

## **December 2014 – January 2015 Update**

December was spent by WIC Central staff and our contractors, Ciber and Xerox, making final plans for a month of User Acceptance Testing (UAT) in January.

Vermont WIC chose to use staff from our 12 District Offices to serve as testers during UAT. Volunteers were recruited to build a 12-member team, who would also serve as the District Office “SuperUsers” during DO conversion to Ceres, and in the Production phase. The UAT testers/Superusers received a full week of training in January, and then took part in three weeks of intensive testing of the Ceres application by following test scripts on every aspect of Ceres and eWIC. Two “mock stores” were set up in the testing room, complete with authorized products and an eWIC terminal and scanner, allowing testers to test the entire process from scheduling, enrolling and certifying a family, issuing their food benefits and eWIC card, through “shopping” using the card.

The WIC Central team on Retailer Enablement finalized the package of materials for retailer authorization. The package was sent to the statewide Large Chain peer group, and to all independent retailers in the Rutland region the first week in January, with a February 28<sup>th</sup> deadline for applications. Authorization must be completed for these retailers to qualify them for our Rutland pilot of eWIC. The stores in the rest of the state will receive the application package in mid-March for completion by the end of April.

Xerox continued work with Third Party Processors (TPPs) for our large chains, and also contacted Value Added Resellers (VARs) for independent stores, to enable them to set up and test their connection to the Xerox eWIC interface. Those retailers unable to integrate their POS systems with Xerox (either directly or through a TPP like First Data, or a VAR like Dumac) would have to let Xerox install a WIC-only “stand beside” terminal/card readers in lane, in order to participate in Vermont eWIC. Vermont WIC and Xerox are strongly encouraging retailers to pursue the integration model. (Retailers: Please contact Sylvia Mitchem – Xerox at [Sylvia.Mitchem@xerox.com](mailto:Sylvia.Mitchem@xerox.com) for information and assistance, if you have not already made contact with her. There must be either a certified integration POS or a stand-beside in your store, if you want to continue to participate with Vermont WIC and accept our new eWIC card.)

The Rutland District Office WIC staff, in collaboration with WIC Central staff, is developing strategies and materials to begin notifying and educating WIC participants about the upcoming changes. This will include postcards, flyers, emails, a “WIC Fair,” and numerous “learning sessions” to prepare families for the new food package, shopping, and activating their eWIC cards.

Thanks to the diligence of our UAT testers, WIC Central staff, DII/AHS/VDH IT staff, Rutland pilot staff, and our contractors Ciber and Xerox, our MIS/EBT Implementation project is still on schedule for pilot start in Rutland in June 2015.