COVERED CALIFORNIA

Community Outreach Network Newsletter

NEWSLETTER #4 — JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2014

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Every day across California, people are making dreams come true. I'm talking about the thousands of insurance agents, county workers, clinicians and members of community groups — and the staff at Covered California™ — who have teamed up to educate and enroll people in coverage under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

I've had the chance to talk with a lot of people since open enrollment launched on Oct. 1, including representatives at our Service Center offices in Rancho Cordova, Concord and Fresno as well as people working in communities across the state. I asked them about the thousands of calls they're answering. The staff and volunteers breathed passion for helping get people coverage and compassion for the difficulties faced by so many Californians. When one of the staff noted that a caller had broken down in tears of gratitude and appreciation for no longer having to live in fear, many around the room nodded understandingly. I asked, "how many of you have also had callers break down in tears of relief?" The response was a resounding yes from almost half of the room.

These men and women aren't just answering calls — in many ways they're answering prayers. More than 5 million Californians are uninsured. We all know someone in that terrifying position. A brother, nephew, grandchild or neighbor who is just one illness away from financial ruin, and it happens more often than you think.

We know we cannot do this alone. It's only going to work if we have the passion, strength and active engagement of everyone. So, I'm asking you to reach out and tell your son, daughter or brother to tell a friend or co-worker about Covered California. Tell them about **CoveredCA.com** and tell them to call us at **(800) 300-1506**.

Thanks for joining us in delivering on the prayers of millions of Californians.

Sincerely,

Peter V. Lee

Welcome to Answers

If you are unable to find the answer to a specific question, you may find your answer in one of the categorized FAQs below on our website here: **CoveredCA.com/FAQs**.

- Application Status
- Immigration
- Medicare
- Small Business
- Tax Credits
- Voter Registration
- Consumer Protection
- Immigration (Espanol)
- SHOP
- Student
- Tax Penalty

Key Dates

Please remind consumers of the following important deadlines:

Enrollment Deadline	Payment Received Deadline	Coverage Begins
Jan. 15, 2014	Jan. 28, 2014	Feb. 1, 2014
Feb. 15, 2014	Feb. 25, 2014	March 1, 2014
March 15, 2014	March 26, 2014	April 1, 2014
March 31, 2014	April 25, 2014	May 1, 2014

- **March 31, 2014 is the last day of open enrollment.**

For answers to frequently asked questions about enrollment deadlines and payment dates, check out **Enrollment Deadlines and Payment Dates (bit.ly/19mDyJp)**

Messages from Community Outreach Network Partners

Advocate for the Affordable Care Act: Alice Benjamin

Alice Benjamin is a cardiac clinical nurse specialist with more than 15 years' experience. She is a community health activist and an active member of several professional health and community organizations. In addition to her full-time job at a hospital, she also volunteers with the American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association and is an Affordable Care Act education adviser with AARP. In Gallup polls, nurses are consistently considered to be ethical and honest, and they are important front-line health care providers. Benjamin is one of more than 400,000 registered nurses in California who is a patient advocate. She has volunteered hundreds of hours in the past year to speak in diverse communities at schools, churches, retirement centers and even congressional town halls for elected officials — including for U.S. Reps. Maxine Waters, Linda Sánchez, Janice Hahn and Karen Bass — to raise awareness about the health care law.

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"As a nurse, I see firsthand the devastation of what not having health care coverage can do to a person. I've seen numerous cases of preventable and/or manageable conditions unnecessarily lead to heart attacks, strokes and even death. With many uninsured and underinsured people now having access to quality health care, we as a nation now have the opportunity to swing the pendulum from acute care to early identification, prevention and wellness," said Benjamin.

"I really believe I'm making an impact by helping consumers understand issues around the law, including the exchanges, and I'd like to see more nurses involved," she said. "As nurses, our holistic approach and ability to meet people where they are [in terms of learning] can really help."

Working Together to Enroll More Madera County Residents

By Steve Duckworth, Madera County Department of Social Services

The Madera County Department of Social Services is pleased to partner with Covered California's Community Outreach Network and state, regional and local partners to help residents of our county find health care plans that best meet their needs. Outreach efforts aimed at reaching the uninsured include:

- Placing computers in county libraries to allow easy access to **CoveredCA.com**.
- Collaborating with local partners, such as the Madera County Public Health Department, Madera County Behavioral Health Services, First 5 Madera County and Camarena Health, to reach out to underserved groups in our community.
- Educating local hospitals on the new hospital presumptive eligibility process, which under the Affordable Care Act, provides temporary no-share-of-cost Medi-Cal benefits to individuals determined eligible by qualified hospitals.
- Participating in community forums, including those designed for medical professionals, business owners and civic organizations.

For many in the local community, our eligibility staff is the face of Covered California. These dedicated individuals, supported by equally dedicated clerical, fiscal and information technology staff, provide direct services to the residents of Madera County. In our central office, a unit of eligibility workers staffs the Affordable Care Act hotline. Callers to the hotline get health care questions answered and applications processed. Eligibility teams in our Chowchilla and Oakhurst outstations serve local communities with the same degree of professionalism. We encourage residents of Madera County who are seeking health insurance to contact us at **(559) 675-2463**.

Enrollment Numbers and Trends

Covered California shares health insurance marketplace statistics on a weekly basis. The most recent enrollment statistics can be found here: **bit.ly/18FbJX0**. Covered California has reached milestone levels in the number of professionals trained to help consumers, face to face, as they obtain affordable, quality health insurance through the agency's online marketplace.

"We are adding in-person assisters by the hundreds each week," said Covered California Executive Director Peter V. Lee. "Our presence in neighborhoods across the state is strong — and growing. Certified Enrollment Counselors, Certified Insurance Agents and county eligibility workers provide consumers with personal, secure and competent help in selecting a health insurance plan that fits their medical needs and budget."

Neighborhood in-person enrollment assistance can be found easily on **CoveredCA.com**. The website itself is another easy-to-use, do-it-yourself path consumers can take to enroll in health insurance. Millions of consumers will qualify for financial assistance from the federal government to pay for coverage.

"There are many paths to the final destination of health insurance coverage," Lee said. "We have thousands of employees and partners helping Californians every day."

Since open enrollment began Oct. 1, consumers have been shopping for and comparing health care coverage through Covered California's website — a one-stop shop where consumers can determine if they are eligible to enroll, and eligible for subsidies or Medi-Cal.

Who can help with enrollment?

Consumers can contact the Covered California Service Center at **(800) 300-1506** six days a week (from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday).

In addition, Covered California's Certified Insurance Agents, Certified Enrollment Counselors and county eligibility workers can provide in-person assistance and help consumers enroll. To find someone in your community who is certified to help you enroll, go to **CoveredCA.com** and click on "Find Help Near You."

Enrollment Events Recap

"Cover Your City" Enrollment Events

Covered California launched a series of exciting campaigns in November 2013. One of the campaigns initiated was "Cover Your City," led by the cities of Sacramento and Long Beach on Nov. 16, 2013.

On Nov. 16, Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson and the city of Sacramento, in partnership with Covered California, the California Black Health Network and The California Endowment, launched "Cover Sacramento Day" in Sacramento. The education and enrollment event occurred at four convenient locations throughout Sacramento, where individuals and families could go to apply for affordable health insurance. These locations were:

- Grant High School in North Sacramento.
- Sacramento Central Library.
- Dr. Ephraim Williams Family Life Center in Oak Park.
- The offices of Assemblyman Richard Pan in South Sacramento.

The city of Long Beach and more than 25 community partners also joined for "Cover Long Beach" — a citywide outreach, education and health insurance enrollment campaign — to increase access to care and promote health and wellness for Long Beach residents. Health insurance enrollment was offered at the following six locations:

- Long Beach Department of Health and Human Service.
- The Children's Clinic Family Health Center at Hamilton Middle School.
- Long Beach Community Action Partnership.
- Long Beach Friends Church.
- St. Mary Medical Center/Dignity Health.
- Westside Baptist Church.

Covered California is committed to the success of this initiative and will continue to provide support to other cities joining in this effort during the remaining open-enrollment period through March 31, 2014.

By joining Covered California in this campaign, cities can opt to do one or all of the following:

- Pass a resolution declaring a day (or week or month) to cover their city.
- Write a Covered California opinion/editorial for publication in a local newspaper.
- Include an announcement about "Cover Your City" in their newsletter, on their website or through social media channels.
- Send postcards and mailings about Covered California to city residents.
- Work with a local library.

WE Connect Health Care Enrollment and Resource Fair

The California Endowment, in partnership with Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHW) and Covered California, continued its efforts to enroll Californians in affordable, quality health coverage at the WE Connect Health Care Enrollment and Resource Fair at the Sacramento Convention Center on Nov. 9, 2013. More than 1,500 Sacramento-area residents and SEIU members attended the event to take advantage of dozens of resources, including enrollment assistance for health coverage through Covered California and Medi-Cal.

"The Sacramento WE Connect event was the perfect setting to bring together our members, along with local agencies and community partners, and connect uninsured Sacramentans to the resources they need to live a healthy life," said Dave Regan, SEIU-UHW president. "As Obamacare is implemented across the state, it is critical that we continue working in our communities until every single Californian has access to the coverage and care they need."

We encourage you to help plan an enrollment event in your community.

Enrollment Event Planning Guide

Covered California has created the "Enrollment Event Planning Guide" to help partners plan and hold enrollment events to get Californians interested in and excited about having health care coverage. Partners can access the **Planning Guide** at: (**bit.ly/1ieD76x**).

Enrollment event questions? We can help.

If you have questions or would like to host an enrollment event, please contact Covered California at **CommunityOutreachNetwork@covered.ca.gov**.

Covered California Campaigns

Covered California orchestrated a series of innovative outreach and marketing campaigns to stimulate enrollment in the months of October and November. The campaigns outlined below will continue through March 31, 2014.

Covering Cities, Libraries and Places of Worship

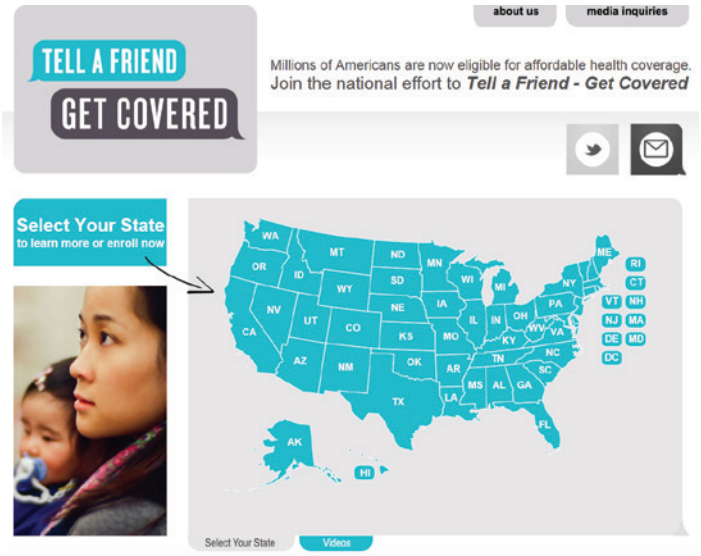
This campaign reaches the communities through events or activities sponsored jointly by Covered California and cities, libraries and places of worship during the open-enrollment period, Oct. 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014. The focus is to have cities, libraries and places of worship host outreach, education and enrollment events.

Covered California's Certified Educators and Community Outreach Network partners will educate consumers about Covered California and the Affordable Care Act and connect them to Certified Enrollment Entities/Certified Enrollment Counselors, Certified Insurance Agents and Certified Plan-Based Enrollers in their communities to assist with enrollment.

"Tell a Friend — Get Covered"

The goal of the "Tell a Friend — Get Covered" campaign is to encourage Americans to have meaningful conversations about what access to affordable health insurance means for them and how Covered California and other exchanges across the country are open for business.

The campaign, which will utilize messaging from celebrities, aims to reach 100 million people. The message bearers will include actors Tatyana Ali of "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air," Wilmer Valderrama of "That '70s Show" and Fran Drescher of "The Nanny." The campaign also released a video featuring Obama impersonator Iman Crosson (who performs as "Alphacat"), rapping about the new law.



"One of the key reasons we're doing this campaign is that those under 30 live and breathe social media. They live Twitter. They live Facebook," said Peter V. Lee, executive director of Covered California. Research has shown strong demand for health insurance within that age group. He said, "young people are not young and invincible. Rather, they're the young convincibles. Again and again, if you look at the surveys, if you put before young people what insurance costs them and what they get, they want to buy."

The campaign also mobilizes target audiences to share information among their personal social networks. Covered California recognizes that friends and family are among the most influential voices when it comes to decisions about health care. Providing interesting and engaging content for audiences to share among peer groups will expand the campaign's reach.

Campaign questions?

If you have questions or need more information on these campaigns, please email **CommunityOutreachNetwork@covered.ca.gov**.

Outreach, Education and Enrollment Events Near You

To find an event near you, click on the button "Events Near You" on the CoveredCA.com or at **bit.ly/1hAfnam.**

Newsletter comments or feedback?

Please email Irene Ng, Community Outreach Network specialist, at **Irene.ng@covered.ca.gov.**

ABOUT COVERED CALIFORNIA

Covered California is the state's marketplace for the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Covered California was charged with creating a new health insurance marketplace in which individuals and small businesses can get access to affordable health insurance plans. With coverage starting in 2014, Covered California will help individuals determine whether they are eligible for premium assistance that will be available on a sliding-scale basis to reduce insurance costs or whether they are eligible for low-cost or no-cost Medi-Cal. Consumers can then compare health insurance plans and choose the plan that works best for their health needs and budget. Small businesses will be able to purchase competitively priced health insurance plans and offer their employees the ability to choose from an array of plans and may qualify for federal tax credits.

Covered California is an independent part of the state government whose job is to make the new market work for California's consumers. It is overseen by a five-member board appointed by the Governor and the Legislature. For more information on Covered California, please visit **CoveredCA.com**.

CONTACT US:

CoveredCA.com

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(800) 300-1506

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