

December 19, 2013

**Via Email**

Dear Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) Controllers, Communicable Disease Controllers, and Other Community Partners:

Welcome to STD Control Branch Health Reform eUpdate #5. In this issue, we discuss outreach and enrollment in insurance coverage expansion in California and the role of local health departments and community-based organizations in these efforts. This issue addresses five key questions:

**1. How is coverage expansion in California going so far?**

Covered California began enrolling individuals in coverage in October; as of December 7, 2013, there were already 575,000 applications started and 159,000 persons enrolled. In November alone, California accounted for one in four coverage enrollments nationwide.<sup>1</sup> On January 1, 2014, most of the 600,000 people currently enrolled in the Low-Income Health Program (LIHP) will be transitioned to Medi-Cal. LIHP enrollees with incomes between 133 percent and 200 percent of the federal poverty level will be transitioned to coverage through Covered CA, the health benefit exchange.<sup>2</sup> However, about five million people eligible for coverage January 1, have yet to be enrolled. To ensure that Californians benefit from expanded coverage through health care reform, it is important that people learn about their eligibility and be linked to enrollment.

**2. What is the deadline for enrolling in coverage expansion?**

Dec. 23 is the deadline for consumers to enroll and obtain individual coverage starting Jan. 1, 2014. However, open enrollment continues through March 31 for coverage during the remainder of 2014. The open enrollment period for coverage in 2015 will begin October 1, 2014. Medi-Cal enrollment is continuous throughout the year. For more information on key enrollment deadlines and coverage dates, see the table below.

<b>Enrollment Deadline</b>	<b>Coverage Begins</b>
Dec. 23, 2013	Jan. 1, 2014
Jan. 15, 2014	Feb. 1, 2014
Feb. 15, 2014	March 1, 2014
March 15, 2014	April 1, 2014

**3. Where can I find outreach and enrollment materials to give to my clients?**

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.californiahealthline.org/capitol-desk/2013/12/state-officials-say-pace-of-exchange-sign-ups-increasing-dramatically>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/provgovpart/Pages/LIHPTransitionResource.aspx>

Covered California has a toolkit of outreach and enrollment resources for community partners on their website: <https://www.coveredca.com/hbex/toolkit/>. Materials are available in multiple languages, including Arabic, Armenian, Chinese, English, Farsi, Hmong, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Russian, Spanish, Filipino, and Vietnamese.

- [PowerPoint Slides](#)
- [Printable Materials](#)
- [Service Center Phone Numbers](#)
- [Fact Sheets](#)
- [FAQs](#), including for Immigrants in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) and for [Young Adults/Students](#)
- [YouTube Videos](#)

A key resource includes a web page with information on where to find help in-person from certified enrollment counselors, certified agents and county service agencies.

- [Find help near you](#)

#### **4. What funding opportunities are there for outreach, education, and enrollment activities?**

##### a) Covered California

In February 2014, up to \$5 million in grants will become available for organizations to provide outreach, education, and enrollment to uninsured persons in California. These grants may provide an opportunity for local health departments and community-based organizations to ensure communities with limited access to care benefit from coverage expansion through Covered California. For more information on grant opportunities through Covered California, visit the Covered California stakeholder webpage: <https://www.coveredca.com/hbex/stakeholders/>. Slides from an October 28, 2013 webinar on the navigator program are posted [here](#).

##### b) Department of Health Care Services (Medi-Cal)

In addition, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), through grants from The California Endowment and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), will be making funds available to counties to conduct targeted outreach and enrollment services to enroll the following special populations in expanded Medi-Cal coverage:

- Persons with mental health disorder needs
- Persons with substance use disorder needs
- Persons who are homeless
- Young men of color
- Persons who are in county jail, state, prison, on state parole, on county probation, or under post release community supervision
- Families of mixed-immigration status
- Persons with limited English proficiency

DHCS is encouraging counties to partner with community-based organizations in these efforts. For more information on Medi-Cal outreach and enrollment grant opportunities through DHCS, visit the DHCS Outreach and Enrollment Work Group

webpage: <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/med-cal/eligibility/Pages/OEworkgroup.aspx>.

## 5. How can local health departments and community-based organizations participate in outreach, education, and enrollment?

### Client-Level

- Download educational materials from the Covered California [outreach toolkit](#); display and distribute these materials in clinic waiting rooms, drop-in centers, outreach programs, drug treatment programs, HIV testing sites, community health centers, and other locations serving persons who might be uninsured.
- Make sure that staff and volunteers are familiar with the basics of coverage expansion and how to link clients to enrollment resources, such as certified enrollment counselors who can help individuals sign up for coverage. Additional suggestions include saving the [“Find help near you”](#) link to your web browser’s favorites and printing out lists of local enrollment entities and distributing this information to front-line staff for use in the field and the office.
- Add questions to client intake forms, where appropriate, on insurance status and provide uninsured clients with information on where to enroll in coverage.

### Organization-Level

- Join the Covered California Community Outreach Network, which includes non-compensated local organizations (including local health departments) that help raise public awareness about the new health insurance marketplace. To join the network, complete an [Interest Form](#), and email it to [CommunityOutreachNetwork@covered.ca.gov](mailto:CommunityOutreachNetwork@covered.ca.gov).
- If eligible, sign your organization up to become an enrollment entity. (Both local government agencies and non-profit organizations are potentially eligible.) For more information on how to apply to become an enrollment entity, visit <https://assisters.ccgrantsandassisters.org/>.
- If eligible, partner with a certified enrollment entity to sign up key staff to become a certified enrollment counselor (CEC). CECs are trained to provide in-person counseling and assistance to consumers in need of help with applying for Covered California programs. For more information on how to become a CEC, visit <https://www.coveredca.com/hbex/counselors/>.
- Learn how other prevention organizations are responding to health care reform implementation in their communities; see recent webinar slides [here](#).