

# CONSULTATION & NUTRITION SERVICES UNIT

## STAFF:

**JULIE LOTHAMER- MANAGER**

**HANNA THELEN - NUTRITION & BREASTFEEDING ANALYST**

**TARA FISCHER - NUTRITION EDUCATION & HIGH-RISK PROGRAM LEAD**


**DIONNE MOORE-SMITH - BREASTFEEDING COORDINATOR**

**VACANT - PC COORDINATOR**

**MAGGIE HEIDENREICH - FOOD AUTHORIZATION PROGRAM LEAD**

**BROOKE PERRY - FORMULA AND RISK PROGRAM LEAD**



The slide features a light cream background with decorative elements. On the left, a green stem with leaves and a red flower hangs down. On the right, a red flower and a green stem with leaves are visible. In the top right and bottom left corners, there are soft, red, cloud-like shapes. The main title is centered in a large, black, sans-serif font.

# Formula, Nutrition Risk, & Food Package Updates

Brooke Perry, MPH, RD, IBCLC  
[PerryB11@michigan.gov](mailto:PerryB11@michigan.gov)



# Important Dates.

**Formula Contract RFP** – current contract ends 10/31/2026

**Nutrition Risk Revisions** – Spring/Summer 2026

**Final Food Rule Food Packages** – 03/01/2026

**Food Packages Customization Screen Update** – 12/2025





## Final Changes to the WIC Food Packages

### More Choices

The changes provide **more choices** to ensure participants have access to essential nutrients that support healthy growth and development.



## Final Changes to the WIC Food Packages

### More Balance

The changes provide **more balance** to address key nutritional needs and support healthy dietary patterns.



## Final Changes to the WIC Food Packages

### More Flexibility

The changes provide **more flexibility** to accommodate personal and cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.



## Final Changes to the WIC Food Packages

### More Support

The changes provide **more support** for individual breastfeeding goals to help establish long-term breastfeeding.



# Whole Grains



## Breads

- 100% whole wheat
- Whole grain
- Any size

## Bread Products (e.g., buns, bagels, pita, etc)

- 100% whole wheat
- Whole grain
- Any brand or size

## Oats

- Any brand or size

## Pasta

- Whole wheat
- Whole grain
- Any brand or size

## Tortillas

- Whole wheat
- Whole grain
- Whole corn
- Any brand or size

## Other Whole Grains

- Any brand or size
- Intact whole grains (e.g., brown/wild rice, quinoa, barley, corn masa flour, millet, amaranth, etc)

Must contain per 8 ounces:

- $\leq 16$  grams of sugar
- $\geq 106$  IU (2.67 mcg) vitamin D\*

\* Vitamin D requirements must be met by April 2027

Michigan WIC is seeking an extension to meet both requirements by April 2027.



# Yogurt



&

# Nut Seed Butter

## Michigan Specific Requirements

- 12-18 oz container
  - > 5 g protein
  - Brand specific
- Any variety of nut or seed butter (e.g., almond, sunflower, sesame, soy)
  - Nutritionally comparable to peanut butter



# Tofu

## Requirements

14-16 oz  
block

$\geq 100$  mg  
Ca/100 g

Brand and  
type specific



### Plant-based Beverage (per 8 oz)

- $\leq 10$  g sugar
- $\geq 8$  g protein
- Additional nutrient minimums

### Plant-based Cheese (per 1.5 oz)\*

- $\geq 250$  mg Ca
- $\geq 6.5$  g protein

### Plant-based Yogurt (per 8 oz)\*

- $\leq 16$  grams of sugar
- A minimum of 250 mg Ca, 6.5 g protein, & 106 IU (2.67 mcg) vitamin D

\* None authorized at this time - current available options do not meet requirements.



# Plant-based Milk Products

# Final Food Rule

## New Foods



### Call to Action: Product Availability

Be on the lookout for new foods that meet the updated criteria and send UPCs and labels to the state office at:

[MDHHS-wicfoodsubmissions@michigan.gov](mailto:MDHHS-wicfoodsubmissions@michigan.gov)

or

[UPC submissions](#)





# Office Hours



Coming soon!



Thank you!

Brooke Perry, MPH, RD, IBCLC

[PerryB11@michigan.gov](mailto:PerryB11@michigan.gov)

# Coordinator Summit Breastfeeding Updates



Dionne Moore-Smith, Breastfeeding Coordinator  
October 2025

# Discussion Points:

Staffing Updates

Breastfeeding Rates

OA Grant Training Outlook

2026 Goals/Upcoming Trainings

National Breastfeeding Month

Peer Program Updates

Pump Pilot Expansion

Pumps/Breastfeeding Supplies Ordering



# Staffing Updates:

- State Peer Counselor Coordinator
- Regional Lactation Consultants



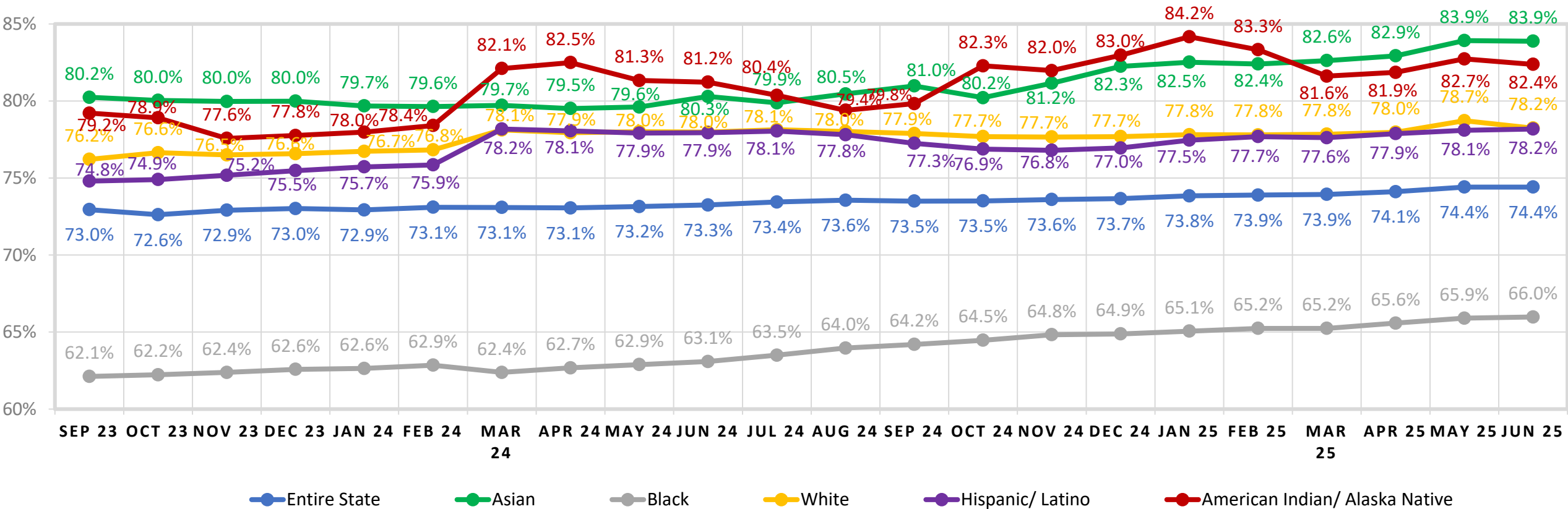
# Breastfeeding Rates



# State Breastfeeding Initiation

## Based on Race and Ethnicity

Data Source: Pre-defined Reports



# OA Grant-Funded Trainings



[Beyond the Shape: Compassionate Support for Curvaceous Breastfeeding Mothers](#)



[Breastfeeding Benefits and Barriers](#)



[Breastfeeding from a Global Perspective](#)



[Certified Lactation Specialist \(CLS\)](#)



[Confidence in Counseling](#)



[Creating Dynamic WIC Classes](#)



[Exclusive Pumping: The Basics](#)



[Exclusive Pumping: Beyond the Basics](#)



[IBCLC Exam Prep Course](#)



[Lactation Bridge Course](#)



[Lactation Skills Day](#)



[Lactation Pain Management: Symptoms, Causes, and Solutions](#)



[Latching, Lifestyle and Limitations of Breastfeeding](#)



[Making More Milk Book Group](#)



[The Milk of Human Kindness: Trauma Informed Lactation Care](#)



[Motivational Interviewing for the Lactation Professional](#)



[Parental and Infant Health During Lactation](#)

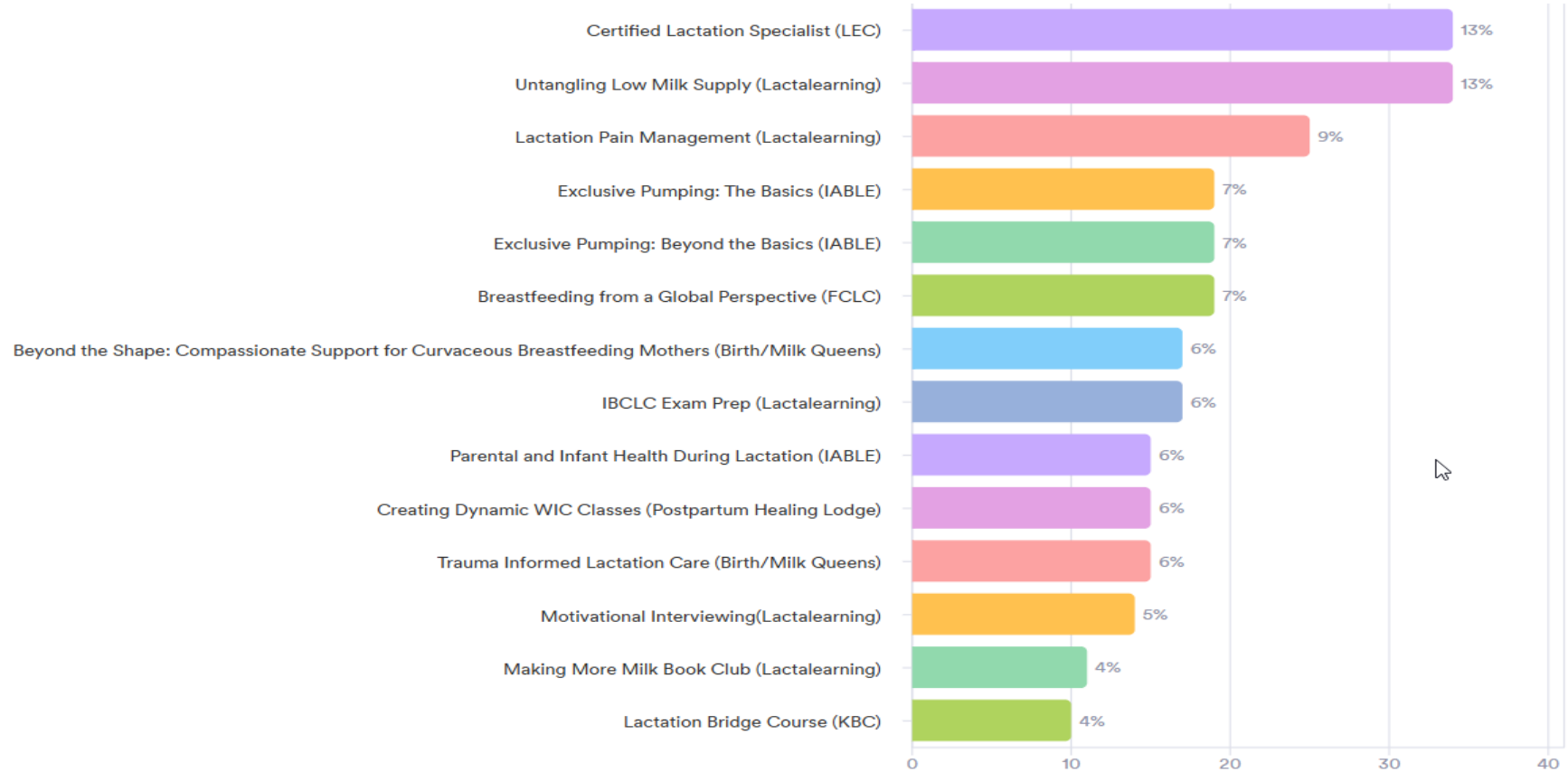


[Untangling Low Milk Supply](#)

# OA Grant-Funded Trainings

## WIC Breastfeeding Peer Update (September 23, 2025)

Which of the 2025 OA Grant funded lactation trainings would you like to see offered next year? Please select your top three choices.



# What are some of our goals for FY26?



Peers	Peer Retention Strategies
	More education on milk expression and pumps
	OA Grant training requirement – FY 26
	Mid West Region Collaborative Peer Counselor virtual conference
	Revise/create peer counselor policies
Trainings	Contact hours
	Inclusion of more peers in Milk Expression training
	Revamping of Peer Manager and Advanced Clinical Lactation Skills trainings
	Condense OA Grant Training Offerings
	MIBFN Webcast – Winter (all staff)
Level 3-4 Support	Support Group- IBCLC recertification support
	Billing
	Certification & Recertification
Pumps	Pump Pilot Expansion
	Streamline direct shipment of supplies to local agencies
Circle of Care	Add resources

# WIC and MIBFN OA Project

- The Million Dollar Question: How Can WIC and Community Partners Work Together to Better Serve Families?
- An innovative and unique project to create strong community connections to bolster WIC participation and community trust. Community-based organizations (CBO) are trusted partners within the maternal infant health space and are familiar with the WIC service delivery model and are positioned to connect clients with local agencies. This project focus was to look from the outside in.
- Stay tuned for future report and a panel webinar this winter !



# Breastfeeding/Peer Program Updates



**Dickinson-Iron District Health Department's  
11th Annual Breastfeeding Awareness Walk**

**When:** Saturday, August 2, 2025  
**Where:** Strawberry Lake/Knights Kingdom, Norway, MI  
**Time:** 11:00am-12:00pm

**Event Highlights:**

- Community walk (stroller-friendly!) around Strawberry Lake
- Giveaways & Breastfeeding Resources
- Captured by Mik will be offering free photography as a gift to families
- Light Refreshments and Snacks
- UP Family Doula Lacy Anderson
- Car Seat Check Scheduling with Community Service Trooper Geno Basanese

**bellinhealth** **Amn** **DIDHD** **DELMEYER** **chicco**

A Special thank you to the City of Norway for allowing the use of Strawberry Lake.



# Peer Program Updates

## 2025 USDA MWRO Breastfeeding Awards of Excellence Premiere Awardees



**District Health Department #4**

**Peer: Lisa Mitchell** pictured here with her clients

**WIC Coordinator: Chelsea Engle**



**Washtenaw County Health Department**

**Peers: Siham AitGacem, Erica Dierkens,  
Sheila Harris, Dera Williams**

**WIC Coordinator: Gayathri Akella**

**Breastfeeding Coordinator: Erika Chanderraj**



# Peer Program Updates

## 2025 USDA MWRO Breastfeeding Awards of Excellence Gold Awardees



**Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency (OLHSA):**  
**Peers: Holly Bertram and Lina Yohan**  
**WIC Coordinator: Ashley Krasicky**  
**Breastfeeding Coordinator: Porlai Lor**



**Jackson County Health Department**  
**Peers: Jazmine Coburn and Danielle Sherrod**  
**WIC Coordinator: Chelsea Schanz**  
**Breastfeeding Coordinator: Annalisa Rowles**



# Peer Program Updates

2025 USDA MWRO Breastfeeding Awards of Excellence Gold Awardees



**Wayne County Health Department**  
**Peers: Jalynn Hamilton, Anna Malos, Layal Nasser, Briyanna Williams**  
**WIC Coordinator: Duaa Cannon**



# Peer Program Updates

**2026 WIC Breastfeeding Awards of Excellence Application Period**

**October 6 – December 12, 2025**

**Will your agency be our next awardee?**

**How to apply? [WIC Breastfeeding Award of Excellence application](#)  
Application is available on WIC Works Resource System**

**Office Hours: Coming in November**



# Peer Program Updates

## Upcoming Peer Trainings

- Regional Peer Trainings
- Winter Webcast by MIBFN (used as Winter PC training): **2/12/26**
- OA Training TBD will replace the Annual WIC Conference
- Peer Update (2026-virtual): **9/22/26**

## Peer Counselor Development Task Force

Ideas on improving Peer retention and morale:

- **Management Evaluation Special Recognitions – Exceptional PC Programming Honor Award**
- **[Hospital/PC Collaboration Toolkit: The Peer Counselor Difference](#)**
- After Hours Policy Revision

# COLLABORATION AND OUTREACH

## Local Agency Breastfeeding Collaboration

- Visit our Google Drive [Collaboration folder](#) to find sample documents on breast pumps, infant feeding classes, infants at work programs & policies, and staff training.

## Breastfeeding Work Group

- [Breastfeeding Workgroup](#) (Meets virtually on Friday in January, April, July, October on Friday 8:30-12:30)
- Visit our Google Sheets LA [Sharing Notes page](#) to gather great ideas from each other.

## Community Partners

- [WIC Materials Available to our Maternal Child Health Partners](#)

## Directories

- [Breastfeeding Coordinators](#)
- [Breastfeeding Peer Counselors](#)
- [Level 3 & 4 Breastfeeding Staff](#)
- [Regional Lactation Consultants \(LCs\)](#)



# Pump Program/Supplies Ordering

- Expansion of pump pilot- 9 agencies
- Streamline offerings
- Move to more direct shipment of items to local agencies
- Improve process for how agencies acknowledge receiving of items from large annual shipment



THANK YOU. Please let us know how  
we can support you.

Dionne Moore-Smith, MPH, RD, IBCLC  
[MooreSmithD@michigan.gov](mailto:MooreSmithD@michigan.gov)

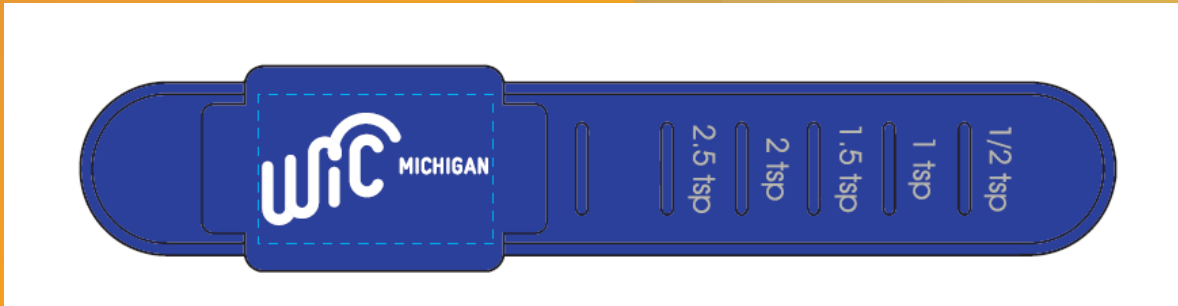




# Nutrition Education & WIC Workforce Updates

Michigan WIC Coordinator Summit  
October 28, 2025

# NE Resources



# 2025 National Maternal Nutrition Intensive Course



- **A Multilevel Approach to Improving Breastfeeding Practices**
- **The Milky Way: Exploring How Maternal Genetics Shapes Human Milk Composition**
- **Staffing, Training, and Roles of WIC Paraprofessionals: Results of a National Review**
- **GLP-1 Agonist Use for Obesity Treatment in Adolescents**
- **Ultra-Processed Foods: Challenges for Regulation and Dietary Guidance**
- **Smart Eating on a Budget: Extension Tools for Healthier Families**

Course available  
September 1 – December 31

**Group Portal:** <https://learning.umn.edu/corporate/landingPage.do?method=load&corporateGroupId=43149813>



## Heavy Metals What You Need To Know

### What are heavy metals?

Heavy metals are found naturally in our air, water and soil. Plants absorb these metals as they grow, and as a result they are found in some foods.

- Our bodies need some heavy metals, like zinc and iron, to be healthy.
- Large amounts of other metals, like arsenic and lead, can be harmful.
- Some heavy metals may affect brain development and impact



### Mix up what you eat.

Some foods have more heavy metals than others. Limit exposure by:

• **Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables.** Pick different kinds of fruits and vegetables to get a variety of vitamins and minerals.

• **Eating a variety of your grains.** Try a variety of grain options, like multigrain or whole grain bread, cereal, oatmeal, quinoa or rice.

• **Providing whole food snacks.** Eat healthy snacks from all food groups, such as avocados, bananas, beans, cheese and yogurt. Choose rice-based snacks and teething foods less often to help limit exposure to arsenic.

- **Choosing water.** Drink water throughout the day and limit juice to no more than 4 ounces a day.

### First Foods

Infant cereal is **easy to digest** and a good source of **iron**, which all babies need. First foods can also be infant meats, fruits and vegetables.

WIC provides a variety of infant cereal options. Try **corn, millet, multigrain, oat, quinoa and whole wheat.**



New on  
Website!

## MEAL BOOSTERS

Make the most of every bite by adding nutrient dense foods to your meals and snacks. This helps support health and growth.

Stay consistent with eating habits by:

- **Sitting at the table** for all meals and snacks.
- **Limiting distractions** during meal times to keep the focus on food
- **Eating as a family** to model healthy eating habits.
- **Offering liquids** after the meal to encourage appetite for food.

Boost your meals and snacks with WIC

### Nut or Seed Butters

- Spread it on toast, crackers, fruit or vegetables.
- Mix a big spoonful into hot cereal, shakes, smoothies or yogurt.
- Spread thinly or mix well for young children.

### Eggs

- Add extra eggs to quiches, scrambled eggs, omelets or pancake batter
- Top salads with hard-boiled eggs.
- Mix in scrambled eggs to fried rice or stir-fry.
- Make an egg sandwich with mayonnaise or guacamole.

### Cheese

- Melt it on sandwiches, potatoes, or vegetables
- Add it to soups, sauces, casseroles or omelets
- Serve it with crackers or fruit

### Yogurt

- Eat plain or top with fruit, cereal or granola.
- Use for a fruit or vegetable dip.
- Add into soups or smoothies.

### Beans

- Add beans to chili, rice and nachos.
- Make a side of baked beans or bean salad.
- Puree beans into creamy soups.
- Serve hummus, bean dips and spreads with vegetables or crackers.

### Other Add Ins:

- Powdered Milk
- Cream Cheese
- Whipping Cream
- Butter
- Vegetable Oils
- Mayonnaise
- Sour Cream
- Flaxseed

In  
progress!



MDHHS - Pub xxx (x 25)  
Adapted from Kent County

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# EXPLORING CULTURAL PRACTICES

## WEBINAR SERIES

- FILIPINO
- INDIA
- HISPANIC
- MUSLIM
- AFRICAN AMERICAN
- NATIVE AMERICAN
- BENGALI
- ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN
- VIETNAMESE
- AFGHAN



**Available Online:**

<https://mediasite.mihealth.org/Mediasite/Channel/wic/browse/null/most-recent/null/0/fad0acef49774fb98894528ce81f5a6414>

# CULTURAL INFORMATION SHEETS

## Exploring Native American Culture

**Background**

Native Americans are a diverse group of people who have lived in North America for thousands of years. They have a rich and varied culture, with many different languages, customs, and traditions.

**Traditions and Celebrations**

Native Americans have a rich and varied culture, with many different languages, customs, and traditions. Some of the most well-known traditions include the Powwow, a gathering of Native Americans from different tribes to dance and sing, and the Sun Dance, a religious ceremony performed by some Plains tribes.

**Education and Literacy**

Native Americans have a rich and varied culture, with many different languages, customs, and traditions. Some of the most well-known traditions include the Powwow, a gathering of Native Americans from different tribes to dance and sing, and the Sun Dance, a religious ceremony performed by some Plains tribes.

## Exploring the Afghan Culture

**Background**

Afghanistan is located in Central-South Asia and is bordered by Pakistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and China. The country is primarily mountainous, with plains in the north and southwest. Kabul is the capital.

**Traditions and Customs**

The term *Mullah*, or a person who practices Islam, embraces various peoples and societies spread over many countries. Islam began in what is now present-day Saudi Arabia. It is a monotheistic faith and the second largest religion in the world. Muslims believe the Prophet Muhammad received a holy text, the Quran, through an angel. Islam means peace or submission to God. Islam respects other religions and faiths, such as Christianity and Judaism, and mosques are sacred places of worship.

**Holidays and Celebrations**

Islam is a one-month Muslim in the Muslim lunar calendar. The *Ramadan* is a one-month Muslim in the Muslim lunar calendar. The *Ramadan* is a one-month Muslim in the Muslim lunar calendar. The *Ramadan* is a one-month Muslim in the Muslim lunar calendar.

**Physical Practices**

Muslims practice modesty. Women wear headscarves called *hijabs*, some wear face coverings called *niqabs*, and men wear *kufi* hats. They wear headscarves and face coverings. They may not wear eye contact. They may not wear eye contact.

## Exploring African American Culture

**Background**

African American history dates back to early American slavery in the 17th to the 18th century.

## Exploring the Chinese Culture

**Background**

China, officially known as the People's Republic of China, is located in East Asia.

## Exploring the Filipino Culture

**Background**

The Republic of the Philippines is an archipelago country in Southeast Asia, consisting of 17,541 islands with a hot, humid, tropical marine climate. The Philippines was under Spanish rule for over 300 years (1565-1898) and has a strong Spanish influence on food, culture, and language.

**Traditions and Customs**

The family is central to Philippine society. They maintain close relationships, and multigenerational living arrangements are common. Respect for authority is valued and honored. Sometimes, family members work abroad to support the family, called Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). They periodically send boxes full of non-perishable food, medicine, gifts, and more, called  *balikbayan boxes*, to family and friends back home.

**Holidays and Celebrations**

Public holidays are classified as regular or special. Festivals are mostly religious and Christian by the dominant religion. Harvest festivals occur during the harvest season, including *Ateneo* and *Panay*. The Christmas season begins as early as September, and *May Week* is observed by the Christian population. Many Catholics abstain from meat on Fridays during the Lenten season or Fridays leading up to Easter.

**Health Disparities**

Most Filipinos who immigrate to the U.S. have an increased risk of heart disease, endometrial disease, stroke, and diabetes. There is a higher rate of breast cancer among Filipinos.

## Exploring the Bengali Culture

**Background**

Bangladesh is located in the southeastern part of Asia, sharing borders with India and Myanmar. It is the world's eighth most populous country.

## Exploring the Jamaican Culture

**Background**

Jamaica is an island country in the Caribbean Sea, south of Cuba and west of Haiti. It is the seventh largest island in the Caribbean.

## Exploring the Vietnamese Culture

**Background**

Vietnam, officially called the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, is a country located on the eastern coast of Indochina.

## Exploring the Guatemalan Culture

**Background**

Guatemala is in Central America, bordered by Mexico to the north, Belize to the northwest, Honduras to the south, and El Salvador to the southeast. Guatemala has a lush and diverse landscape ranging from beaches, so rainforests and mountains. Guatemala has a rich history dating back centuries to the Maya civilization. The country became independent from Spain and Mexico in 1821. From the early 20th century, dictators have ruled the country with military coups and a bloody civil war. Today, the country is a constitutional democratic republic with a president. It is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, with over half the population living in poverty. Guatemala City is the capital and the largest city in Central America.

**Traditions and Customs**

Guatemalan family life is either Maya (indigenous) or Ladino (non-indigenous). Maya families primarily speak the Maya language, with the extended family as the basis of the community. Also, Maya people rarely marry outside their local villages. Ladinos adopt a Spanish language, dress, and lifestyle, living a more Western middle-class lifestyle with extended families living in separate homes. The Maya culture is prevalent throughout the country, including crafts, colorful handwoven textiles, and costumes that are unique to each community. Weekly markets in Maya villages are important social gatherings. In addition, the art of the colonial period is represented in the architecture and decor of Roman Catholic churches throughout the country.

**Holidays and Celebrations**

Fairs and religious festivals are celebrated throughout the year. Guatemala's national day of independence from Spain, September 15, is celebrated with fireworks, dances, parades, soccer matches, and cockfights. At festivals, indigenous crafts are sold, including intricately embroidered huipils (sweaters) worn by Maya women. Many Guatemalans celebrate All Saints' Day on November 1 with kite flying and treating on *famelle* (candies). Most Guatemalans observe Christmas and build a brightly colored nativity scene to put under the Christmas tree.

**Education and Literacy**

Spanish is the official language of Guatemala and is spoken by most of the population. Education is publicly funded, and in 2022, the literacy rate was 91.7%. Half the population lives in poverty, which deters some from going beyond primary education.

**Health Disparities**

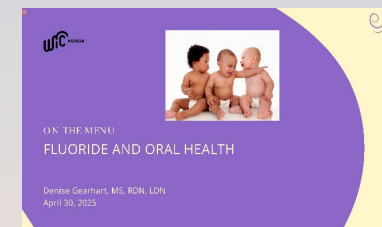
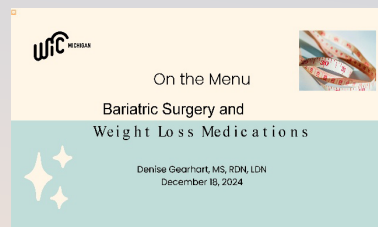
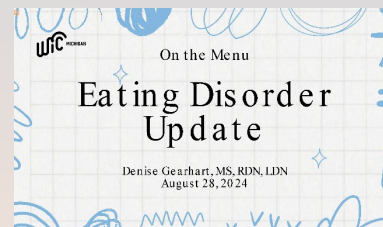
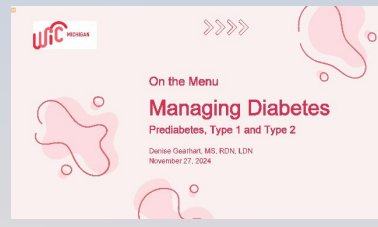
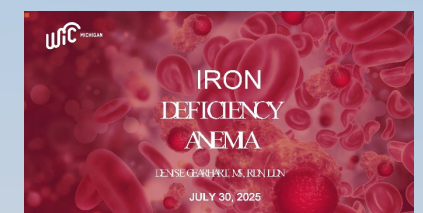
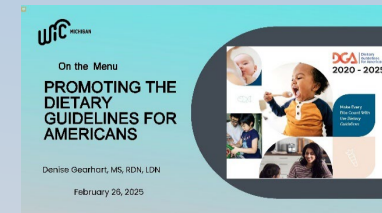
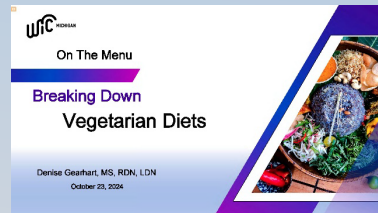
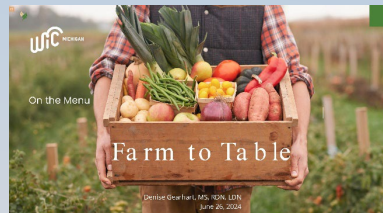
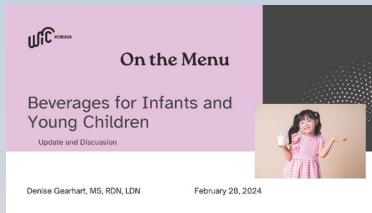
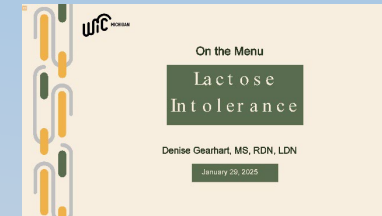
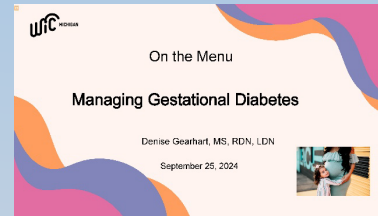
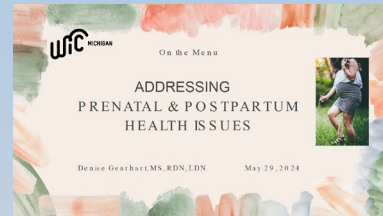
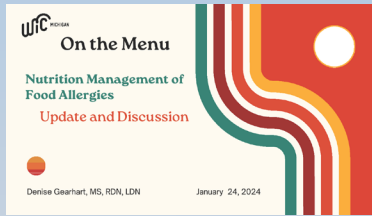
Many Guatemalans experience challenges with health outcomes, including malnutrition, poor growth in infants and children. Many families choose between indigenous treatments or medicine for care.

Available Online: <https://www.michigan.gov/wahhs/assistance-programs/wic-staff/nutrition-and-health-for-staff/cultural-information-sheets>

# ON THE MENU

2024

2025



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# Advanced CPA Award 2025

Heather Carefoot  
Calhoun County

Rachel Broussard  
OLHSA

Kaitlin Kosek  
Macomb County

Jessica Sova  
Central Michigan DHD



BUILDING HEALTHY BODIES WITH IRON FOODS:

## How to Eat More Foods with Iron

Low iron is the most common nutrition-related disorder in the world. In the United States, about 10 million people have low iron. The good news is that for most people, what you eat can help. People need iron for healthy bodies! Offer your family 2 to 3 food sources of iron per day.

Iron is naturally found in animal meat and is easily absorbed into the body. Plant-based foods also offer iron but they need the help of vitamin C foods to be absorbed by the body. Some foods like grains are iron-fortified. This means iron has been added to them.

Here are some foods that are good sources of iron:

### Animal proteins:

- Beef
- Beef liver
- Eggs
- Pork
- Salmon
- Turkey
- Veal



### Plant-based foods:

- All WIC cereals
- Baked potato
- Broccoli
- Cooked beans
- Raisins
- Nuts
- Whole grain bread



### Foods high in vitamin C:

- Bell peppers
- Broccoli
- Tomatoes
- Cantaloupe
- Kiwis
- Strawberries
- Orange juice

— Eat these during the same meal or snack

### Plan a menu with more iron:

#### Breakfast:

Instant cooked oatmeal with strawberries



#### Lunch:

Egg salad whole grain sandwich, sweet potato fries



#### Snack:

Whole grain crackers, bell peppers, and hummus



#### Dinner:

Black beans, brown rice, corn, and tomatoes



Learn more about how to give your child enough iron

Take the lesson [Building Healthy Bodies With Iron Foods](#) at [wichealth.org](http://wichealth.org) for more ideas.

# wichealth.org and wichealth.org/support

- Annual Webcast  
<https://mediasite.mihealth.org/Mediasite/Channel/wic/browse/full/most-recent/null/0/689732a8a83a46aaa8c90c92dd7b27d914>
- Resource Library
  - Client Search (password resets, verifications, etc.)
  - wichealth to go PDFs and images
  - Custom Photography
  - Social Media Posts
  - Monthly Newsletters
- Staff Trainings
  - Conversations about weight
  - Postpartum depression
  - *In process:* Autism and nutrition



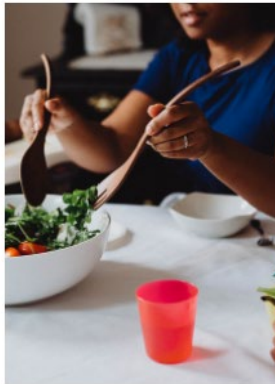
Scenes from WIC Clinics



Nutritious Food & Drink for Children



Outdoor Play



At the Table

Subscribe to the wichealth.org Monthly Newsletter:

<http://eepurl.com/dPg1Rv>

# NUTRITION SERVICE PLANS

## NUTRITION EDUCATION GOAL

**NE Goal: Contact Tara**  
**Redemption Report: Contact Brooke**

**SAVE THE DATE &  
JOIN US!**



**Nutrition Education Workgroup**

March 12, 2026

June 11, 2026

September 10, 2026



**Nutrition Education Advisory Team**

Meet virtually 3-4x/year

Ask me for details.

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# MICHIGAN WIC PART-TIME DIETETIC INTERNSHIP

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IN COLLABORATION WITH THE  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
DIETETIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

- \* **Non-traditional path to become Registered Dietitian**
- \* **Part-time WIC Staff/ Part-time Intern/  
+ Master's Student**
- \* **Applications due February 15 each year**





**THANK YOU**

[fischertl@michigan.gov](mailto:fischertl@michigan.gov)

The background features a complex geometric design. A diagonal line runs from the top-left to the bottom-right. To the left of this line, there are several overlapping shapes: a dark purple triangle at the top-left, a blue square containing a white semi-circle and concentric circles, a pink square with a white semi-circle, a blue square with a white semi-circle, a pink square with a white semi-circle, and a dark purple triangle at the bottom-left. To the right of the diagonal line, there are solid blocks of pink and dark purple. The text is positioned on the right side of the image, set against a solid blue background.

# WIC WORKFORCE SURVEY RESULTS



# SURVEY FINDINGS

**n=45**

- Note: Many questions allowed multiple responses.

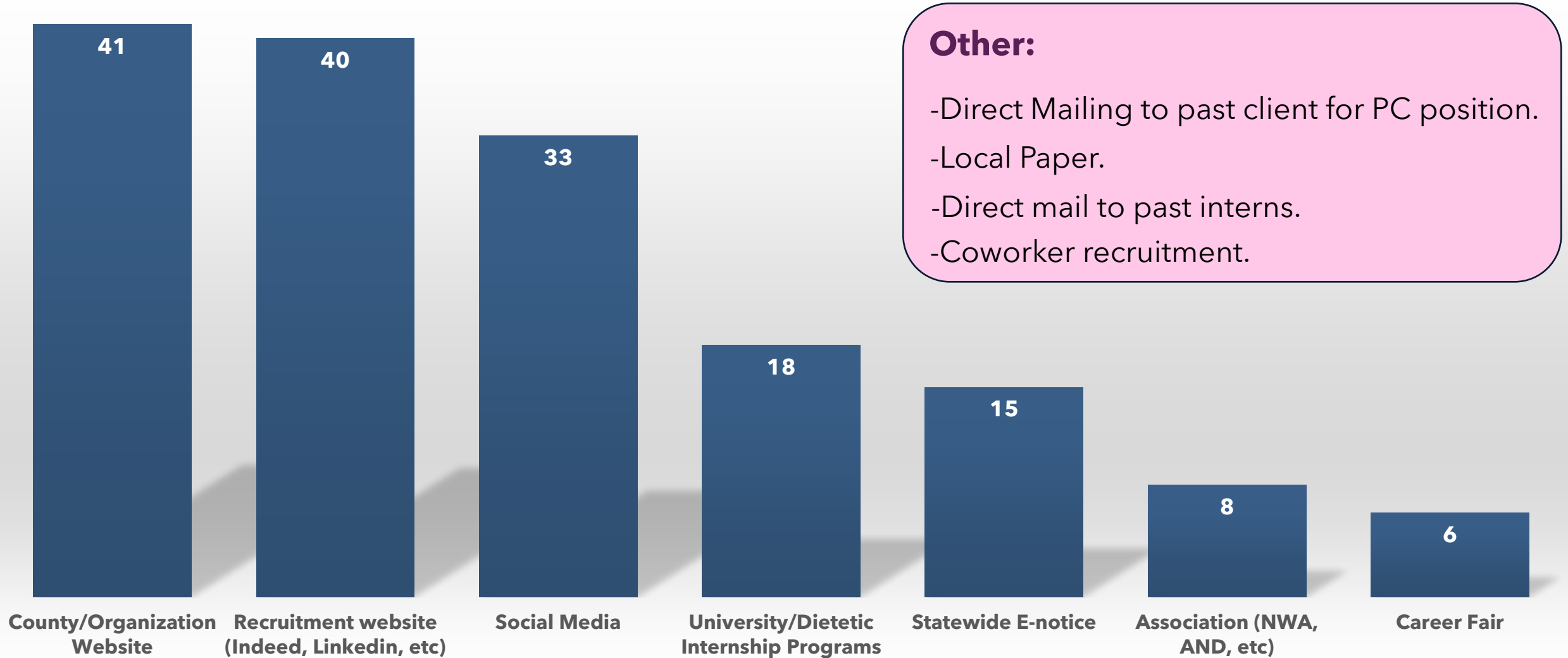
## **Survey Sections:**

- Recruitment & Hiring Practices
- Benefits/Perks
- Budget & Funding
- Role Specific Results



# **RECRUITMENT & HIRING PRACTICES**

# Recruitment Methods, order by effectiveness



**67% believe recruitment efforts are adequate.**

# Strategies used by LA to recruit staff who reflect the local community (including but not limited to language, race, color, culture, etc.)

## Themes:

- **Post openings locally**

- Local paper, community bulletin board. local job groups, word of mouth, sharing with local universities, sharing postings with clients.
- Our agency is involved with numerous community organizations. We have recruited staff through other organizations when we have been attending outreach events.
- Referrals from employees (peers and CIAO client ambassadors).

- **Administrative action to prioritize local hires**

- Tribal people have priority for employment.
- Job description states "would like candidate to live within county".
- Text WIC clients that we were hiring a full time BFPC and to apply if interested.

- **Social Media**

- Indeed and social media have given us great diversity in staff.

# Strategies used by LA to recruit staff who reflect the local community (including but not limited to language, race, color, culture, etc.)

## Themes:

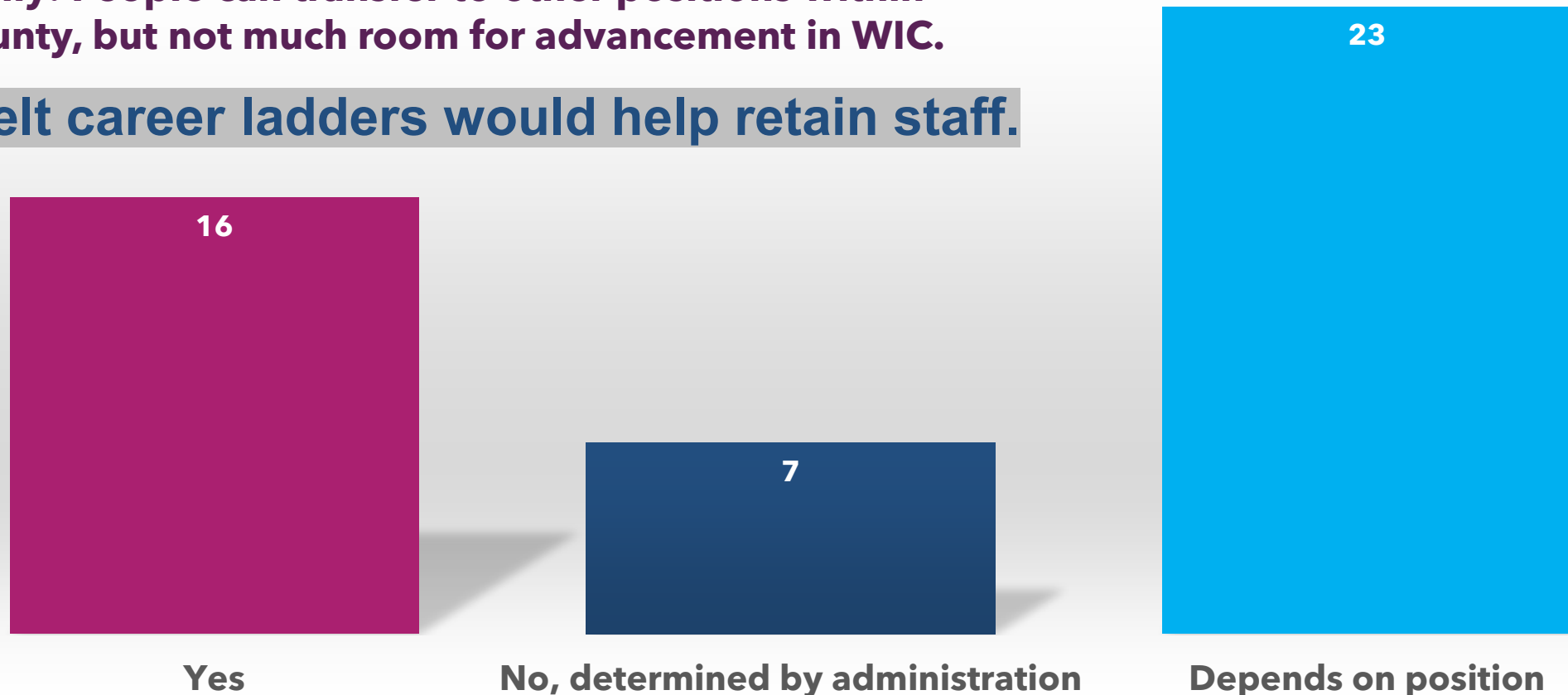
- **Intentional screening**

- Open-ended questions related to these areas are vital to hiring the right people to provide WIC services. Using resources to select questions that have been validated in this area is a good practice to bring out biases that will be problematic.
- Use behavior-based open-ended questions to recruit staff who reflect and understand the local community. This helps to uncover a candidate's real-life experiences, cultural competence, and ability to engage with diverse populations.
  - Example question: "Tell me about a time you worked with someone from a different cultural background. How did you ensure effective communication and respect?"
  - This approach promotes equity, reduces bias, and helps identify candidates who can connect with and represent the community served.

# Does your agency offer any career advancement opportunities?

Generally: People can transfer to other positions within the County, but not much room for advancement in WIC.

75% felt career ladders would help retain staff.



**Conundrum: People stay in WIC/ great longevity (great), so not much upward movement (not so great).**

# How do budget constraints affect your hiring practices?

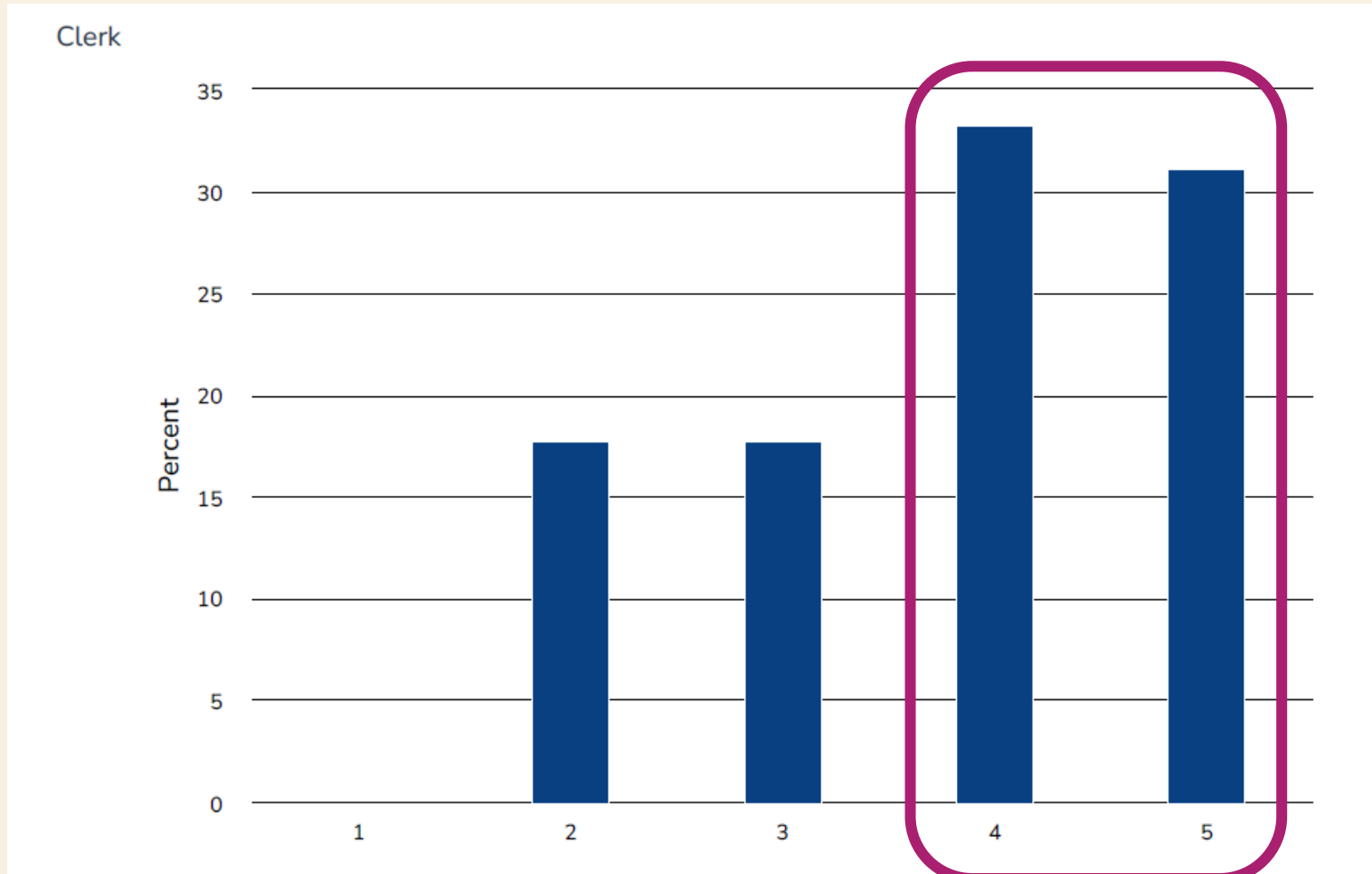


An abstract geometric design on the left side of the slide. It features a grid of colored squares: a bright pink square at the top left with white concentric semi-circles; a grey square below it; a dark purple square at the bottom left with white concentric circles and a solid dark purple semi-circle below them; a yellow square in the middle with a dark purple diagonal line; a blue square at the bottom right with a pink diagonal line; and a dark purple square at the bottom right with a pink dotted pattern. A white horizontal line with a dot at its end extends from the top left towards the center.

# ROLE SPECIFIC RESULTS

# Staffing WIC roles may vary in difficulty.

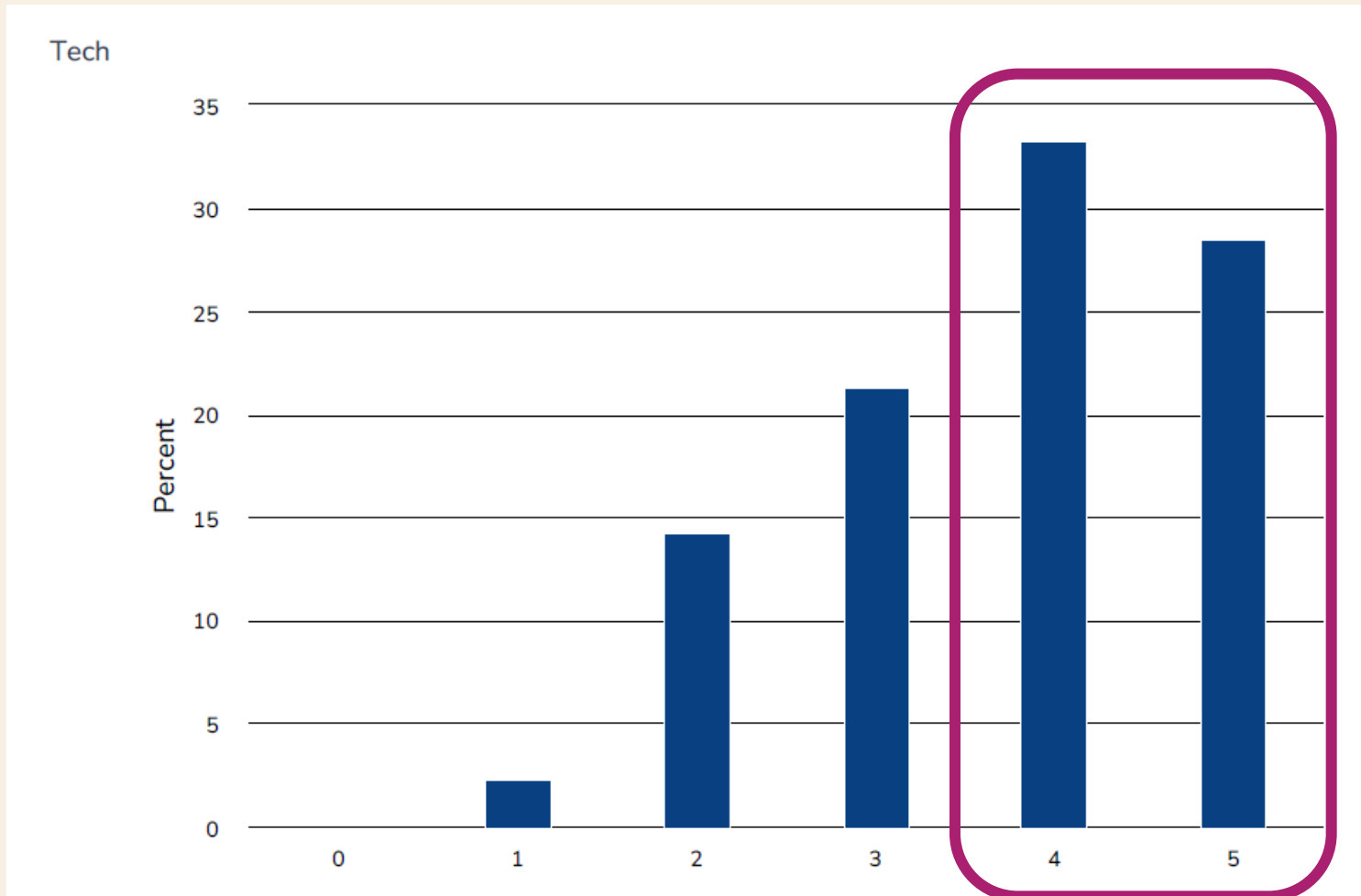
How hard is it to hire a **Clerk**?



1=Very Difficult  
5=Not Difficult

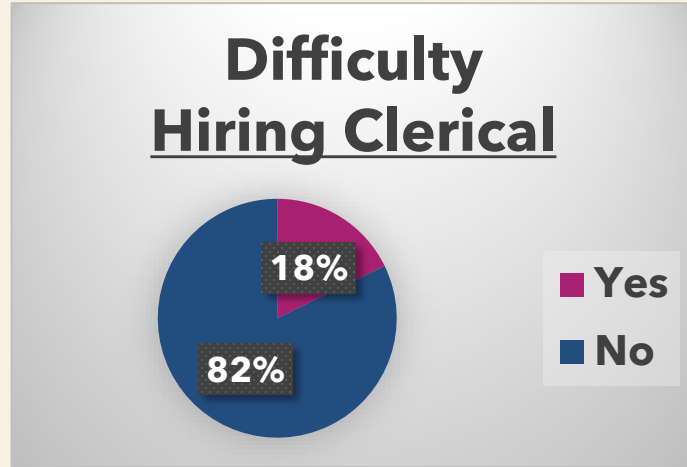
# Staffing WIC roles may vary in difficulty.

How hard is it to hire a **Tech**?



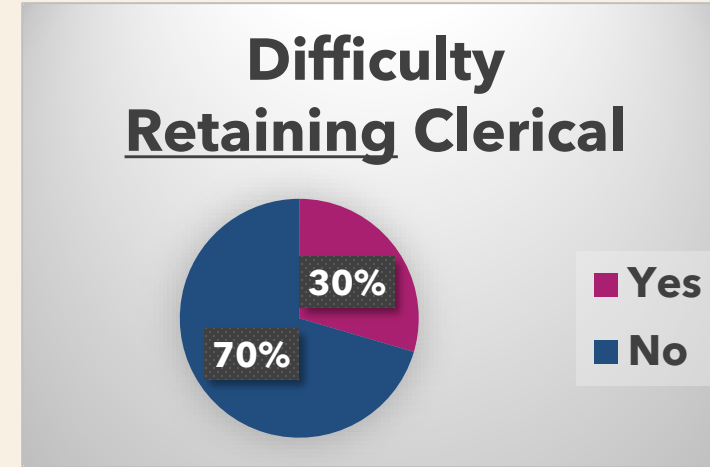
1=Very Difficult  
5=Not Difficult

# HIRING & RETAINING CLERICAL STAFF



Why?

- Pay (50%)
- Work Hours (13%)
- Lack of Qualified Candidates (63%)
- Flexibility (13%)



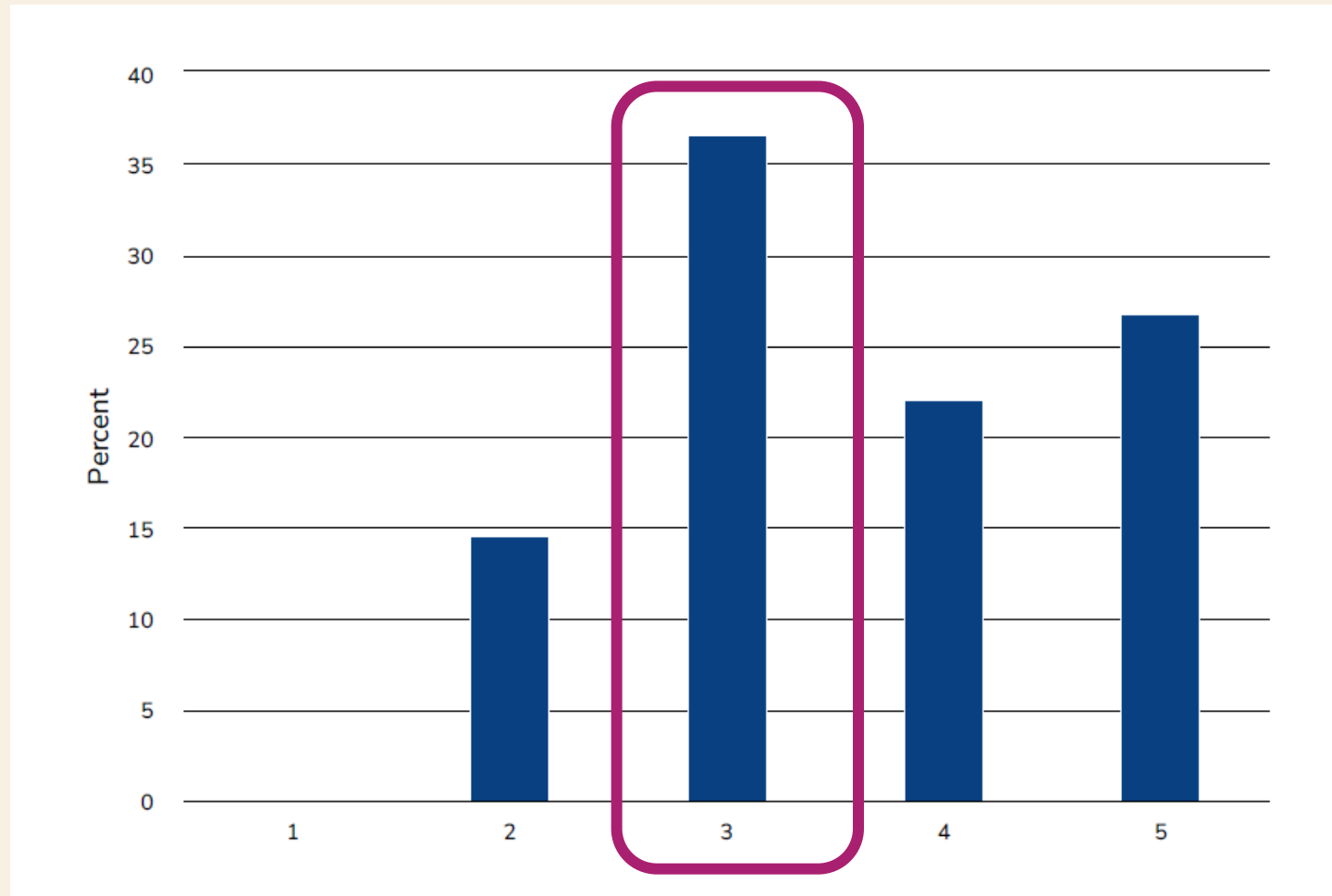
Why?

- Pay (69%)
- Lack of career advancement opportunities (46%)
- Functioning in additional positions (outside of WIC) (23%)
- Work hours (23%)

**'Not a difficult role, but some become overwhelmed with the fast pace, large phone volume, responsibility,'**

# Staffing WIC roles may vary in difficulty.

How hard is it to hire a **Peer**?



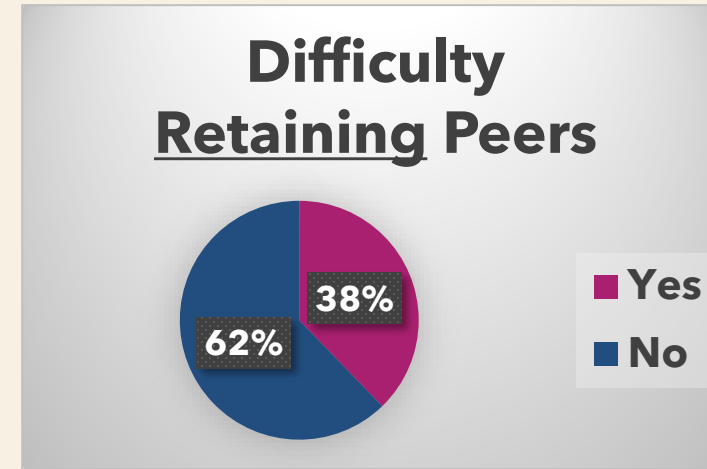
1=Very Difficult  
5=Not Difficult

# HIRING & RETAINING PEERS



Why?

- Pay (88%)
- Work Hours (63%)
- Lack of Qualified Candidates (38%)
- Flexibility (38%)



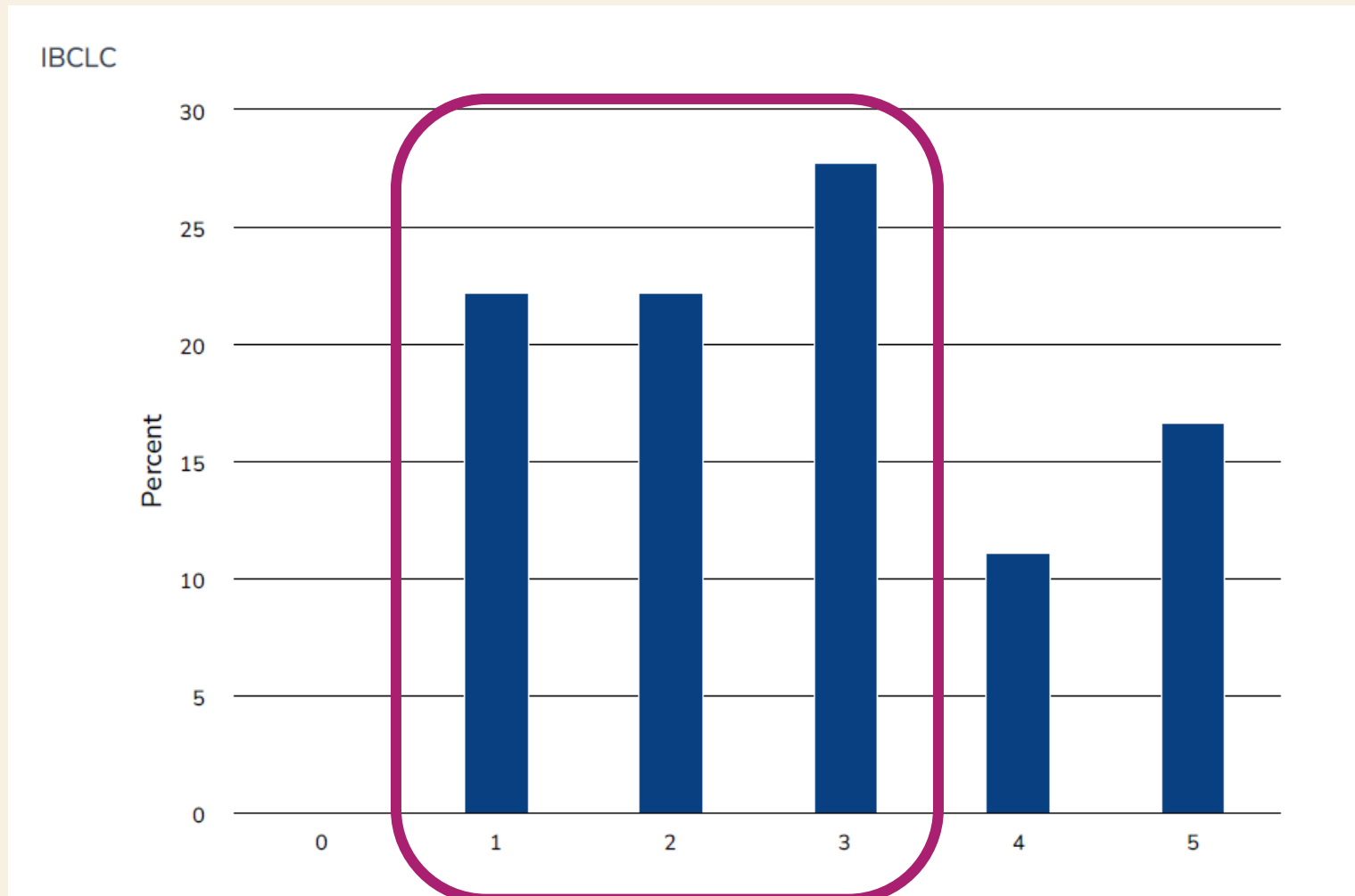
Why?

- Lack of career advancement opportunities (65%)
- Pay (53%)
- Narrow scope/responsibilities (47%)
- Work hours (29%)

**'All of the above, none of the above. It has been so dependent on the Peer.'**

# Staffing WIC roles may vary in difficulty.

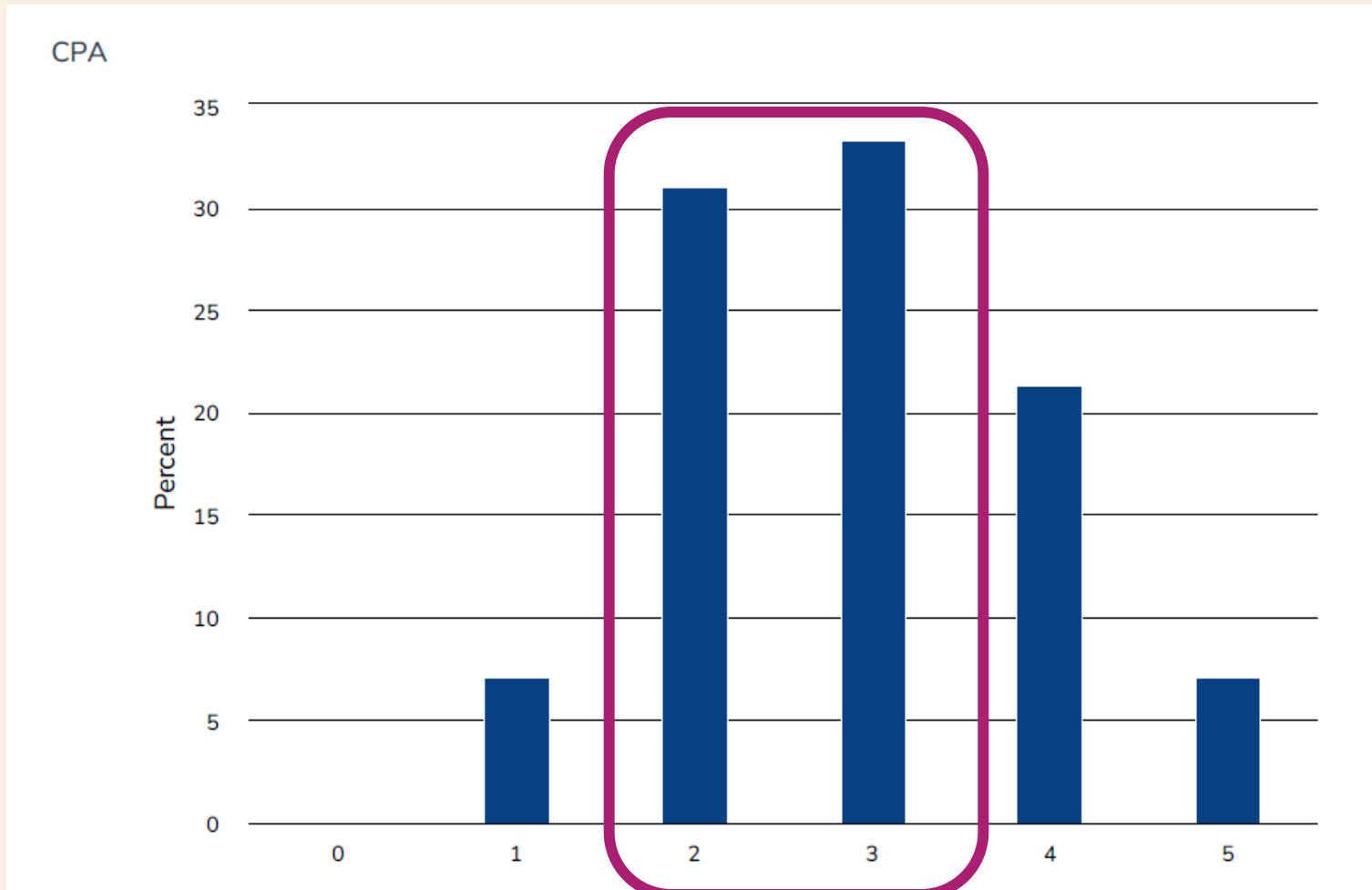
How hard is it to hire an **IBCLC**?



1=Very Difficult  
5=Not Difficult

# Staffing WIC roles may vary in difficulty.

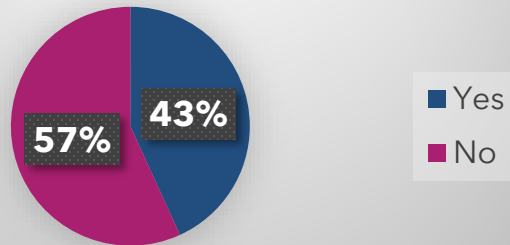
How hard is it to hire a **CPA**?



1=Very Difficult  
5=Not Difficult

# HIRING & RETAINING CPAs

## Difficulty Hiring CPAs

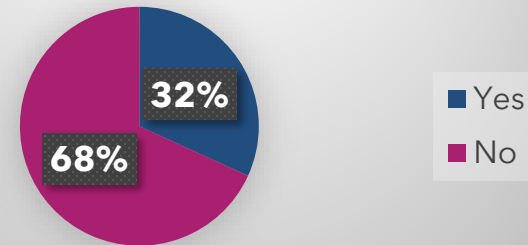


Why?

- Pay (74%)
- Lack of Qualified Candidates (68%)
- Flexibility (16%)

**96% of survey respondents felt current CPA requirements were reasonable.**

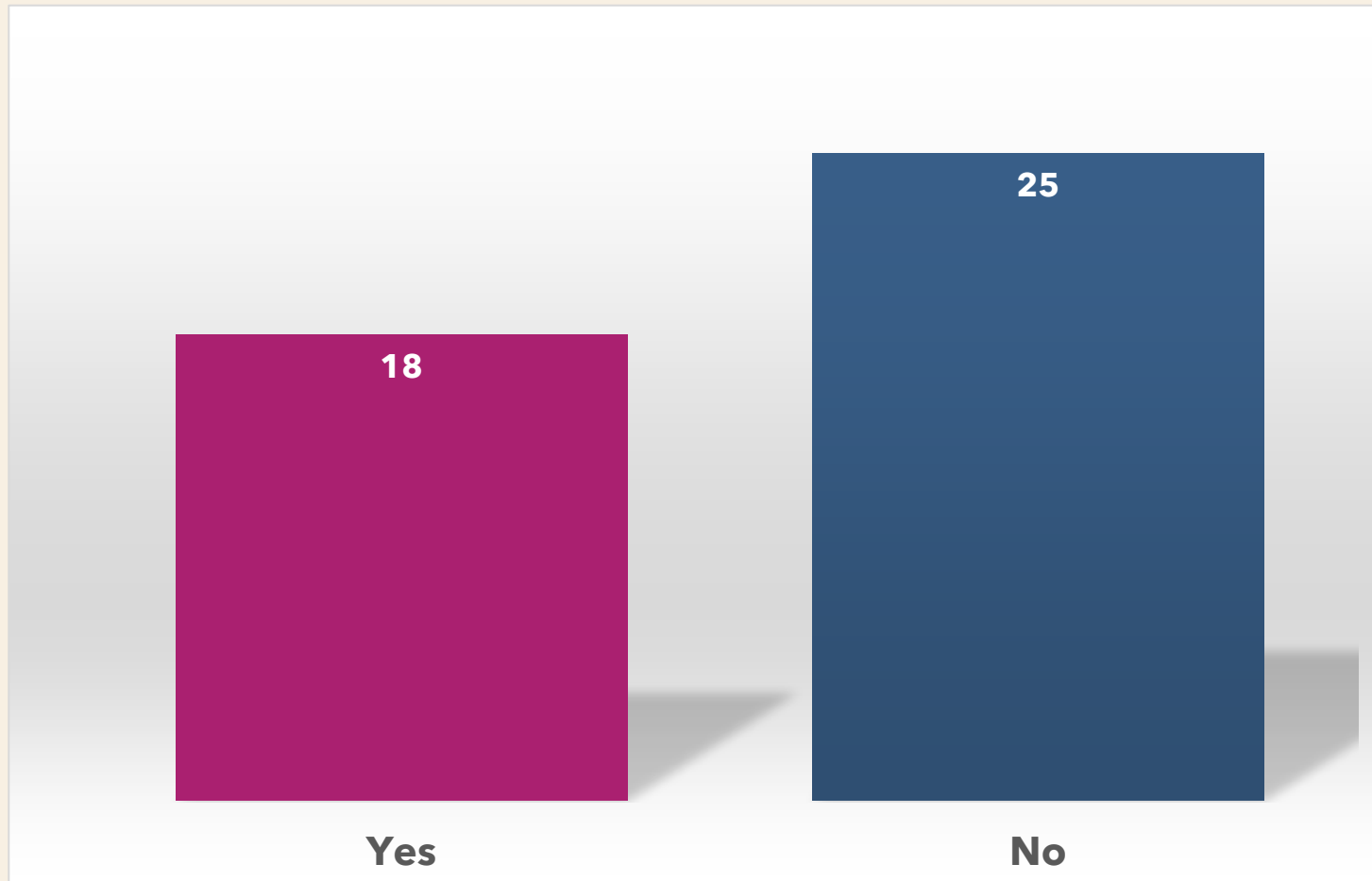
## Difficulty Retaining CPAs



Why?

- Pay (72%)
- Lack of career advancement opportunities (43%)
- Narrow scope/responsibilities (36%)
- Functioning in additional positions (outside of WIC) (29%)

# Would you hire a paraprofessional CPA, if Michigan WIC policy allowed?



It would not be allowed in our county structure. Different union than CPAs and CPAs would need to give up a position to create CPPA position.

Texas has had a successful training plan for many years,.

Consider this for some applicants with comparable experience and extensive training....must have some type of degree and be very well-trained.

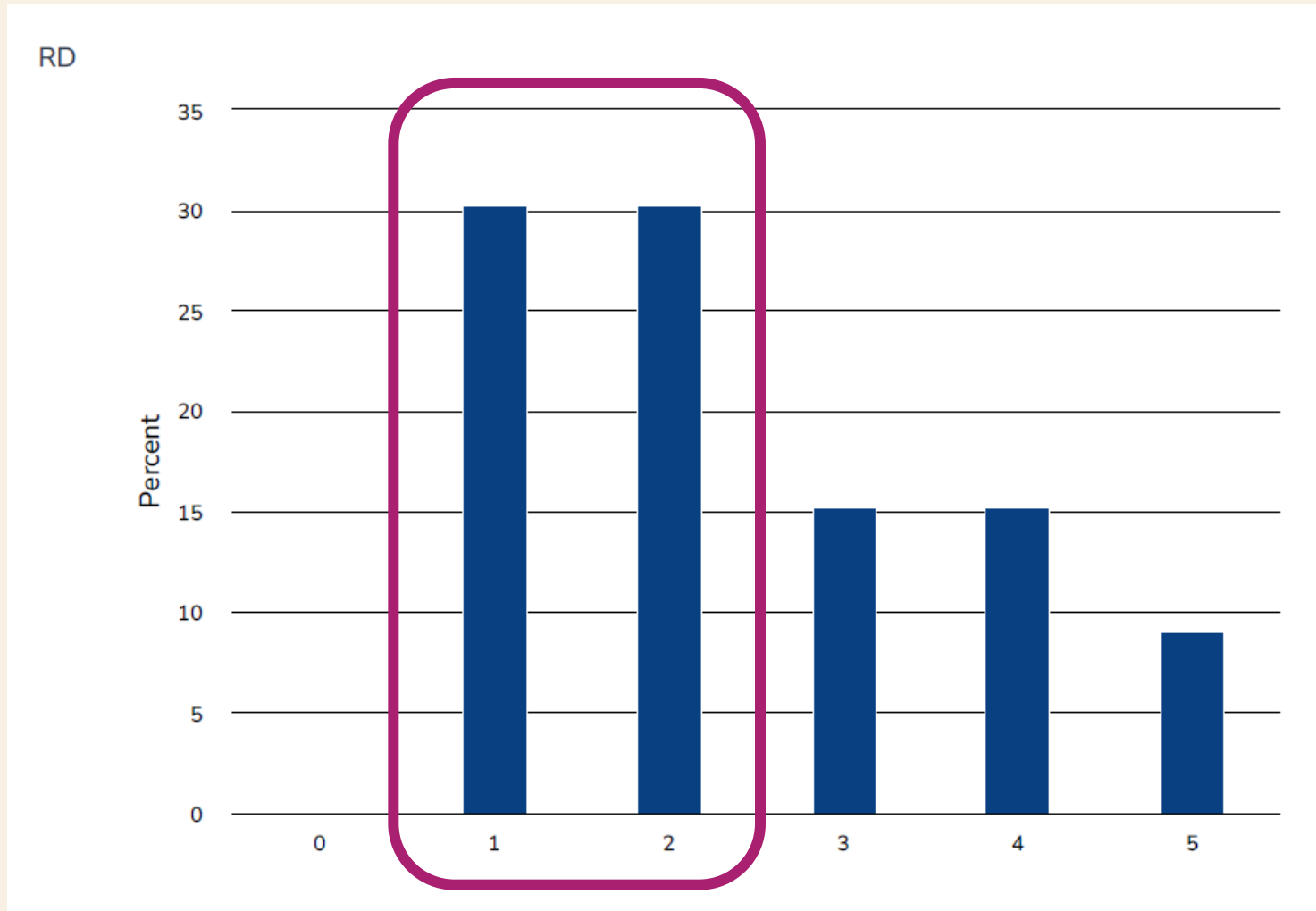
...lost of knowledge and skills would be immeasurable. I depend on my nursing expertise daily to identify and refer clients.

-Some prefer hiring RDs for the flexibility.

-Others prefer hiring RNs for their clinical skills.

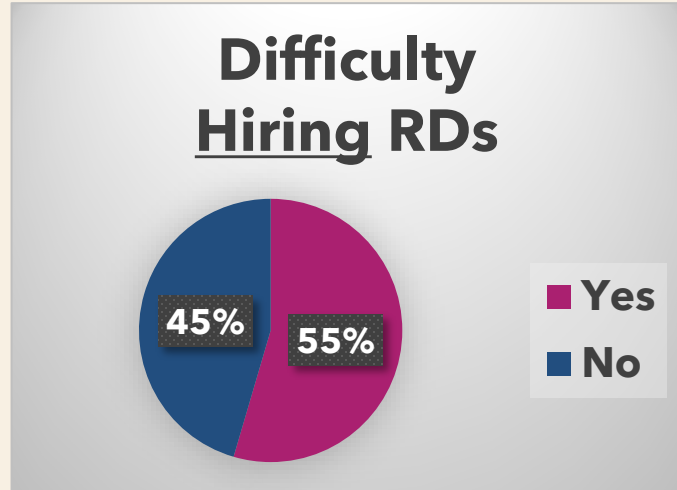
# Staffing WIC roles may vary in difficulty.

How hard is it to hire a **RD**?



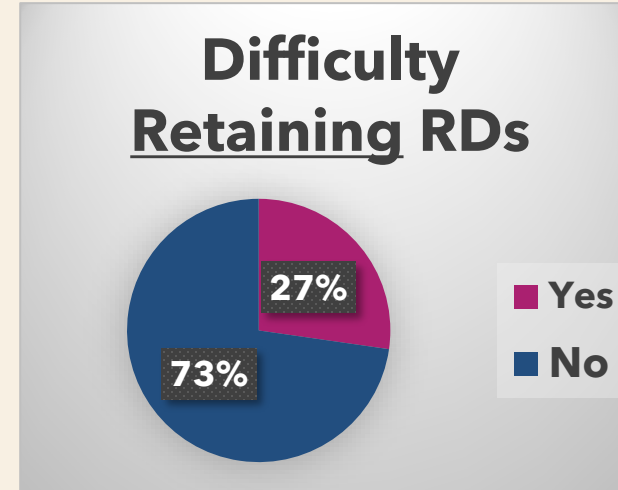
1=Very Difficult  
5=Not Difficult

# HIRING & RETAINING RDS



Why?

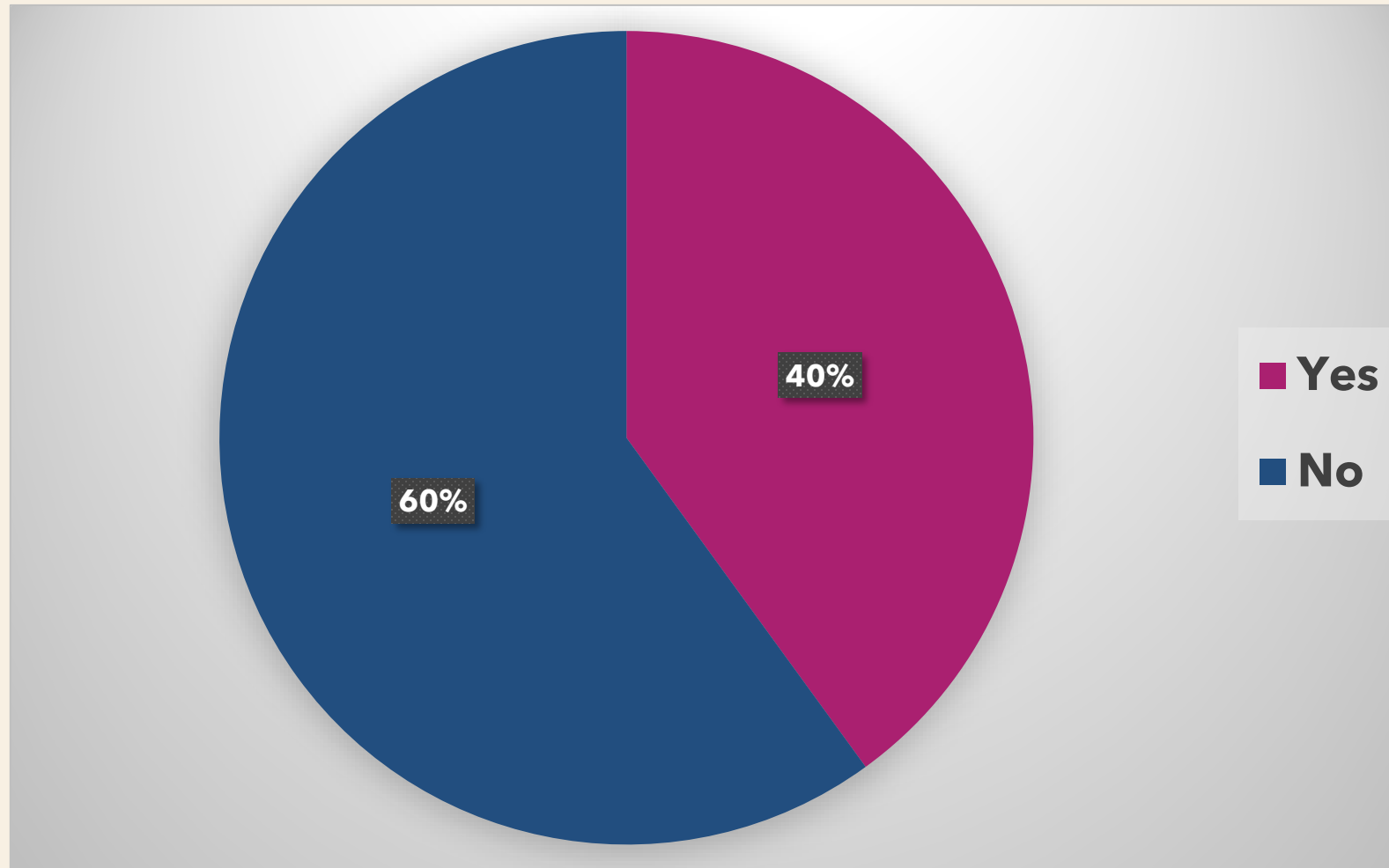
- Pay (67%)
- Lack of Qualified Candidates (75%)
- Flexibility (25%)
- Work Hours (13%)



Why?

- Pay (82%)
- Lack of career advancement opportunities (55%)
- Narrow scope/responsibilities (36%)
- Work Hours (27%)
- Functioning in additional positions (outside of WIC) (9%)

# Do you think non-RDs should be allowed to approve Class III formulas?



# PLEASE SHARE ANY HELPFUL INSIGHTS REGARDING YOUR ANSWER:

**No way!**

**vs.**

**Maybe...**

1. RD education and experience is vital to make appropriate decisions and recommendations.
2. Let's not minimize the RD role in WIC; that will not help increase pay or get qualified candidates.
3. It's outside the scope of nursing.
4. RDs are educated in nutrition so should be the only ones approving class III formulas.

1. CPAs already review SFFR, add to MIWIC for RD approval, so capable to approve most special formulas.
2. If the form is completed correctly and follows the guidelines.
3. It's a lot of extra effort for the non-RD to get RD approval. Non-RD feels less prioritized.
4. HCPs order the formula; generally, it's not appropriate for RD to overrule the decision anyway.

# CONSIDERATIONS

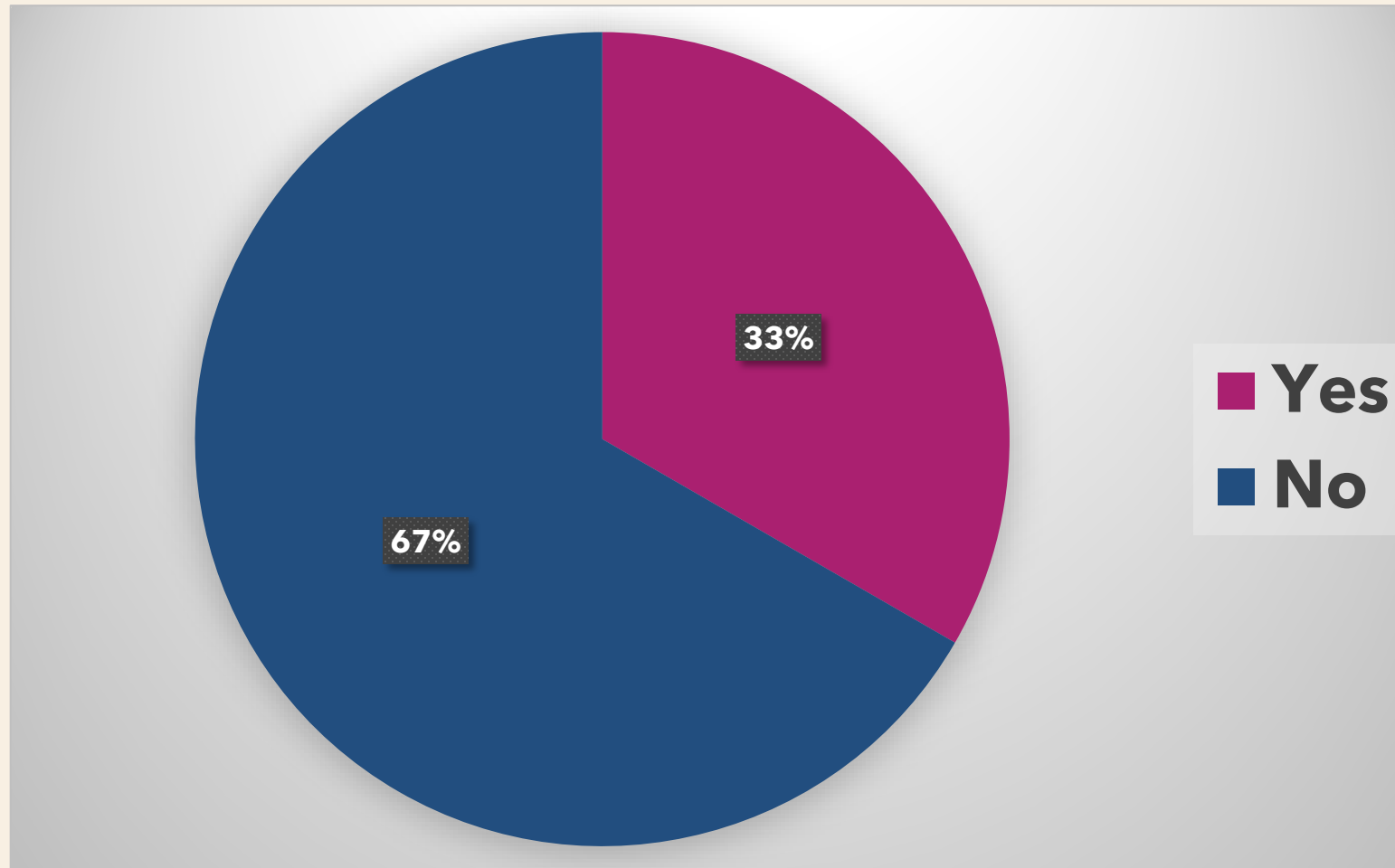
\*\*Maybe if:

- It was another medical professional or someone with nutrition background AND
- Required training and competency provided and assessed.

\*\*Consider reclassifying formulas OR only for certain formulas, like premature or Pediasure

## Other ideas?

# Should non-RDs be allowed to provide high risk counseling?



# PLEASE SHARE ANY HELPFUL INSIGHTS REGARDING YOUR ANSWER:

## No way!

vs.

## Maybe...

- Absolutely not – this dilutes the importance of the RD role.
  - The RD education and experience is vital to make appropriate decisions and recommendations.
  - Non-RDs do not have the training.
  - Let's not minimize the RD role in WIC, I don't think this will increase pay or get qualified candidates.
- If they have a nutrition or dietetics degree, or RD-eligible.
  - If they are properly trained.
  - Counseling should be provided by a professional.
  - Possible with years of experience and higher level of training.
  - Depending on expertise, level of education, etc.
  - Just like a peer – if they feel it is out of their scope they can refer to the RD.

# CONSIDERATIONS

\*\*No but do feel CPA staff should have more control over who NEEDS high risk counseling. Not everyone who 'scores' as HR needs RD services, but only option is to schedule or say they declined. Could use some fine-tuning of process.

\*\*Clients may be more willing to accept NCRD with non-RD staff with whom they are more familiar/comfortable (esp if language is a barrier)

\*\*RD preferred, but if limitations (staffing), having trained back-up could be helpful. (would need added training and competencies)

## Other ideas?

# FINAL COMMENTS

- Compiling a list job description, salaries, etc. statewide would be helpful. Then if an agency needs to justify a position or salary then we can refer to other agencies to help support our justification.
- I support the idea of providing clerks/techs an opportunity to grow within WIC and provide some level of nutrition counseling with appropriate training and education. We have some clerks/techs who have worked in WIC and are ready to grow in their role but they are limited. I think this could help with retention and support.
- I find the most difficult position to fill is our RD positions in our rural areas.
- CPA's that have a Dietetic background that didn't attend the internship should be allowed to conduct high risk appts and approve Class III formulas.
- The political climate also impacts staff- uncertainty of funding and threats of program cuts create a daily underlying stress.
- Taking interns has worked to our benefit to show them the impacts of the program and then hire them when RD-Eligible. Would be nice if the state would host an exam training or provide training resources to help staff pass the exam.

# FINAL COMMENTS

- Have state WIC trainers assist w/LA training to ensure proper training complete
- CPAs are hardest to recruit as the qualifications seem very restrictive, especially as we cannot hire nurses b/c of our unions. It would help if we could hire any health science related degree.
- I don't think it should be required to have a RD on staff for WIC agencies. I think what designates a client as high risk should be completely overhauled for those who truly need nutrition counseling and that counseling should be done by a RD who can bill for services and work closely with their PCP. Now that RDs require a MS degree, it will become very difficult to afford them. If there were collaborations with outpatient RD clinics and those reports were shared between doctors, the RDs and WIC, I believe the clients would benefit more and the WIC programs would save money.
- While I respect the role of the RD in WIC, the Master's Degree requirement has made it challenging to hire an RD and provide the expected compensation. The CPPA role would provide a competent certifier and allow for career growth potential.



# SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Goal for Discussions:

- Safe space to discuss these topics
- Give our thoughts and ideas
- Creative ideas and solutions to these workforce issues

Topics to Cover:

- IBCLC - Hiring and retention
- RD - Hiring and retention, scope of services
- CPA - Hiring and retention, qualifications for position, scope of services, paraprofessional vs professional
- Other topics if time allows.

**"Everyone who works in WIC loves WIC!"**

**THANK YOU**