Data Article

Data providing detailed county level information for eWIC rollout in Ohio

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\textbf{A R T I C L E A I M A G E}

\textbf{A B S T R A C T}

By October 2020, states across the nation must deliver benefits for the WIC program via electronic benefits transfer, also referred to as eWIC. The state of Ohio made the transition from 2014 to 2015 and staggered implementation across counties. In this article, we present county-level data on the specific dates Ohio counties changed to eWIC. We also present detailed demographic data for the counties included in each roll-out date.

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1. Data

State officials in the Ohio Department of Heath (ODH) adopted a staggered implementation approach to roll out eWIC technology across all 88 counties. In 2014, state officials piloted eWIC technology in 5 counties in three different phases. In 2015, the state completed the rollout to the remaining 83 counties in four separate phases (Table 1). Additional details of the rollout can be found in [1]. We also collected detailed demographic data for each county in Ohio and aggregated these data by

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roll out phase. We report these data in Table 2. The authors will provide copies of the newsletters and their county-level demographic data up on request.

2. Experimental design, materials and methods

To retrieve the eWIC implementation data for Ohio we extracted information from newsletters supplied available on the Ohio Department of Health’s website. ODH publishes these newsletters for WIC recipients to keep them informed about WIC program updates and changes. These newsletters contain detailed information about eWIC introduction in counties, how recipients can obtain eWIC cards, and how they redeem benefits with eWIC.

To identify potential setbacks during implementation, ODH officials used three different pilot phases in 2014 (see Table 1) with counties of various sizes and demographic characteristics. Once ODH worked through issues identified in the pilot phases, it implemented eWIC in eight relatively smaller counties on January 26, 2015 and gradually increased the number of counties (see Table 1), and average county population (see Table 2), in implementation groups in the remaining three phases.

Table 2 also provides data on income, household size, and poverty for the groups of counties in each implementation date. We retrieved these data from the Census website [2] and generated data in Table 2 by averaging data across all counties in each roll-out phase. Counties that transitioned in January 26 had the lowest household median income overall, and for households that participated in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This group of eight counties also had, on average, the fewest households and the largest percentage of households with welfare income. Figure 1 in [1] graphically illustrates how ODH geographically grouped counties for implementation. Counties that implemented eWIC on January 26 are all in the Appalachian region.
Table 1
Timeline for WIC electronic benefits transfer transition in Ohio.

| Pilot Studies    | January 26, 2015 | March 23, 2015 | May 1, 2015 | July 1, 2015 |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Jul 14, 2014a    | Athens           | Belmont       | Adams/Brown | Ashtabula     |
| Licking          | Gallia           | Carroll       | Allen       | Auglaize      |
| Aug 4, 2014a     | Jackson          | Coshocton     | Champaign   | Butler        |
| Greene           | Noble            | Fairfield     | Clark       | Crawford      |
| Oct 19, 2014a    | Pike             | Guernsey      | Clermont    | Cuyahoga      |
| Hocking          | Vinton           | Harrison      | Clinton     | Darke/Mercer  |
| Meigs, Putnam    | Washington/Morgan| Holmes        | Defiance    | Erie/Huron    |
|                  |                  | Jefferson     | Delaware/Morrow/Union | Fulton/Henry |
|                  |                  | Lawrence      | Fayette     | Geauga        |
|                  |                  | Monroe        | Franklin    | Hamilton      |
|                  |                  | Muskingum     | Hancock/Hardin | Knox        |
|                  |                  | Perry         | Highland    | Lake          |
|                  |                  | Ross/Pickaway | Logan       | Lorain        |
|                  |                  | Scioto        | Lucas       | Mahoning      |
|                  |                  | Tuscarawas    | Madison     | Marion        |
|                  |                  |               | Montgomery  | Medina        |
|                  |                  |               | Ottawa      | Miami         |
|                  |                  |               | Paulding    | Preble        |
|                  |                  |               | Shelby      | Portage/Columbiana |
|                  |                  |               | Warren      | Richland/Ashtablad |
|                  |                  |               | Williams    | Sandusky      |
|                  |                  |               | Wood        | Seneca        |
|                  |                  |               | Wyandot     | Stark         |
|                  |                  |               |             | Summit        |
|                  |                  |               |             | Trumbull      |
|                  |                  |               |             | Van Wert      |
|                  |                  |               |             | Wayne         |

Note: These are the three pilot phase dates. In the October pilot, the EBT transition occurred sometime during the week of the 19th.

Table 2
County Demographics by eWIC Rollout Phase and by Inclusion in the sample of Transaction Data.

|                | Pilots       | January 26, 2015 | March 23, 2015 | May 1, 2015 | July 1, 2015 |
|----------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Population     | 83,891       | 32,599           | 59,593         | 143,723     | 189,429      |
| Percent white  | 91%          | 95%              | 94%            | 80%         | 81%          |
| Percent black  | 4%           | 2%               | 3%             | 13%         | 14%          |
| Households     | 19,062       | 6584             | 13,717         | 34,120      | 42,527       |
| Percent with welfare income | 26% | 38% | 31% | 29% | 30% |
| Families       | 18,949       | 6510             | 13,590         | 33,827      | 42,153       |
| Percent with welfare income | 25% | 37% | 31% | 29% | 30% |
| Percent married couples | 72% | 66% | 70% | 64% | 63% |
| With welfare income | 11% | 16% | 13% | 10% | 9% |
| Percent single male head | 6% | 12% | 8% | 8% | 7% |
| With welfare income | 2% | 7% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Percent single female head | 21% | 22% | 23% | 28% | 29% |
| With welfare income | 12% | 14% | 14% | 16% | 18% |
| Median household income ($2015) | $51,434 | $39,237 | $45,048 | $51,131 | $49,716 |
| Households with SNAP | $17,477 | $15,763 | $17,046 | $18,479 | $18,428 |
| Households without SNAP | $58,318 | $46,943 | $52,038 | $56,834 | $55,372 |
| Number of counties | 5 | 8 | 16 | 27 | 32 |

Source: [2].

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Transparency document

Transparency document associated with this article can be found in the online version at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2019.103955.

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