

# HHS Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs News Bulletin: Friday, August 9th, 2013

Visit [HHS.gov/Healthcare](http://HHS.gov/Healthcare) and [CuidadodeSalud.Gov](http://CuidadodeSalud.Gov), two consumer-focused health care websites to: [find insurance options](#), [compare care quality](#), and [learn about the law](#). How is the Affordable Care Act helping you? Share your story [here](#). View our *Flickr Info-Graphs* page [here](#).

## **Secretary's Corner**

### ➤ **August 6, 2013**

Secretary Sebelius wrote a blog post about her opinion on healthcare as a mother. "As a mother and grandmother, I know how a mom's voice is critical to maintaining the health of her family—and that's true even after her kids have grown up into young adults. And as a trusted voice in the lives of their children, moms can play a vital role in getting the word out about the exciting new options for affordable, quality health coverage becoming available this fall for their children and other families in their communities. Starting October 1<sup>st</sup>, people who either do not have insurance or who buy their own but are looking for new options will be able to sign up for the Health Insurance Marketplace at [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov). There, they will be able to compare easy-to-understand plans and choose the one that best suits their needs and budget for coverage that will start January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. Many families, including young adults, will also be eligible for tax credits that can help lower the cost of their premiums." View full blog post [here](#).

### ➤ **August 5, 2013**

Secretary Sebelius wrote a blog post about the next steps in implementing the Health Insurance Marketplaces. "The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is working every day to implement the health care law that's already helping millions of Americans. And come October 1, it will help millions more when the Health Insurance Marketplace opens in every state. We're already seeing how the Marketplace is increasing competition and giving consumers a better deal. A number of states from California to Maryland to Vermont recently announced rates for some plans offered through the Marketplace that will be 20 percent less expensive than previously estimated, and include coverage of higher quality than those offered today. New York announced that premiums for individuals enrolling through the state's Marketplace could be 50 percent less costly than they generally are today." View blog post [here](#).

## **Affordable Care Act News**

### ➤ **August 7, 2013**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released an FAQ sheet about common questions and answers on designation of Certified Application Counselor (CAC) Organizations in federally-facilitated marketplaces. View the full FAQ [here](#).

## **Health Care Blog Posts**

### ➤ **August 7, 2013**

Nancy C. Lee, M.D. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health – Women's Health Director, Office on Women's Health, wrote a blog post about how the Affordable Care Act addresses the unique health needs of women. "More than three years ago, the most important women's health legislation in my lifetime was passed into law—the Affordable Care Act. This law lowers the costs of health care for women, increases access to quality health care, and pays attention to the distinct health needs of women and families. As women, we often make health care decisions for ourselves and for our families, so it is important that we know how the health care law benefits us. Women have often been charged more than men for the exact same health coverage. We have paid higher premiums and out-of-pocket costs. We also tend to make less than men and have a harder time paying for health care costs. As a result, women have not always had access to the health care they needed or the freedom to make the best health care choices for themselves and their families. View full blog post [here](#).

## **White House Health Care Blog Posts**

### **➤ August 7, 2013**

Kate Moraras from the White House wrote a blog post about the importance of how Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) understand how to access health care and how the Affordable Care Act impacts the AAPI community. "As a staff member specializing in health policy, I was especially excited to hear that many of the interns were passionate about health and health care access for our community. Interns shared stories about the value of health in their families, and the difficulties some of their loved ones faced when attempting to access care. I heard about the importance of neighborhood community health centers, which tend to provide the cultural and linguistic sensitivity needed to effectively care for our communities. These stories especially caught my attention because enrollment in the new Health Insurance Marketplace is beginning soon on October 1, 2013. It's now more important than ever for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) to understand how to access health care and how the Affordable Care Act impacts the AAPI community. With so many students in the office, it became evident how critical it is for AAPI youth to be informed as well." View full blog post [here](#).

## **Educational Materials**

*Below you'll find materials related to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.*

### **Health Insurance Marketplace**

*For more information about the Health Insurance Marketplace including official resources, research, news, and events visit <http://marketplace.cms.gov/>*

### **Marketplace Updates**

*For information on how to sign up for coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace, including text message and email updates visit <http://www.healthcare.gov/marketplace/index.html>*

### **State by State Fact Sheets**

*Choose your state to learn more about the immediate benefits of the Affordable Care Act, <http://www.healthcare.gov/law/information-for-you/index.html>*