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Contact: Lindsey Dermid-Gray
Nevada WIC
lgray@health.nv.gov

Laura Stokes
Pacify Health
laura@pacify.com

Nevada WIC Provides 24-Hour Support to Breastfeeding Mothers with Innovative Mobile Technology

Carson City, N.V. – In March 2016, the Nevada Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program received a USDA grant to dramatically expand access to breastfeeding support in the state. The grant funds 24-hour access to video consultations with International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs) using the Pacify mobile application.

Access to professional support for breastfeeding is severely limited in rural Nevada. There is only one IBCLC outside of the Reno/Sparks, Carson, and Las Vegas areas, leaving the rest of the state void of professional lactation support. Last year, thousands of Nevada WIC participants lacked access to IBCLCs and in many rural communities there are no IBCLCs within a 200-mile radius.

Pacify hosts a nationwide network of pediatric nurses, nutritionists and lactation consultants who are on-call 24/7 for consultations with parents. Pacify's technology utilizes unique routing and notification systems to alert providers immediately when a parent needs help. Users simply download the app and touch a button to connect with a clinician in three minutes or less – no appointment necessary. A widening body of research suggests that this type of on-demand support is critical to increasing breastfeeding rates and avoiding poor health outcomes, particularly in populations with limited access to in-person support.

In just the first week of launch, WIC participants had enrolled in Pacify at seven different clinics across the state. Leadership from both Nevada WIC and Pacify expressed enthusiasm about the quick start. "Our goal has always been to reach parents who have limited options for this type of support," said Ben Lundin, Co-founder & CEO of Pacify. "This is an awesome step in that direction, and we could not be more excited about this partnership."

Lindsey Dermid-Gray, MPH, Statewide Breastfeeding Coordinator stated, "Professional lactation support is often a critical piece of a woman's ability to meet her breastfeeding goals. We are thrilled to be able to fill this gap by linking our rural Nevada moms with the support they need and deserve."

WIC provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and referrals to health and other social services to participants at no charge. WIC serves income eligible pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, and infants and children up to age 5 who are at nutrition risk.

