

Contact: Hannah Wickey
Wyoming Primary Care Association
1720 Carey Avenue Suite 601
Cheyenne, WY 82001
307-632-5743
www.wypca.org

20 Organizations Band Together to Help Wyoming with Healthcare

State-wide education and enrollment event to be held January 8

This January 8, an education and enrollment event will be held in nine of Wyoming's cities to assist residents with Marketplace health plans. The idea is to provide in-person assistance to Wyomingites on a state-wide level to answer their questions on getting coverage, guide them through the enrollment process and how to use their health plan to their maximum benefit.

20 organizations took part in the planning and implementation of this event to help increase accessibility and offer guidance on an often complicated issue. National, state and local city organizations have coordinated events to be held in Buffalo, Casper, Cheyenne, Cody, Gillette, Jackson, Lander, Laramie and Rock Springs. The events take place at different types of venues ranging from libraries to shopping malls, but all have the same goal of educating and enrolling consumers in health care.

Health plan literacy is a problem in Wyoming. People don't understand terms that are commonplace in a health plan. Ruth Case, a Consumer Affairs Specialist from the Department of Insurance, has found this to be a problem that can be solved through educating the consumer.

"Besides the complexities of working with new healthcare regulations, Wyoming consumers in general lack the basic vocabulary and knowledge of what constitutes a qualified health plan. The focus of consumer education should be to build a working vocabulary so consumers can find insurance that best fits their health care needs, their pocketbook and most importantly protects them from fraud and the high costs of medical care borne by those without adequate health insurance."

A lack of health plan literacy is not a problem unique to Wyoming. On a national level, there is mass confusion on how to make use of these plans to meet the needs of those enrolled in them. A recent study from the Ford Foundation focused on the health literacy of the population targeted by the Marketplace Exchange. It found that 60.1% of people are either not very or not at all confident in their understanding of even one insurance term.

The timing of this event is set exactly one week ahead of the January 15 deadline. Enrolling by January 15 means coverage will start February 1. The January 15 deadline also signifies that there is only one month left of Open Enrollment.

You can find more information on the January 8 enrollment events by visiting wypca.org or by calling 211. Enrollment events taking place at other times can be found by calling 211 or by searching the hashtag #enrollwyo on Facebook and Twitter.

###

