

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Room 352-G
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201



CMS NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 27, 2016

Contact: CMS Media Relations
(202) 690-6145 | [CMS Media Inquiries](#)

COUNTDOWN TO OPEN ENROLLMENT 4

Administration launches new campaign to enroll young adults during Open Enrollment
New outreach platforms, better mobile experience, and strong partners will help reach young adults

Today, as the White House convenes the [Millennial Outreach and Enrollment Summit](#), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced additional initiatives to reach young adults during Open Enrollment and help them find affordable coverage through HealthCare.gov. Young adults had the highest uninsured rates before the Affordable Care Act and have seen the sharpest drop in uninsured rates since 2010. Yet millions of young adults remain uninsured, showing that there is more work to do to equip younger Americans with the tools and information they need to access coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Today, we are announcing new strategies, new tools, and new partnerships to reach young people and help them get covered.

“[More than 9 in 10](#) Marketplace-eligible young adults without health insurance have incomes that could qualify them for tax credits to make plans affordable, but that fact hasn’t fully penetrated the millennial community, and we want to change that,” said Kevin Counihan, HealthCare.gov CEO. “This year, we’ll be using new tactics and strategies to reach young adults where they are and deliver the message that they have affordable coverage options. These new tactics will both benefit young Americans and strengthen the Marketplace risk pool.”

New Digital Platforms

For the first time, Open Enrollment outreach will take advantage of online platforms that cater almost exclusively to young adults. Today, we are announcing the first of these new efforts: outreach utilizing Twitch, a social video platform and community for gamers. This effort will feature [HealthCare.gov](#) pre-roll before videos, a homepage takeover, and

ongoing efforts with streamers on Twitch to amplify our message throughout Open Enrollment. **Twitch currently attracts close to 10 million daily active users** who, on average, spend 106 minutes per person per day on the site. According to ComScore, Twitch's core demographic of 18-34 year-olds have above average uninsured rates.

Mobile 2.0

According to [ComScore](#), 1 in 5 millennials access the internet exclusively through mobile devices. Last year, consumers could easily enroll in coverage at HealthCare.gov through mobile devices, but if they wanted to actually shop around and compare plans, the mobile interface could be difficult and time consuming. This year, consumers will find an end-to-end, mobile optimized experience, including a new state-of-the-art shopping process that **for the first time offers improved ability to comparison shop on their phone or tablet**. Rather than clicking on tiny boxes or zooming in on hard-to-read screens, consumers will now find intuitive navigation and a streamlined interface to compare plans.

Prior Use Mobile Experience

VS

New Mobile Optimized Experience in 2017

- NEW VERTICAL FORMAT
- NEW ONE FINGER MOTION
- NEW SCROLL UP AND DOWN TO VIEW PLANS

Targeted and Coordinated Partner Campaigns

During 2017 Open Enrollment, CMS and stakeholders will organize a young adult **social media outreach campaign under one umbrella: #HealthyAdulting**. As part of this coordinated campaign, longstanding Open Enrollment partners will be stepping up their social media engagement and will coordinate with each other to maximize the impact of that social media work in driving enrollment. CMS will be joining with partners to communicate with young people on the digital platforms they prefer – including Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr – and engaging in a conversation under a unified #HealthyAdulting message about issues young people care about, whether that’s mental health, women’s wellness, reproductive health, or diabetes prevention.

Together, partners in the #HealthyAdulting campaign reach almost **five million social media followers**, meaning trusted voices will be raising awareness about Open Enrollment among young adults. Participating organizations include: The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Diabetes Association, American Hospital Association, American Medical Student Association, the League of United Latin American Citizens, Mental Health America, Autism Speaks, March of Dimes, Mocha Moms, My Halal Kitchen, National Council of La Raza, National Action Network, National Partnership for Women & Families, the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, National Women’s Law Center, Out2Enroll, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Raising Women’s Voices, Truth Initiative, the United Methodist Church, and Young Invincibles. Specific social media activities our partners are planning include:

- *National Council of La Raza* will engage their 56,600 Twitter followers by hosting a twitter storm supported by the *League of United Latin American Citizens* targeting young millennial Latinos and immigrants to discuss the value proposition of healthcare.
- The *National Action Network*, a leading civil rights organization founded by Reverend Al Sharpton, will engage their over 500,000 followers using #HealthyAdulting to reach out to young adults.
- *March of Dimes* will host a Facebook Chat for its 630,000 followers about prenatal care and preventive services covered as essential benefits under Marketplace plans.
- The *Planned Parenthood Federation of America* will engage their 837,000 followers in a Facebook live-stream led by the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health addressing the state of Latina health.

Meanwhile, we are also introducing new partnerships for 2017 with partners that have strong social media followings among young adults. Examples of new partnerships in 2017 include:

- *Tumblr* will produce and promote a #HealthyAdulting event that will brand the movement of young adults taking ownership of their health and life choices by gaining health insurance and taking advantage of preventive services and wellness visits.
- *My Halal Kitchen* will host Facebook conversations for its 1.3 million followers about healthy living, mental and emotional wellness, and heart health.

- *Autism Speaks* will engage its 217,000 Twitter followers by hosting a Twitter chat on the prevalence of autism among young adults, autism screening as a covered benefit, and additional resources the community can use to get the best care.

Collaborating with Federal Partners and Programs

As we get closer to Open Enrollment, we are also working with federal partners to reach people enrolled in their programs who may need and want Marketplace coverage, with a particular focus on reaching young adults. Today we are announcing two new efforts:

- **The Department of Defense** will include information about the Marketplace in the Transition Assistance Program, Transition GPS (Goals, Plans, Success) curriculum; more specifically, in the Personal Financial Planning module. The program, run through the Defense Transition Assistance Program Office, will inform transitioning Service members about health insurance options for their family, including HealthCare.gov coverage and possibility of qualifying for Marketplace financial assistance. Since this course is continually being offered, many Service members will lose their military coverage outside of Open Enrollment but would be eligible to sign up for Marketplace coverage through a special enrollment period. Approximately 200,000 transitioning Service members, many of whom are under the age of 35, will receive this information annually.
- **The Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Programs (CHIP)** will work in coordination with HealthCare.gov to get more and better information to young adults aging out of these programs at age 19, to others exiting Medicaid or CHIP coverage, and to people who apply for these programs but have incomes too high to qualify. Federal law requires states to transfer these individuals' account information from Medicaid or CHIP to the Health Insurance Marketplace, but the Marketplace has had limited ability to conduct outreach to this group to date. New this year, the Marketplace will be able to contact millions of these individuals via email and mail, and provide information about financial assistance and Marketplace coverage options during Open Enrollment. Almost half of the individuals in this group are age 18-34. In addition, CMS will be releasing new guidance for states outlining best practices for communicating with individuals leaving Medicaid or CHIP and for sharing information with the Marketplace to facilitate direct outreach and to make it easier for individuals to complete a Marketplace application using information they have already provided to their state Medicaid or CHIP program.

In addition, as [previously announced](#), **the Internal Revenue Service will conduct new outreach this year to uninsured people who paid the individual responsibility penalty or claimed an exemption**, letting them know that tax credits are available for Marketplace coverage and providing information about their health coverage options. Young adults are overrepresented among those who paid the fee: about 45 percent of taxpayers paying a penalty or claiming an exemption were under age 35, compared to about 30 percent of all taxpayers in 2014. Experts have suggested reaching out to those who paid the fee or claimed an exemption to make sure they are aware of their options to enroll in coverage, an approach already implemented in Massachusetts.

Getting Ready for Open Enrollment

We're putting the finishing touches on our plans for Open Enrollment 4. Between now and November 1, you'll see a series of announcements from us about what's new, what's better, and what to expect during this Open Enrollment – including new tools for consumers, new outreach tactics and targeting strategies, and more information about continued access to affordable coverage. Today's announcement is the first in this series.

Americans can sign up for affordable health plans that meet their needs and their budgets at HealthCare.gov or their [state Marketplace websites](#) beginning November 1. Open Enrollment runs through January 31, 2017. Health coverage can start as soon as January 1, 2017 for consumers who sign up by December 15, 2016.

###

Get CMS news at cms.gov/newsroom, sign up for CMS news [via email](#) and follow CMS on Twitter [@CMSgov](#)