



## **Protocol for Distribution of VitaGrant Multivitamins and Accompanying Materials**

The goal of the VitaGrant is to promote the use of folic acid in women of reproductive age in Florida to reduce the risk of certain birth defects of the brain and spine, called neural tube defects (NTDs) and to increase awareness of other pre/interconceptional health issues. A key component of the Florida VitaGrant is distributing multivitamins containing the recommended daily allowance of folic acid (400 micrograms). At least 450,000 bottles of multivitamins will be distributed free to non-pregnant women of childbearing age across the state through a number of distribution sites. Vitamin distribution will begin in January 2005 and will continue for three years or until all of the vitamins have been distributed.

### **Distribution Sites:**

Any provider/entity that comes in contact with the target population is eligible to participate in the project. Distribution sites will receive a shipment of vitamins and materials every three months. The quantity of vitamins and materials will initially be based upon the number of women the provider encounters who meet the target population criteria and then upon the number of vitamins and materials the provider demonstrates are needed for that individual site.

Participating sites may include, but are not limited to:

- WIC
- Family planning clinics
- Healthy Start providers
- TOPWA providers
- Community Health Centers
- Community events

### **Target Population:**

Any woman who meets all of the following criteria is eligible to receive the free vitamins with accompanying materials:

- Non-pregnant
- Childbearing age (distribution sites participating in the evaluation must obtain parental consent for participants under the age of 18, unless the individual is an emancipated minor, is married or is receiving the vitamins through a family planning clinic)
- Client or non-client (a woman does not have to be a client or patient of the provider in order to receive the vitamins)

### **Who Can Distribute:**

Any staff who encounters a woman meeting the above criteria may distribute the vitamins. These include:

- Nutritionists
- Nursing staff (RNs, LPNs)
- ARNP staff
- Physicians
- Social Workers (unlicensed and licensed)
- Paraprofessional staff



**How the Vitamins and Materials are to be Distributed:**

Staff should complete the following steps when interacting with an eligible participant:

- Provide brief education on the importance of consuming folic acid and the value of maintaining good pre/interconceptional health
- Inquire whether woman is interested in receiving multivitamins and materials
- Provide vitamins with accompanying materials. Women may receive a bottle of multivitamins, irregardless if she has received them previously. The number of bottles she may receive is unlimited, however only one bottle should be distributed at any one contact
- Provide guidance on the following:
  - ✓ Vitamins should be kept out of the reach of children
  - ✓ Only one multivitamin should be taken per day. If the participant is already taking a multivitamin she should not any additional multivitamins
  - ✓ Some prescription medications are not to be taken at the same time as a multivitamin. Participants can consult their pharmacist or doctor for more information.
- Complete vitamin tracking log (or vitamin data collection form for evaluation sites only)

**Regional Outreach Staff will work with individual distribution projects to:**

- Track distribution of vitamins and materials
- Collect data collection forms
- Provide technical assistance
- Provide on-site training to staff on the VitaGrant project, folic acid and pre/interconceptional health

**Questions about the project should be directed to:**

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