MEDIA RELEASE

OPEN ENROLLMENT BEGINS NOV. 1
FOR MARYLAND HEALTH CONNECTION

DEADLINE IS DEC. 15 FOR 2018 COVERAGE

BALTIMORE (Oct. 30, 2017) – Marylanders can enroll in health and dental coverage for 2018 through MarylandHealthConnection.gov beginning Wednesday, Nov. 1.

Dec. 15 is the deadline to sign up for 2018 coverage, and plans begin Jan. 1, 2018. Marylanders who are eligible for Medicaid or have recently experienced certain life events can enroll year-round. Maryland Health Connection is the only place for Marylanders to access federal tax credits to lower the cost of insurance. Nine out of 10 Maryland Health Connection enrollees this year received financial support to offset some or all of their costs.

"We urge all Marylanders without health coverage to check out the website and the plans this year, even if they've looked before and chose not to enroll," said Dr. Howard Haft, interim executive director of the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange, which runs Maryland Health Connection. "From what they've heard and read, many may be surprised to find plans comparable to or even cheaper than a year ago, if they qualify for financial help."

Advertisements to "see health care differently" will appear on TV, radio, print and out-of-home advertising across the state to stress the importance of having health coverage to be able to access quality medical care and to counter the risk of large, unexpected medical bills.

There are numerous ways to enroll:

- Individuals can apply at MarylandHealthConnection.gov
- They can apply through the "Enroll MHC" mobile app available free in the App Store (iOS) and the Google Play Store (Android). More than 160,000 during the past year have downloaded the app, the most popular of any state health exchange in the country. Users can upload verification documents with the camera on their mobile device.

- Hundreds of insurance brokers and navigators are available for free expert advice. You can find their locations and contact information at MarylandHealthConnection.gov/Help or through the mobile app.
- Twenty "Beat The Rush" events with experts providing free assistance to help people will be held at various locations around the state this upcoming weekend Nov. 3-5.
See MarylandHealthConnection.gov/BeatTheRush for times and locations.
- Consumers can also call toll-free 1-855-642-8572 (TTY: 1-855-642-8573) to reach the consumer support center. It offers assistance in more than 200 languages, as well as TTY services for the deaf and hard of hearing. During open enrollment, the call center is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Maryland has made major strides in helping uninsured residents get coverage during the past several years.

- The percentage of residents without health insurance fell to an all-time low of 6.1 percent in 2016. --*U.S. Census Bureau*
- Prior to 2010, about 720,000 Marylanders lacked health insurance. Through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in Maryland, roughly 400,000 have coverage -- 290,000 through Medicaid expansion and more than 100,000 in subsidized private health plans.
- Maryland ranked fifth in the nation in the percentage of young adults (ages 18-34) enrolled in 2017. -- *Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services*
- Maryland ranked fourth in the nation in rural health coverage gains from 2013 to 2015. -- *Kaiser Family Foundation*

About the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange: The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE), a public corporation and independent unit of state government established in 2011, administers Maryland Health Connection.

About Maryland Health Connection: Maryland Health Connection (MHC) is the state-based marketplace for Marylanders to shop and enroll in health insurance, as well as determine eligibility for Medicaid and other assistance programs. It is the only place where Marylanders can access financial help such as tax credits to make coverage more affordable. Enroll online at MarylandHealthConnection.gov or download the free Enroll MHC mobile app for Apple and Android devices.

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