



October 24, 2014

Champions for Coverage:

The countdown is on—less than 22 days until open enrollment begins! The Champion program is going to be ramping up our communication throughout open enrollment. You can now expect to receive weekly updates as well as an increase in Webinars.

We want to hear from you! Please share your Marketplace success stories of education, outreach and/or enrollment in your communities by emailing us at Champion@cms.hhs.gov. Sharing best practices from the field will help each organization further their education goals and we might even ask you to present on Webinar.

Thank you to all who joined us on Wednesday's webinar (October 22) Champion for Coverage Webinar: Preparing for Open Enrollment. For those unable to join, we will be posting the audio recording and transcript as well as the resources at (<http://cms.hhs.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Outreach/Partnerships/ChampionsForCoverage.html>) within the next few weeks.

The first slide deck, Assisting Consumers with the Renewal and Re-enrollment Process for 2015 can be found at (<http://marketplace.cms.gov/technical-assistance-resources/renewal-reenrollment-process.pdf>).

The second presentation, Marketplace Online Application Updates, slide deck can be accessed at: <http://marketplace.cms.gov/technical-assistance-resources/training-materials/training.html>

NEW/UPDATED CONTENT AND WEBINARS

Upcoming Champion Webinar: Preparing for 2015 Open Enrollment - Wednesday, November 5

We welcome you to join us for a webinar on Wednesday, November 5th on updates and resources for the 2015 Open Enrollment Season. We also encourage you to submit questions in advance to Champion@cms.hhs.gov.

When: Wednesday, November 5, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. ET
How: Webinar link: TBD

Participant Number: TBD

Conference ID: TBD

2015 Open Enrollment Period Begins November 15, 2014

The open enrollment period for the 2015 plan year will begin on November 15, 2014 and continue through February 15, 2015.

Remember that if a consumer wants to keep their same coverage and get an updated eligibility determination for purposes of APTC/CSR or wants new coverage, the consumer will need to come back to the Marketplace and update their information and select a plan by December 15, 2014, in order for the coverage to go into effect on January 1, 2015. If a consumer selects a plan between December 16, 2014, and January 15, 2015, the new plan will be effective February 1, 2015. If a consumer selects a plan between January 16, 2015, and February 15, 2015, the new plan will be effective March 1, 2015.

Connecting Kids to Coverage Webinar

Reaching rural communities presents unique challenges but there are effective strategies being used in rural areas to successfully find and enroll eligible families in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Join us on Thursday, October 30, at 3:00 p.m. EDT for the next Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign webinar to learn more about tips, techniques and Campaign resources that you can use in your efforts. Additional details about the webinar are forthcoming.

- Reaching and Enrolling Families in Rural Communities
Thursday, October 30, 2014
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. EDT
[Register Here](#)

5 Steps to Staying Covered

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is committed to making it as easy as possible for current Health Insurance Marketplace enrollees to renew their coverage for 2015. It is encouraging consumers to come back at the start of Open Enrollment on November 15, update their 2015 application, and compare their options to make sure they enroll in the plan that best meets their budget and health needs for next year.

To help consumers better understand the renewal process, CMS is releasing today the 5 Steps to Staying Covered – to make it as simple as possible for them to choose the plan that best fits their needs and budget. The consumer tested 5-step process includes:

- 1) Review: Plans change, people change – review your coverage and look for a letter from your plan about how your benefits and costs may change next year,
- 2) Update: Starting November 15, log in and update your 2015 application - make sure your household income and other information is up-to-date for next year,
- 3) Compare: Compare your current plan with other plans that are available in your area,
- 4) Choose: Select the health plan that best fits your budget and health needs, and
- 5) Enroll: The marketplace opens on November 15, make sure to review, update, compare and choose by December 15 to have any changes take effect on January 1. Contact your plan after you've enrolled and make sure you pay your first month's premium.

To view the Federal Marketplace notices, visit: <http://marketplace.cms.gov/technical-assistance-resources/training-materials/training.html>

To learn more about the 5 Steps to Staying Covered, visit: <http://marketplace.cms.gov/outreach-and-education/5-steps-to-staying-covered.pdf>

“From Coverage to Care” materials are available in Spanish!

From Coverage to Care (C2C) is an initiative from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) designed to help people with new health coverage understand their benefits and connect to primary care and the preventive services that are right for them. C2C resources in Spanish are now available to download and print. Available resources include:

- A Roadmap to Better Care and a Healthier You (Una Guía para Un Mejor Cuidado y Una Vida Más Saludable), that includes 8 steps that explain what health coverage is, and how to use it to get needed care;
- Consumer tools including a sample insurance card and a sample explanation of benefits; and
- An 11-part video series that helps explain the information covered in the Roadmap.

To download, print, and order these resources in Spanish, please visit- <http://marketplace.cms.gov/c2c>

Important Marketplace Update

The Affordable Care Act is working to deliver affordability, access, and quality in health insurance to millions of Americans across the country as they seek health care coverage. After last year's open enrollment period, CMS listened to consumers to help identify areas where we needed to improve, and we put that learning into practice and focused on testing our new products. One of the outcomes of this effort is the new application for HealthCare.gov consumers.

The new application for new [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) consumers is simpler, faster, and more intuitive.

- It's simpler. The consumer enters information only once. With the original application, a consumer would need to re-enter the same data multiple times. Now, the system saves that data as the consumer moves through the application.
- It's faster. Depending on the consumer's specific situation, the new application could reduce the number of screens by over 75 percent with fewer clicks to navigate through the questions.
- It's intuitive for users. The new application is more user-friendly for consumers with simpler navigation and built-in help along the way.

CMS will continue to work to make [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) the best possible experience for consumers.

The Health Insurance Marketplace DIY Design Toolkit

There are some communications materials that CMS must create and others you can create yourself following a few simple guidelines. The more we become "brand champions," the better we're able to define and differentiate the program from other programs run by CMS and from similar programs run by organizations outside of the federal government.

Access the DIY toolkit today: <http://marketplace.cms.gov/outreach-and-education/diy-toolkit-summary.pdf>

NEWS AND UPDATES

Empowering Women Through Affordable Health Coverage

HHS released a new HHS Blog about women and the Affordable Care Act, citing real stories from women across America who are taking control of their health and becoming empowered to pursue their passions because of the law.

- “Being covered means everything to me.” – Yvonne Jones
- “I’ve launched my small business and can focus on expanding it because I now can afford health coverage for my entire family.” – Betsy Furler

We encourage you to read it and share with your social networks and partners.

HHS.gov Blog: [Empowering Women Through Affordable Health Coverage](#)

Twitter

- [RT @HHSgov](#): The [#ACAisWorking](#) for women – empowering them to take control of their health: <http://1.usa.gov/1ugikkw> [#GetCovered](#)
- The ability to get affordable, quality coverage is changing the lives of women like Betsy. <http://1.usa.gov/1vng7b9> [#GetCovered](#)
- The [#ACAisWorking](#) to help millions of women access affordable, quality health care. Join them and [#GetCovered](#): <http://1.usa.gov/1vng7b9>
- Join Betsy, Lynn, and others and take control of your health. Open Enrollment begins 11/15. <http://1.usa.gov/1vng7b9>

Facebook

- The ability to get affordable, quality coverage is changing the lives of women like Betsy. <http://1.usa.gov/1vng7b9> [#GetCovered](#)
- The ability to get affordable, quality coverage is changing the lives of women like Yvonne of Philadelphia. <http://1.usa.gov/1vng7b9> [#GetCovered](#)
- The [#ACAisWorking](#) for women. Join Betsy, Lynn, and others and take control of your health. Open Enrollment begins November 15th. <http://1.usa.gov/1vng7b9> [#GetCovered](#)

New: Updated Medicaid Enrollment Report

Medicaid and CHIP Enrollment Grows by 8.7 Million Additional Americans

On Friday, HHS released the latest Medicaid enrollment [report](#), which shows approximately 8.7 million additional Americans now have coverage through Medicaid and CHIP, many for the very first time. Medicaid enrollment grew to more than 67.9 million in August 2014, which shows nearly a 15 percent increase over the average monthly enrollment for July through September 2013. For more information please check out:

<http://www.hhs.gov/healthcare/facts/blog/2014/10/medicaid-chip-enrollment-august.html>.

EMPLOYER AND SHOP INFORMATION

New SHOP Tools for CuidadoDeSalud.gov

CMS posted two new SHOP tools to CuidadoDeSalud.gov and blogs in English and Spanish, How Much is your Small Business Health Care Tax Credit worth? And ¿Cuánto vale el Crédito Fiscal de su Pequeña Empresa?

Shop Tax Credit Estimator: <https://www.cuidadodesalud.gov/es/shop-calculators-taxcredit/>

Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Employee Calculator: <https://www.cuidadodesalud.gov/es/shop-calculators-taxcredit/>

English Blog: <https://www.healthcare.gov/blog/how-much-is-your-small-business-health-care-tax-credit-worth/>

Spanish Blog: <https://www.cuidadodesalud.gov/es/blog/how-much-is-your-small-business-health-care-tax-credit-worth/>

Affordable Care Act 101 Webinars for Small Employers

Health care continues to be an important issue for small business owners. The Small Business Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, and Small Business Majority are committed to helping businesses navigate the changes and opportunities in health care through the Affordable Care Act 101 webinar series.

Each week, small business owners can learn the basics of the Affordable Care Act and how they can enroll in small business health insurance marketplaces. Other topics discussed include insurance reforms, the small business health care tax credit, and employer shared responsibility provisions. SBA and HHS representatives help small business owners understand the facts of the Affordable Care Act so they can make informed decisions about providing health insurance for their employees.

The webinar is offered on Thursdays at 2:00 pm ET every week; the webinar will also be offered in Spanish on alternate Tuesdays at 4:00 pm ET. To register for the webinar and to learn more about how the ACA affects small businesses, you can visit <http://www.sba.gov/healthcare>.

Schedule of English-language Weekly ACA 101 Webinars for Small Employers:

- Thursday, October 30 at 2:00 pm ET: [Click to Register \(link is external\)](#)

Schedule of Spanish-language Bi-Weekly ACA 101 Webinars for Small Employers:

- November 4, 2014 at 4 pm ET- [Click to Register](#)
- November 18, 2014 at 4 pm ET- [Click to Register](#)
- December 2, 2014 at 4 pm ET- [Click to Register](#)
- December 16, 2014 at 4 pm ET- [Click to Register](#)

For more information on how the new health care law affects small businesses, check out www.sba.gov/healthcare .

HHS BLOG POSTS ABOUT THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND HEALTHCARE.GOV

Blog post from Wednesday, October 22

Title: Scheduled downtime to improve HealthCare.gov

Link: <https://www.healthcare.gov/blog/scheduled-downtime-to-improve-healthcare-gov/>

Blog post from Tuesday, October 21

Title: 5 Steps to stay covered through the Marketplace in 2015

Link: <https://www.healthcare.gov/blog/5-steps-to-stay-covered-through-the-marketplace/>

Blog post from Friday, October 17

Title: Medicaid and CHIP Enrollment Grows by 8.7 Million Additional Americans

Link: <http://www.hhs.gov/healthcare/facts/blog/2014/10/medicaid-chip-enrollment-august.html>

Blog post from Friday, October 17

Title: Empowering Women Through Affordable Health Coverage

Link: <http://www.hhs.gov/healthcare/facts/blog/2014/10/empowering-women-through-affordable-health-coverage.html>

Blog post from Friday, October 10

Title: How much is your Small Business Health Care Tax Credit worth?

Link: <https://www.healthcare.gov/blog/how-much-is-your-small-business-health-care-tax-credit-worth/>

-CMS Office of Communications, Partner Relations Group