



October 9, 2013

WIC IMPACTED BY FEDERAL SHUTDOWN, MANY WIC SERVICES STILL AVAILABLE

HICKORY, NC – Catawba County Public Health received notification from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services that the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, also known as WIC program, has been impacted by the Federal Government shutdown.

Issuance of new food benefits will be discontinued October 9, 2013 due to the limitation in federal food benefit funds. However, WIC participants that already have vouchers can continue to use their vouchers and WIC vendors can continue to accept vouchers.

The Catawba County Public Health WIC clinic will remain open and continue offering the following services: eligibility determinations, nutrition education, and breastfeeding education and support, including issuance of breast pumps, breastfeeding supplies, and breastfeeding peer counseling services.

Current WIC participants with upcoming voucher visits and new applicants determined to be eligible for food benefits will be placed on a waiting list for food benefits, including formula, but will still receive other services.

“It is important for current WIC participants and newly eligible applicants to make and keep their appointments as women, infants, and children who have kept their certifications current will be among the first on the waiting list to receive food benefits once federal funds are back in place,” said Julie Byrd, WIC Director, Catawba County Public Health.

“Our focus is on serving our residents and minimizing disruptions to vital services caused by the federal shutdown,” said Doug Urland, Health Director, Catawba County Public Health. “Our staff is continuing to offer many important WIC services and is making referrals to available community resources including churches, food banks, and food pantries.”

Public Health and all of its service areas remain open. The public can continue to schedule and attend appointments.

WIC is a federal supplemental nutrition program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women and children up to age five. The goal of the program is to help prevent nutrition-related problems in pregnancy, infancy and early childhood. WIC food vouchers are redeemable at participating food stores and farmers’ markets for nutritional foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, milk, juice, eggs, cheese and cereal. WIC also provides nutrition and breastfeeding counseling. The Catawba County WIC office serves more than 4,000 participants a month.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

Located off Fairgrove Church Road behind Catawba Valley Medical Center in Hickory, N.C., Catawba County Public Health provides health and education services to eligible men, women, and children in the community. For more information, please call (828) 695-5800 or visit www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth.

“Leading the Way to a Healthier Community”