Maine DHHS Urges People to Take Advantage of New Health Care Savings and Extra Time to Sign Up for Coverage

March 24, 2021

AUGUSTA— The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) released the following statement today in response to Tuesday's announcement by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that the special enrollment period for HealthCare.gov plans will be extended until August 15, 2021.

The Biden Administration previously announced that people without access to affordable coverage could sign up for coverage between February 15 and May 15, 2021 in response to the loss of jobs and health insurance due to COVID-19. Yesterday, this special enrollment period was extended to give consumers more time to take advantage of new savings through the American Rescue Plan. Consumers now have another three months to enroll or review their coverage, with increased tax credits available to lower their monthly premiums starting April 1.

> *"Being able to visit your doctor, to fill a prescription, and to receive the health care you need to stay healthy is even more important amid this pandemic,"* ***said Governor Mills****. "Affordable health insurance is available for Maine people, and I encourage anyone who needs it to visit CoverME.gov to explore their options and to sign up for a plan by August 15. Don't miss this opportunity to protect your health and the health of your loved ones."*

> *"We urge Maine people to take this additional time to enroll in high-quality, affordable health care coverage,"* ***said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew****. "Even if you already have a health plan, you're likely to qualify for better coverage at a lower cost to you and your family if you take action. Visit CoverME.gov as soon as possible to explore your options."*

Starting April 1 under the American Rescue Plan, consumers have access to additional savings through HealthCare.gov. These savings will lower premiums by, on average, $50 per person per month and $85 per policy per month, according to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. On average, one in four individuals who enroll through HeathCare.gov can upgrade their plan for coverage that offers lower out-of-pocket costs at the same or a lower monthly premium.

More than 3 million uninsured people are estimated to be newly eligible for these health care coverage savings. In Maine, this includes 16,300 uninsured residents who are newly eligible for tax credits and 2,200 uninsured residents newly eligible for silver plans that carry a $0 monthly premium.

Additionally, beginning in early July, consumers eligible to receive unemployment compensation for any week during 2021 may get additional savings when enrolling in new Marketplace coverage through HealthCare.gov or updating their existing Marketplace application.

If you're not sure what coverage you qualify for, visit CoverME.gov or call Consumers for Affordable Health Care at 1-800-965-7476 to learn more about affordable options through both MaineCare and HealthCare.gov. Maine people are eligible for insurance through MaineCare if their annual income is less than $17,236 for a

single person or $29,435 for a family of three. Eligible Maine people may enroll in MaineCare at any time of year.

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