



Know the Facts

The Affordable Care Act Is Working in New Hampshire

December 10, 2014

With a new open enrollment period upon us, here are the facts about how health care reform is working in New Hampshire. The insurance marketplace is here to stay, and people will continue to have access to quality plans and financial assistance through the Affordable Care Act, or ACA. As more and more people obtain coverage through the ACA, they will gain a better understanding of what the law means for them. A recent Gallup poll found that the majority of Americans who purchased new health insurance policies through the ACA marketplace over the past year are as satisfied as other Americans with their health insurance: 71 percent rated their coverage “excellent” or “good,” compared with 72 percent among all those who have coverage.¹

Last year, 50,000 New Hampshire residents obtained health insurance thanks to the ACA.² Among those, an overwhelming majority qualified for financial assistance to help cover the cost of care.³ Whether you are thinking of signing up for health insurance or have already purchased coverage on the marketplace, shopping around during this year’s open enrollment period could mean big savings.

New Hampshire by the numbers

Who has benefited

- **40,000 New Hampshire residents signed up for health care through the exchange.** During last year’s open enrollment period, about 40,000 people—more than two-thirds of all eligible New Hampshire residents—signed up for health insurance on the exchange.⁴
- **More than three-quarters of enrollees qualified for tax credits that, on average, made plans 74 percent cheaper.** Seventy-six percent of New Hampshire residents who signed up for a plan received tax credits to make their insurance more affordable. Tax credits lowered the cost of the average plan from \$390 to \$100, a 74 percent decrease.⁵

The deadlines to sign up are approaching

To re-enroll in different coverage or enroll in new coverage beginning January 1, the deadline to sign up is **December 15, 2014.**

The final deadline to sign up for health coverage in 2015 is **February 15, 2015.**

- **New Hampshire’s uninsured rate fell by 1.4 percentage points after open enrollment.** From 2013 to mid-2014, New Hampshire’s uninsured rate decreased from 13.8 percent to 12.4 percent.⁶
- **10,000 New Hampshire residents signed up for health care through Medicaid.** During the same open enrollment period, about 10,000 people signed up for health insurance through Medicaid, even though New Hampshire initially chose not to expand the program.⁷

Who can still benefit

- **In New Hampshire, 12.4 percent of residents are still uninsured.** Despite the success of the ACA in allowing thousands of New Hampshire residents to sign up for health coverage, 12.4 percent of the state still lacks insurance.⁸
- **Financial assistance is available, and you could pay as little as \$149 per month for coverage.** A 40-year-old nonsmoker who earns \$30,000 annually in New Hampshire can find a bronze plan that costs \$149 per month once tax credits are factored in and a silver plan that costs \$208 per month.⁹
- **Medicaid expansion will expand access to health care for up to 50,000 New Hampshire residents.** Late in the last open enrollment period, New Hampshire signed Medicaid expansion into law, which made up to 50,000 people eligible for expanded Medicaid coverage. Already, 20,000 New Hampshire residents have signed up for the new Medicaid program.¹⁰
- **Expanding Medicaid will bring New Hampshire \$300 million in economic growth.** Because New Hampshire accepted federal funding to expand Medicaid in 2014, the state will see its economy grow by an estimated \$300 million over the next eight years.¹¹

Have insurance? Shopping around could save you money

- **The number of insurers participating in New Hampshire’s exchange increased from one to five, increasing competition and lowering rates.** Four new insurers joined New Hampshire’s federal exchange for this year’s open enrollment period.¹² The participating insurers offer 3.8 times as many plans on the exchange as last year.¹³
- **Choosing lower-cost premium plans could result in savings of \$2 billion.** If everyone nationwide who previously signed up in the marketplace switched to the lowest-cost premium plan in the same metal tier—silver, for example—their combined actions would create \$2 billion in savings for consumers and taxpayers.¹⁴

Need help?

Go to www.HealthCare.gov to start the application process.

If you need assistance, you can get free, in-person help from an expert in your community to guide you through the process. Go to localhelp.healthcare.gov to find assistance near you.

You can sign up over the phone by calling 1.800.318.2596.

- **All New Hampshirites with exchange coverage can benefit from a premium decrease.** In New Hampshire, 100 percent of residents who are eligible for tax credits on the exchange can purchase a silver plan that costs less than it did last year.¹⁵
- **Switching plans can deliver double-digit premium decreases for New Hampshirites.** Renewing last year's cheapest silver plan would result in a 1.7 percent premium decrease, while switching to this year's least expensive silver plan would result in a 17.5 percent decrease.¹⁶

Endnotes

- 1 Frank Newport, "Newly Insured Through Exchanges Give Coverage Good Marks," Gallup, November 14, 2014, available at <http://www.gallup.com/poll/179396/newly-insured-exchanges-give-coverage-good-marks.aspx>.
- 2 Kaiser Family Foundation, "State Marketplace Statistics," available at <http://kff.org/health-reform/state-indicator/state-marketplace-statistics/> (last accessed November 2014); Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, *Medicaid & CHIP: April 2014 Monthly Applications, Eligibility Determinations, and Enrollment Report* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014), available at <http://www.medicaid.gov/affordablecareact/medicaid-moving-forward-2014/downloads/april-2014-enrollment-report.pdf>.
- 3 Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, *Premium Affordability, Competition, and Choice in the Health Insurance Marketplace, 2014* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014), p. 23, available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/health/reports/2014/Premiums/2014MktPlacePremBf.pdf#page=23>.
- 4 Kaiser Family Foundation, "State Marketplace Statistics."
- 5 Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, *Premium Affordability, Competition, and Choice in the Health Insurance Marketplace*.
- 6 Dan Witters, "Arkansas, Kentucky Report Sharpest Drops in Uninsured Rate," Gallup, August 5, 2014, available at <http://www.gallup.com/poll/174290/arkansas-kentucky-report-sharpest-drops-uninsured-rate.aspx>.
- 7 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, *Medicaid & CHIP: April 2014 Monthly Applications, Eligibility Determinations, and Enrollment Report*.
- 8 Witters, "Arkansas, Kentucky Report Sharpest Drops in Uninsured Rate."
- 9 Cynthia Cox and others, "Analysis of 2015 Premium Changes in the Affordable Care Act's Health Insurance Marketplaces" (Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation, 2014), available at <http://kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/analysis-of-2015-premium-changes-in-the-affordable-care-acts-health-insurance-marketplaces/>.
- 10 Associated Press, "N.H. Expanded Medicaid Tops 20,000 Enrollees," New Hampshire Public Radio, October 14, 2014, available at <http://nhpr.org/post/nh-expanded-medicaid-tops-20000-enrollees>.
- 11 Megan Cole, Randy Haught, and Mengxi Shen, "An Evaluation of the Impact of Medicaid Expansion in New Hampshire" (Washington: The Lewin Group, 2013), available at http://www.lewin.com/~media/Lewin/Site_Sections/Publications/NHPhasell.pdf.
- 12 Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, *Health Plan Choice and Premiums in the 2015 Health Insurance Marketplace* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014), p. 14, available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/health/reports/2015/premiumReport/healthPremium2015.pdf>.
- 13 McKinsey Center for U.S. Health System Reform, "2015 Individual Exchange information, last updated November 19, 2014," p. 35, available at http://healthcare.mckinsey.com/sites/default/files/McKinsey_2015_individual_rate_filings.pdf#page=35 (last accessed November 2014).
- 14 Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, *Health Plan Choice and Premiums in the 2015 Health Insurance Marketplace*, p. 2.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Margot Sanger-Katz and Amanda Cox, "Updated: Why Shopping Is So Important in Health Enrollment," *The New York Times*, November 14, 2014, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/15/upshot/why-shopping-is-so-important-in-health-enrollment.html>.