

DATE: February 10, 2014

TO: Health Care Providers

FROM: Sue Woodbury, MBA, RD
Oregon State WIC Program Manager

RE: February 2014 Changes to Oregon WIC Formula Contracts

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) in Oregon values our partnership with health care providers across the state. With your support and referrals, Oregon WIC provides healthy and nutritious foods to nearly 175,000 women, infants and children across the state. All WIC clinics in Oregon are accepting new participants.

As a valued partner, we want to provide you with timely and consistent information when program changes occur. A recent decision by the formula manufacturer, Abbott Nutrition, to change the caloric density and formulation of their Similac infant formula products impacts what WIC can provide. This change is impacting WIC programs across the nation.

Federal regulations establish minimum requirements and specifications for infant formulas WIC can issue. By changing the caloric density, **Oregon WIC can no longer provide Similac Sensitive or Similac Total Comfort.** Your patients currently receiving these formulas from WIC will work with our WIC staff to successfully transition to Similac Advance or another WIC-eligible formula before **May 1, 2014.** Any new participants coming into a WIC clinic requesting one of these products will not be able to receive them, even with medical documentation.

Fortunately, most healthy formula-fed infants do well on any lactose-containing infant formula and our WIC staff is trained to address common issues of fussiness, gas and spitting up. In addition, based on research from UC Davis regarding baby behaviors around crying, sleeping and basic cues, Oregon WIC has resources to offer you and your staff including an on-line training module and education materials to share with families. And as always, we have staff available to provide breastfeeding support and assist your patients with any breastfeeding questions or concerns they may have.

We recognize there may be infants with an underlying condition that may warrant the use of a medical formula. Our local WIC Nutritionists are available to work with our shared families to assess the appropriate course of action and coordinate care.

Thank you for your assistance in promoting improved health outcomes for our shared families. If you have any questions regarding these changes, please contact your local WIC program:

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyPeopleFamilies/wic/Pages/countyinfo.aspx>

You can also contact the Oregon WIC formula specialist, Cheryl Alto MS, RD, at 971-673-0057 or cheryl.l.alto@state.or.us.