; and Anita Bailor, Grant Administrator, KANA. No other interested parties were present.

*Summary of Comments:*

All three agencies expressed concern that there will be insufficient funding for travel throughout a region of that size. Other challenges included: village travel, size of the region, cultural differences, past problems with regionalization of programs, and uncertainty about the technical capacity to work with other agencies.

The staff attending the teleconference could not comment on whether their agency could be a lead agency without additional information. One concern was if they would have the ability to provide services outside of their existing service area. There were also questions about the preferred model for service delivery, and multiple requests for the State to provide more information or guidance on how the regional structure would support current service delivery.

Two agencies, KANA and APIA, expressed concerns about the requirement for having a registered dietitian on staff, as well as the degree requirements for the WIC Coordinator's position. One agency, BBAHC, noted that they currently have a RD in the coordinator position, so neither of those requirements presented a concern for that agency.

*Analysis of Comments:*

Each of the three WIC grantees in Southwest Alaska currently serves small defined populations. The proposed regionalization in Southwest Alaska would require a lead agency to significantly expand the physical space of its service area. Additionally, each of the current grantees is a tribal organization that delivers services to a specific population. Providing services regionally would mean providing services in communities they do not typically operate in. None of the entities currently serves 1,000 clients per month.

The WIC program is a small part of each of the grantees overall programming. They are each larger organizations, with leadership that will need to be engaged before the agencies can fully assess their interest and ability to provide services under the proposed model.