Memo: Improving Access to WIC and SNAP Benefits to Support Child Health

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Many families in the Commonwealth struggle to afford the food they need to stay healthy. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) play a vital role in promoting child health and development and alleviating food insecurity. Despite their known benefits, both WIC and SNAP are underutilized by low-income individuals and families, both across the United States and here in Pennsylvania.

We recently conducted a qualitative research study to better understand beneficiary perspectives on WIC and SNAP, in order to inform interventions that could close these eligibility to enrollment gaps. In this memo originally written to share with state legislators, but also relevant for other policymakers in the Commonwealth, we summarize themes from our recent research and suggest opportunities for policy improvement.

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