



PA NEN Member Highlights - *finding the story that hasn't been told so many times*

Shirley Sword, MS, RDN, LDN

Chief, Nutrition Services Section at the Pennsylvania Department of Health:
Bureau of WIC

What is WIC?

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides Federal grants to States for nutrition education, breastfeeding support, referrals to healthcare and other social services programs, and supplemental foods for pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk. More information about Pennsylvania WIC services can be found [here](#).

What does WIC mean to Shirley?

For nearly 20 years, Shirley has worked at the state level to empower WIC employees through her support of the data system, program development, policy interpretation, and statewide trainings. What's more, she started her career at a local agency furthering WIC's cause and providing and evaluating nutrition education.

A view of her comprehensive skillset

In the spirit of the full-scope of WIC, you'll find Shirley hard at work...

- Developing policies and procedures for statewide implementation.
- Encouraging data integrity, best practices and client-centered care at Pennsylvania WIC agencies.
- Overseeing program operations at Pennsylvania's local agencies.
- Managing grants and functional budgets.
- Ensuring healthful variety in WIC Food Packages.

Projects around the corner?

This year, she's striving to implement the issuance of WIC benefits via an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card for WIC clients using a new Management Information System (MIS) system. A dual implementation of this magnitude is a significant undertaking. She's done the dirty work - appropriately using and allocating operational funding, attending trainings across the nation, detailing implementation processes and developing trainings for staff in hopes of a smooth transition for our state.

Favorite food?

Shirley couldn't pin down that magic bite that puts a twinkle in her eye. But, she knows how to handpick her favorite restaurants wherever she might be. You name it - she'll tell you the go-to neighborhood pizza place, taqueria, even crêperie!