

NEWS RELEASE



Date: July 14, 2010

Contact: Alissa Robbins, 971-673-3315 (desk) or 503-490-6590 (cell)

Oregon launches new insurance plan for people with existing medical conditions

Today the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is launching a federally funded insurance plan, allowing people with existing health conditions to purchase medical insurance. The new insurance pool adds another option for uninsured Oregonians with existing medical conditions to purchase health insurance, in addition to the existing Oregon Medical Insurance Pool (OMIP).

“There is now another health insurance option for Oregonians with pre-existing conditions who have been denied coverage. This federally funded program will be available until 2014, when insurers will no longer be able to deny coverage based on pre-existing conditions,” said Tina Edlund, Deputy Director of the Oregon Health Authority.

To qualify for the new high-risk pool, an individual must have been uninsured for a minimum of six months, have an existing medical condition and be a U.S. citizen or legally present. Applications are available now and coverage may begin as early as Aug. 1. Premiums will range from \$221 to \$714 each month, based on age range and plan choice. These premiums would be higher if there were no federal subsidy. There will be a choice of two comprehensive medical and prescription drug coverage plans, which will include a deductible of either \$500 or \$750. Both plan options will have an annual out-of-pocket limit of \$5,950. For those who have been uninsured for less than six months or who otherwise do not meet the federal pool eligibility requirements, the existing Oregon Medical Insurance Pool (OMIP) remains available.

Recent federal health reform legislation provides funding for this temporary high-risk insurance pool. A new health insurance exchange, a central marketplace for health insurance that provides one-stop shopping for individuals and small businesses, will be available by 2014.

To apply for the new insurance pool, go to: www.omip.state.or.us or call 800-848-7280.

Demand for the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) is so high that the state is maintaining a reservation list of people who want to apply for OHP, then drawing from that list. The next drawing is July 21. People whose names are drawn receive an application packet that asks them questions about income and residency that determine if they are qualified for OHP. To be added to the reservation list, low-income Oregonians should call 1-800-699-9075 or 711 TTY, or visit the website at www.ohplist.oregon.gov.

The Oregon Health Authority is a leader in the effort to innovate for quality and affordable health care in Oregon, by putting the care back in health care, improving the health of Oregonians, and working to lower the cost of care so it is affordable and accessible to everyone. A nine-member, citizen-led group called the Oregon Health Policy Board oversees the Oregon Health Authority. To learn more about OHA, visit www.oregon.gov/OHA. Connect with us at www.Facebook.com/OregonHealthAuthority and www.Twitter.com/OHAOregon.

###

