

Ariz. WIC Dietitians recognized for long-term Western Region Project



From left: Linda Yee, Jaclyn Chamberlain, Terri Green, Tasha Foster, and Marie Tymrak
Not pictured: Haley Schieser

Several Registered Dietitians were recognized this month by *Altarum Institute – Systems Research for Better Health* for their work over the last four years to help create an adaptable model for implementing Participant Centered Education (PCE) in WIC clinics throughout the Western Region.

Linda Yee, Jaclyn Chamberlain, Terri Green, Tasha Foster, Marie Tymrak, and Haley Schieser (not pictured), along with Maricopa and Yavapai counties, have been involved with a steering committee to address the use of PCE in the overall WIC experience. Participant Centered Nutrition Education, as defined by Altarum, "...focuses on a person's capacities, strengths, and developmental needs – not solely on her problems, risks, or negative behaviors," according to their Participant-Centered Nutrition Education Model.

The philosophy behind PCE is placing the participant (WIC mom, child, etc.) at the center of the process using her input to drive the counseling she receives in WIC. In the past, the WIC nutrition education model was focused on deficiencies and things people needed to do, rather than opportunities for improvement with the participants' interests in mind.

Arizona took the lead on this project, which has been implemented at the state level by some states in the Western United States, and has been exploring the process from a larger viewpoint since 2006. The PCE process serves to support client-based services, give counselors the tools to create an environment that helps to change the current system, and create a WIC system that empowers WIC families and facilitates behavior change.

The PCE process requires critical thinking on the counselors' part and creating a customized approach for each clinic and participant. Now, the participant is encouraged to be engaged as an active part of the education process.

For more information on Participant Centered WIC Education and Services, view Altarum's Report: http://www.altarum.org/files/pub_resources/PCE%20Model.pdf