



## **WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Subproject**

### **Dec 2013 – Jan 2014 Update**

December and January were months of intensive planning activity for the project. Project teams and contractors work on at least thirty (30) specific project-related plans covering topics as diverse as Help Desk, Schedule Management, Procurement and Security. Our aggressive schedule of concluding the Planning Phase by January 30, 2014, a brief 2.5 months after the official Kick-Off meeting, was met. Many of the plans had already been drafted by the State Project Manager with input from the Steering Committee and other state team members. Contractors added to these plans, but in some cases were responsible for the initial drafts, that were then reviewed and added to by the State Team. Our Quality Assurance Contractor reviewed all plans before they were officially accepted.

We are grateful to our state team members and contractors for the constructive, speedy and collegial work on these important planning documents.

January also saw two intensive weeks of face-to-face meetings as part of planning. One week involved Ciber staff and Vermont WIC staff engaging in a thorough orientation to the MPSC system (the Vermont version being called Ceres --- see the new logo with this document). Each screen was reviewed and functionality discussed. Ciber staff noted where Vermont WIC configurations would "Vermont-ize" the MIS.

Ciber and Vermont WIC were joined by representatives of JP Morgan Chase, the EBT Contractor, for the second week, for planning of the interface between Ceres and the EBT Host system. MPSC is currently set up for offline EBT and paper food instruments, and Vermont will likely be the first state to use MPSC MIS with online EBT. Therefore, Ciber and the EBT Contractor must understand each other's systems and requirements in order for the two systems to work together.

The week of meetings was very productive for giving Ciber and Vermont WIC an understanding of the types of changes to the MPSC MIS, and the issues to be addressed in an interface, for Ceres to be ready for WIC EBT.

Readiness Network Coordinators met in January and discussed "clinic enablement," the activities that will prepare clinic sites to be physically ready for the Ceres system. A first round of clinic site assessment checklists was distributed for RCN members to complete; this will help determine whether data ports and power outlets will be sufficient for the new system, and to provide an inventory of IT equipment currently assigned to WIC clinics. Outreach clinics (formerly known as outlying clinics) will be assessed for wireless signals and internet access.

A survey of District Office staff was conducted to assess the effectiveness of our Readiness Coordinator Network and communications with staff to create awareness of the

implementation project, and to gauge acceptance. The results were very positive, with nearly 100% awareness of the coming MIS and EBT systems, and strong positive attitudes about the change to a paperless MIS and from home to retail/EBT delivery of food benefits. We'll be doing some fine-tuning of the RCN webpages, and implementing other good ideas we received from the survey, in coming months.

If you have questions about the project, please be in touch with us by email at [wic@state.vt.us](mailto:wic@state.vt.us).