



Newsletter

Tuesday, January 22, 2013

2013 Older Americans Month Theme: *Unleash the Power of Age*

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New Look and New Direction for HealthCare.gov

When key parts of the health care law take effect in 2014, there'll be a new way for individuals, families and small businesses to get health insurance.

Last week [HealthCare.gov](#) was re-launched to include [new information about the Marketplace](#), where families and small businesses will be able to easily compare and purchase high-quality health insurance plans starting October 1, 2013, with coverage beginning January 1, 2014. Whether you're uninsured, or just want to explore new options, the Marketplace will give you more choice and control over your health insurance options.

You will be able to go to [HealthCare.gov](#) to buy insurance from qualified private health plans and check if they are eligible for financial assistance all in one place, with a single application. Many people will be eligible for a new kind of tax credit to help pay their premium costs. If a state is running its own Marketplace, [HealthCare.gov](#) will direct people to the right place.

The Health Insurance Marketplace [toolkit](#) has resources to help you spread the word about the Marketplace. It includes information, tools, and resources you need to help consumers find health insurance to fit their budget, with less hassle. As new items are developed for outreach, they will be added to this toolkit.

Help to get the word out [about the Marketplace](#) and [HealthCare.gov](#) to your family members, your neighbors and your networks. Tell them it's not too soon

to check out the site for tips and things they can do now to prepare for enrollment in October. [Checklist for Individuals & Families - 7 things you can do to get ready now.](#)

You can sign up for emails or text message updates, so you don't miss a thing when it's time to enroll. If you're looking for insurance for yourself, your family and/or your small business, these updates will be a great resource to help find health insurance that fits your budget, with less hassle.

Feeling social? Like the Health Insurance Marketplace on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) for even more news and updates about the Health Insurance Marketplace. These new channels will offer even more consumer friendly news and updates about the Health Insurance Marketplace.

[Click here](#) to read the blog, *Countdown to Affordable Health Insurance*, by Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services posted to the website on January 16, 2013.

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Recent Announcements from HHS

HHS Awards \$1.5 Billion to Support States Building Health Insurance Marketplaces
January 17, 2013

Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius last week announced \$1.5 billion in new Exchange Establishment Grants to California, Delaware, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, and Vermont to ensure these states have the resources necessary to build a marketplace that meets the needs of their residents.

“These states are working to implement the health care law and we continue to support them as they build new affordable insurance marketplaces,” Secretary Sebelius said. “Starting in 2014, Americans in all states will have access to quality, affordable health insurance and these grants are helping to make that a reality.”

Because of the Affordable Care Act, consumers and small businesses will have access to marketplaces starting in 2014. The marketplaces are one-stop shops that will provide access to quality, affordable private health insurance choices similar to those offered to members of Congress. Consumers in every state will be able to buy insurance from qualified health plans directly through these marketplaces and may be eligible for tax credits to help pay for their health

insurance. These marketplaces promote competition among insurance providers and offer consumers more choices.

Delaware, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Vermont received awards for Level One Exchange Establishment Grants, which are one-year grants states will use to build marketplaces. California, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New York, and Oregon received Level Two Exchange Establishment Grants. Level Two grants are multi-year awards to states to further develop their marketplaces.

A total of 49 states, the District of Columbia, and four territories have received grants to plan their marketplaces, and 34 states and the District of Columbia have received grants to build their marketplaces. To ensure states have the support and time they need to build a marketplace, states may apply for grants through the end of 2014 and may use funds through their start-up year.

[Click here](#) for a detailed breakdown of marketplace grant awards made to states, including summaries of how states plan on using the awards.

[Click here](#) for more information on the Health Insurance Marketplace.

New Designs to Make Health Records Easier for Patients to Use
January 15, 2013

Winning designs of printed health records to help patients better understand and use their electronic health records (EHRs) were announced by Farzad Mostashari, M.D., the national coordinator for health information technology. The designs, created through a Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) challenge contest, all met the goal of making EHRs valuable to patients and their family members. More than 230 submissions to the design challenge were submitted.

The Health Design Challenge supports ONC's efforts to engage consumers in their health through the use of technology, including the [Blue Button](#), and is part of ONC's Investing in Innovation (i2) Initiative. The i2 Initiative holds competitions to accelerate development and adoption of technology solutions that enhance quality and outcomes.

[Click here](#) to read about the winners.

Millions of Americans Newly Eligible for Quality, Affordable Health Coverage in 2014
January 14, 2013

Because of the Affordable Care Act, millions of Americans will be newly eligible to receive quality, affordable health care through Medicaid and the new health insurance marketplaces (also known as the Exchanges) in 2014. Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius recently released a proposed rule that promotes consistent policies and processes for eligibility notices and appeals in Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Exchanges and give states more flexibility when operating their Medicaid programs.

The proposed rule will help develop systems that will make it easy for consumers to determine if they are eligible for Medicaid or tax credits that make insurance more affordable. It also includes information on how consumers will receive coordinated communications on eligibility determinations and can appeal eligibility determinations. It gives states flexibility in designing benefits and determining cost sharing in the Medicaid program. The proposed rule also provides flexibility to state-based Exchanges by allowing them to choose to rely on HHS for verifying whether an individual has employer-sponsored coverage and conducting some types of appeals.

[Click here](#) for more information on this proposed rule.

More Doctors, Hospitals Partner to Coordinate Care for People with Medicare
January 10, 2013

Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced that doctors and health care providers have formed 106 new Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) in Medicare, ensuring as many as 4 million Medicare beneficiaries now have access to high-quality, coordinated care across the United States.

Doctors and health care providers can establish Accountable Care Organizations in order to work together to provide higher-quality care to their patients. Since passage of the Affordable Care Act, more than 250 Accountable Care Organizations have been established. Beneficiaries using ACOs always have the freedom to choose doctors inside or outside of the ACO. Accountable Care Organizations share with Medicare any savings generated from lowering the growth in health care costs, while meeting standards for quality of care.

This group of new ACOs includes a diverse cross-section of physician practices across the country. Roughly half of all ACOs are physician-led organizations that serve fewer than 10,000 beneficiaries. Approximately 20 percent of ACOs include community health centers, rural health centers and critical access hospitals that serve low-income and rural communities.

[Click here](#) for a list of the 106 new ACOs.

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NIH-Supported Alzheimer's Studies to Focus on Innovative Treatments

Alzheimer's Disease Cooperative Study Group will undertake four clinical trials over five years

With new research funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the nation's premier Alzheimer's disease study network will undertake four major studies aimed at finding new treatments for the disease. The award supports the latest projects of the [Alzheimer's Disease Cooperative Study \(ADCS\)](#) , a national consortium of academic medical centers and clinics set up by NIH in 1991 to collaborate on the development of Alzheimer's treatments and diagnostic tools.

In this round of studies, the ADCS will test drug and exercise interventions in people in the early stages of the disease, examine a medication to reduce agitation in people with Alzheimer's dementia, and test a cutting-edge approach to speed testing of drugs in clinical trials.

[Click here](#) for more information and to read about the four studies made possible under the new award.

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ACL Webinar on Enhanced Options Counseling Update

The Administration on Community Living (ACL) is engaged in a collaborative process with 8 states (CT, MD, MA, NH, OR, VT, WA, WI) that will serve as high performing national models for providing LTSS Options Counseling to all State residents with LTSS needs. ACL is hosting this webinar to share with Part B and other interested states some of the progress made by the Part A states. The agenda will include specific updates on the topic of Medicaid administrative funding and new resources.

Date: Thursday, January 24, 2012

Time: 2:00 p.m. ET

[Register.](#)

Call-in Telephone Number: (866) 233-3852

Passcode: 277405#

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Webinar on Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation and Clients with Dementia

Presented by the Administration on Aging (AoA) and the American Bar Association (ABA), this webinar is part of the **Legal Resources and Alzheimer's Webinar Series** which aims to provide continuing education to develop dementia capable legal professionals. It is open to any professional in law or aging.

Topic: *Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation and Clients with Dementia*

Date: Thursday, January 24, 2013

Time: 2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Eastern

[Register.](#)

Participants will learn about:

- Protecting persons with dementia
- Spotting and intervening in cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation of persons with dementia

Presenters:

- Kathy Greenlee, Administrator, Administration for Community Living and Assistant Secretary for Aging
- Lori Stiegel, Senior Attorney, ABA Commission on Law and Aging

The **Legal Resources and Alzheimer's Webinar Series** covers legal issues of people with Alzheimer's disease (AD) and their caregivers. Persons with Alzheimer's disease are particularly vulnerable to financial exploitation, physical or emotional abuse, and neglect both at home and in care facilities. These webinars, as outlined in the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease, will help ensure that people with AD have their dignity, safety, and rights maintained. Archives for this series are available [here](#).

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ACL Webinar Series on the Affordable Care Act

On Tuesday, January 29, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) will continue its series of webinars on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (also known as the Affordable Care Act, or ACA) and its impact on older adults, people with disabilities and the aging and disability networks, focusing on managed long-term services and supports.

Title: *Promising Practices for Medicaid Managed Long-Term Services and*

Supports

Date: Tuesday, January 29, 2013

Time: 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Eastern

Description:

As an increasing number of states move toward developing and implementing managed long-term services and supports systems for older adults and individuals with disabilities, important lessons can be learned from those states that have already made this transition. This month we will examine promising practices for managed long-term services and supports from states with existing programs.

Presenter: Alice Dembner, Community Catalyst

To register for the online event

1. [Click here](#).
2. Click "Register".
3. On the registration form, enter your information and then click "Submit".

Once your registration is approved, you will receive a confirmation email message with instructions on how to join the event.

Please note: Space is limited, so please register as early as possible. This webinar will also be recorded and posted on our [website](#) soon after the webinar.

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Webinar on Ticket to Work: Support Services for People Who Have a Disability and Are Ready to Work

If you are interested in learning about the Ticket to Work Program or Work Incentives, attend this free Work Incentive Seminar Event (WISE) online webinar.

WISE webinars are online events held for beneficiaries to learn about the Ticket to Work Program and available Work Incentives through accessible learning opportunities. WISE webinars are hosted on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

Date: Wednesday, January 23, 2013

Time: 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. EST

[Register.](#)

Once you submit your registration form, you will receive a confirmation Email with event details and instructions.

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Stay Informed

This Week's Quick Facts

More than half (63 percent) of centenarians were age 100 or 101 while roughly 92 percent were ages 100 to 104. Supercentenarians — those ages 110 and older — represented 1 percent of the centenarian population.

In 2010, the median monthly earnings for people aged 21 to 64 with any kind of disability was \$1,961 compared with \$2,724 for those with no disability.

Webinar Reminders

Health Care Law Webinar in Spanish

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Partnership Center continues to host a series of webinars for faith and community leaders. All webinars are open to the public and include a question and answer session where you can ask HHS staff any questions you may have. You are encouraged to submit questions you would like to have answered on the webinars to ACA101@hhs.gov.

Webinar Details:

Title: *Health Care Law 101 in Spanish*

Date: Tuesday, January 22, 2013

Time: 2:00 p.m. ET

This webinar will provide a presentation on the main provisions in the Affordable Care Act, the health care law, and how to access care in your community in Spanish.

[Register.](#)

After registering you will receive an e-mail confirmation containing information about joining the webinar. Please contact us at ACA101@hhs.gov if you have registration problems.

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NCOA-Sponsored Webinars

Answering the FAQs about Medicare

Join the National Council on Aging (NCOA) for its webinar, *Answering the FAQs about Medicare*. The webinar will address frequently asked questions NCOA receives via its consumer site, [My Medicare Matters](#).

The webinar is designed for persons who counsel or care for those with Medicare, whether professionally or personally, as well as those aging into Medicare who may want to know more about their coverage options. The webinar will take a look at common concerns, and how to find answers to some not-so-common questions.

Agenda:

- Inquiries about Medicare enrollment, including when it may be appropriate to delay enrollment (and how to avoid penalties later)
- Coverage issues, such as vaccinations, second opinions, and what therapies may be available for those who are homebound
- Getting help with Medicare costs

This webinar will be offered twice for your convenience:

Dates: Tuesday, January 22, 2013
Times: 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. ET

Friday, January 25, 2013
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ET

[Register for this webinar.](#)

[Register for this webinar.](#)

Want to get your question answered? [Send an email](#) before the event and we'll try to include it!

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Budget Basics: Helping Older Adults Become Savvy Saving Seniors

For many vulnerable and disadvantaged older adults, the path to economic security begins with basic money management. Learning how to budget, avoid scams, and apply for benefits can help them stay secure and independent longer.

Sponsored by the National Council on Aging (NCOA) and IlluminAge this webinar will explore resources and best practices for community-based money-management education for older adults.

Agenda:

- An overview of the money-management challenges many older adults face in today's economy.
- An introduction to the [Savvy Saving Seniors™](#) program developed by NCOA with support from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation.
- Ideas and insights you can apply in bringing this type of education and support to the older adults you work with in your community.

Speaker: Ramsey Alwin, Senior Director, NCOA Economic Security Initiative

Date: Thursday, January 24, 2013

Time: 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. ET

[Register](#)

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AHRQ Webinar on Innovative Health Care Policies

How can you successfully use Accountable Care Organization (ACO) principles and financial incentives to improve health outcomes?

Join the Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Innovations Exchange for this free webinar and learn from innovators who will share their experiences and lessons learned.

Title: *Using ACO Principles and Financial Incentives to Improve Health Outcomes*

Date: Tuesday, January 29, 2013

Time: 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. EST

The following innovations, part of a new focus on innovative policies that promote quality health care, will be featured during this event:

The Montefiore Medical Center established an infrastructure based on ACO principles, improving the management of diabetes, asthma, and congestive heart failure and reducing hospital admissions, readmissions, and medical expenses among several key populations. [Read the innovation profile.](#)

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan provides financial incentives and supports

provider-led quality improvement collaboratives, significantly improving quality, reducing costs, and generating a positive return on investment. [Read the innovation profile.](#)

[Register.](#)

[More information, including the speakers' bio .](#)

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Tools & Information

Flu Season Is Here--Take Action Now

The United States is experiencing an early influenza season, with flu activity reported in 47 states. Do your part to protect yourself and others against the flu.

If you [have the flu](#),

- Stay home
- Follow your health care provider's recommendations
- Prevent the spread of the flu with these [flu-fighting tips](#).

If you don't have the flu, it's not too late to get a flu shot. The best protection against the flu is to get the vaccine. [Seasonal flu](#) vaccines have a very good safety record.

Everyone 6 months of age and older should get vaccinated. It is especially important to get the vaccine if you, or someone you live with or care for is at [high risk of complications](#) from the flu. The Flu.gov [flu infographic](#) shows you what you need to know about the flu vaccine.

[Video: What is the best protection against the flu?](#)

[Video: How can I prevent the spread of the flu?](#)

[Find a place to get the flu vaccine in your area](#)

Everybody can do their part to help prevent the spread of germs and protect themselves from the flu. Follow Flu.gov on [Twitter](#) (@FluGov) for the latest information about this flu season.

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SSA Launches New Resource Tool

Last week, the Social Security Administration (SSA) expanded its available resource services with the launch of [my Social Security account](#).

Using this online account, more than 60 million people who receive Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) will now be able to immediately request and receive benefit verification letters online. Last year, SSA processed almost nine million benefit verification requests. Beneficiaries will also have access to their payment history and earnings record.

In addition to the benefit verification letter, Social Security beneficiaries can now start or change their direct deposit, and change their address using their *my Social Security* account. Individuals not receiving benefits can create a *my Social Security* account and quickly receive their online Social Security *Statement*.

Please join us in encouraging individuals age 18 or older to sign up for an account.

For more information, including sample Twitter and Facebook posts that you can use to spread the word with others, please see the [press release](#) on *my Social Security* account.

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Great Lakes ADA Center Now Accepting Symposium Registration Stipend Applications

The Great Lakes ADA Center will make available a number of stipends in the amount of \$600.00 to cover the cost of registration for the 16th Annual ADA National Symposium on the Americans with Disabilities Act and Related Disability Issues. Registration must be completed by March 30, 2013. (Recipients who fail to register by the March 30, 2013 deadline will forfeit their stipend).

Applications will only be accepted from individuals who reside in the Great Lakes Region (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin). This stipend is only valid for the 2013 Symposium. Notification to recipients will be made by email within the 1st week of March to enable individuals to meet the early bird registration deadline of March 30, 2013. [Apply](#).

The Symposium will take place in San Antonio, Texas from May 12 to 15, 2013. The ADA Symposium includes up to date information regarding employment, communication, transportation, emergency preparedness, case law, regulatory updates for government and private entities and the latest on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. You will hear from presenters representing various federal agencies including the Departments of Justice, Education,

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and U.S. Access Board. This year there are 72 break-out sessions on a wide-range of ADA related topics and online access to hand-outs from all sessions prior to the conference. [View the Symposium schedule.](#)

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New Video Shows the Impact of Technology on Aging in Place

The video, [High-Tech Aging: Improving Lives](#), recently released by LeadingAge's Center on Aging Services Technology (CAST), shows how current technology can facilitate coordinated care and aging in place.

The video demonstrates the possibilities through the story of Alma, an 83-year-old woman whose journey from home to hospital, rehabilitation and back home is assisted by technology. Alma and her caregivers use personal health tablets, a medication dispenser, electronic health records, home monitoring, telehealth, engagement technologies, and assistive technologies. They also use a personal emergency response system, with automatic fall detection, to plan her care, to communicate with each other and to allow her to remain safely at home with support.

You can also [download](#) the video to show in a presentation.

10 Tips for Online Writing

AIDS.gov Blog by [Aisha Moore, Communications Director, AIDS.gov](#) and [Alan Gambrell, Managing Partner, Public Ink](#)

These days many can publish a blog on any topic without prior writing experience or a degree in journalism or English. Even with credentials, online writing is different from technical and scientific writing. Based on an [analysis](#) by the Nielsen Norman Group of 45,237 pageviews, Jakob Nielsen found that people read an average of 18 percent of what's on a page. Given that, we have to approach online writing a little differently than we do scientific or technical writing—with added attention to brevity. We must also aim to reach our audiences with well-written, researched, and concise content.

[Click here](#) to read their 10 tips.

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n4a Awards \$25,000 to Support Diabetes Screening Activities for Seniors
8 Area Agencies on Aging and Title VI Native American Aging Programs to further address the need for diabetes prevention

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) announced recently that it has partnered with Novo Nordisk and the Medicare Diabetes Screening Project (MDSP) to award \$25,000 to be used for increasing awareness of the benefits for screening for diabetes and pre-diabetes that are offered by the MDSP, a national coalition of patient, nonprofit organizations and corporate partners, that is leading the way in encouraging seniors to improve their health

[Read more.](#)

Recent Reports

[Association Between Medicare Advantage Plan Star Ratings and Enrollment](#)

Source: The Journal of the American Medical Association

Date: January 16, 2013

[Medicaid's Role in Meeting the Long-Term Care Needs of America's Seniors](#)

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation

Date: January 15, 2013

[Health Online 2013](#)

Source: Pew Research Center

Date: January 15, 2013

[Wounded Warrior Careers: A Four-Year Report](#)

Source: National Organization on Disability

Date: January 15, 2013

[A Bridge to Health: Ensuring Seamless Transitions from Health Insurance Exchanges and Medicaid to Medicare](#)

Source: Medicare Rights Center

Date: January 2013

[Middle Class Security Project](#)

Source: AARP Public Policy Institute

Date: January 2013

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January Observances

National Birth Defects Prevention Month

Resource: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Birth Defects Web page](#)

National Glaucoma Awareness Month

Resources: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Vision Health Initiative webpage](#); [National Eye Institute Glaucoma webpage](#)

National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month

Resource: [Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign](#)

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Awareness Day (January 25, 2013)

Resource: [Internal Revenue Service EITC Awareness Day webpage](#)

National Drug Facts Week (January 28-February 3)

Resource: [National Institutes of Health National Drug Facts Week webpage](#)

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