



Do you have questions for Kim McCoy Wade?

1. What grant opportunities are going to help improve CalFresh access or SNAP-Ed programs?

Recent grants in California to improve access to CalFresh and healthy food include major funding from USDA: two grants to support texting in Yolo and in C-IV, respectively, and a second round of FINI grants to match CalFresh purchases at farmers' markets for fresh fruits and vegetables.

2. Any strategies for closing the gap on the working poor — those ineligible but still food insecure?

Some of the key strategies to improve access for those working include: 1) improve online experience and telephonic options when applying and continuing; 2) maximize broad based categorical eligibility to reach those with 200% gross income, high expenses, and 100% net income; and 3) insure all participants in Medi-Cal can easily enroll and keep CalFresh, too.

3. Does the state plan on creating uniform processes in determining eligibility so that counties aren't challenged with capacity to figuring it out for themselves? As it is counties tend to work too much with the "mays" in determining eligibility that creates longer processes and doubt in the public. What are your plans moving forward?

CDSS is focusing on outcomes of eligibility determinations — specifically, statewide data analysis of trends and anomalies in approvals and denials, through all channels — so counties have data-driven tools to examine their processes, learn from their peers, and more quickly replicate excellent processes. Our upcoming Learning Collaboratives, discussed below, as well as on-going Management Evaluations also address this topic.

4. What is the state/counties doing to improve eligibility workers' customer services skills. What training is given?

Counties have a range of trainings for their workforce on customer service, including what Rick Wanne shared from San Diego. The upcoming Learning Collaboratives on Customer Service (in February 2016 for 19 counties with largest caseloads and TBD for the 39 with smaller) will include this topic.

5. Can you elaborate on the priority of increasing enrollment/participation among children?

CDSS and counties are continuing to work to increase participation rates among all eligible people and are deepening partnerships with both WIC and school meals (building on both direct certification and the new school meals' application linkages) that target children and their families.

6. Are there plans for streamlining consortia processes?

CDSS is looking to streamline our own processes -- such as releasing ACLs -- and we work closely with consortia on shared priorities -- such as improving customer experience on-line and statewide data reporting and analysis -- but can't speak specifically to consortia processes.

7. Can you expand on the priority regarding nutrition and jobs? In CA we have a strong SNAP-Ed network and the vast majority of CalFresh recipients are working — what made this a priority?

CDSS intention in "going beyond food" to nutrition and jobs is to strengthen what's already strong. Our SNAP-Ed program is the largest in the country and is moving to implement a new strategic plan and evaluation, with our public health, senior, and other partners. Our E&T program, which helps working recipients get more training to boost wages and those with barriers to work to address those barriers, is growing significantly: a new pilot is launching in Fresno County and more counties are exploring partnership with local third-party organizations with job training expertise. This work will become particularly important as the employment rate drops further and time limits for single adults without dependents working fewer than 20 hours are reinstated.