



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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**HEALTH CONNECTOR, REP. PAUL MARK AND COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTER OF FRANKLIN COUNTY DISCUSS LOCAL HEALTH
INSURANCE ASSISTANCE OPTIONS DURING OPEN ENROLLMENT**

GREENFIELD – Monday, December 8, 2014 – The Massachusetts Health Connector, Rep. Paul Mark (D-Peru) and the Community Health Center of Franklin County today detailed opportunities for residents to access help applying for health insurance coverage during Open Enrollment.

The Open Enrollment period started November 15, and everyone who is in Health Connector coverage or was placed in temporary plans over the last year needs to submit a new application if they want insurance coverage through the Commonwealth. In the first few weeks of Open Enrollment, approximately 100,000 people have completed an application and been determined eligible for a Health Connector plan or MassHealth coverage.

“Our number one goal this Open Enrollment is to ensure our current members are able to transition without a gap in coverage by submitting a new application. The good news is we have a working online system that makes applying easier than before,” said Jean Yang, the Executive Director of the Health Connector. “We have great local help available across the state through support from leaders like Representative Mark and organizations like the Community Health Center of Franklin County, which can sit down with members and help them complete an application, find out if they qualify for help paying for insurance, and pick the best plan for them and their families.”

“The Community Health Center of Franklin County is fortunate to be taking part in the Open Enrollment effort associated with the Affordable Care Act,” said Peter Kuusisto, the Outreach and Education Coordinator for the Community Health Center of Franklin County. “Access to health coverage and health care is an integral part of achieving better health outcomes and we are happy to be a part of that.”

The Commonwealth’s online Marketplace re-launched on November 15, with a new web application that gives users the opportunity to go through a start-to-finish process from application to picking a plan in the appropriate program. The new system at MAhealthconnector.org includes a shorter application, and applicants can find help from Navigators and Certified Application Councilors in their area (a full list can be found [here](#)).

At the start of Open Enrollment there were more than 400,000 people in Health Connector programs or temporary Medicaid coverage. If those members want to maintain coverage they will need to submit new applications to ensure they maintain coverage after their current programs expire. Each program has unique deadlines members who want to maintain coverage through the Commonwealth must follow:

- Health Connector members in Qualified Health Plans must apply, pick a plan and make their payment by December 23 for coverage starting January 1, 2015;
- Health Connector members in legacy Commonwealth Care or Medical Security Plan plans must apply, pick a plan and make their payment by January 23, 2015, for coverage starting February 1, 2015;
- Temporary coverage members will have that coverage end in a series of three waves, based on a first-in/first-out policy. Coverage will end on January 15, 2015, for Wave 1, February 1, 2015, for Wave 2, and February 15, 2015 for Wave 3. Like Qualified Health Plan and Commonwealth Care/MSP members, temporary coverage members will be mailed color-coded notices with their end dates, but are encouraged to apply as soon as possible when Open Enrollment begins on November 15.

In order to ensure members are aware of the need to submit a new application, the Health Connector and the Commonwealth are undertaking a targeted public outreach campaign that will include direct mail and phone calls to members, a door-knocking operation targeting current members, a series of public information and enrollment events, and a public education and messaging campaign.

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