

December 15, 2016

### **Only Six Weeks Left to Sign Up for January Health Coverage**

Department of Vermont Health Access officials reported that Vermont Health Connect Open Enrollment has been progressing smoothly. They expect the state to maintain one of the lowest uninsured rates in the country in 2017.

Open Enrollment is a time for new customers to sign up for health and dental plans for the coming year. It is also a time for current customers to compare their existing health plan to other options. Vermont Health Connect offers a free 2017 Plan Comparison Tool, which can help customers decide whether another plan would be a better fit for their family's needs and budget. The online tool allows customers to compare plans not just by monthly premiums and deductible amounts, but also by estimated total annual costs. Vermonters can try it out by clicking on "Decision Tools" at <http://VermontHealthConnect.gov>.

After taking a couple minutes to enter age, income, health status, and expected use of medical services for all family members, the site presents the 20 qualified health plans from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont and MVP Health Care in order of estimated total costs, lowest to highest. Users then have several options for sorting the results, or they can click on links to plan details and additional information on insurance carrier websites.

Vermonters who would prefer to talk to a live person about their options can call Vermont Health Connect's toll-free Customer Support Center at 855-899-9600 or set up an appointment with an Assister in their community.

Vermont Health Connect encourages Vermonters to take note of the following dates:

December 15 – Last day to sign up or report change for January 1 coverage

December 26 – Payment due for January 1 coverage

January 15 – Last day to sign up or report change for February 1 coverage

January 31 – Open Enrollment ends (coverage effective March 1)

Customers with online accounts can sign in to report changes and pay their bill from 5am until 1am most days. Due to scheduled system updates, customers won't be able to access their online accounts from 8pm tonight until 5pm tomorrow (Saturday). The Plan Comparison Tool and all information on the Help Center site will continue to be available. This weekend's maintenance period will not impact the Vermont Health Connect's call center, which is open 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday.

Vermont Health Connect's 2017 Open Enrollment began November 1 and runs until January 31. New customers can sign up online, by phone, or in person with an Assister. Current customers are automatically being renewed into 2017 coverage; they are able to call 855-899-9600 or click on the Renewals link in their online account to report changes for the 2017 coverage year.