Third Year Enrollment for Affordable Health Coverage Begins November 1

Agencies and organizations across San Mateo County partner to target 29,000 uninsured

SAN MATEO, Calif. – The 2016 enrollment period for Californians to sign up for affordable health insurance begins Sunday, November 1. Tens of thousands of San Mateo County residents will be able to join over four million people who now have affordable health coverage through California’s implementation of the Affordable Care Act and Covered California, the State’s health insurance marketplace.

Over 8,400 County residents successfully signed up for health insurance during the 2015 enrollment period, and over 20,000 people renewed their coverage. Effective local enrollment efforts helped to make San Mateo County Health System the highest enrollment government navigator entity in the state – for the second year in a row.

An additional 20,000 individuals enrolled in Medi-Cal, the State’s no cost health insurance, available to those with low incomes such as someone who makes less than $16,243 or a family of three who make less than $27,725. “We’ve had great success in getting the eligible population enrolled in Medi-Cal since 2013, and we have equally committed to successfully renewing eligible members so that their coverage remains intact,” stated Iliana Rodriguez, San Mateo County Human Services Agency Director.

The San Mateo County Health System estimates that more than 29,000 county residents ages 18-64 still need affordable health coverage and may qualify for financial help. Uninsured residents tend to be located in “hot spots” across San Mateo County, including East Menlo Park, Redwood City, East Palo Alto, and North Fair Oaks. County outreach efforts will target these “hot spots” by partnering with trusted, community based organizations using $250,000 from Covered California Navigator Grant Program funding.

Covered California selected San Mateo County Health System and two community partners to receive funding to help raise public awareness, motivate, and connect county residents to health coverage. The grant funding will help support a “no-wrong-door” approach through which a single application is used to determine and enroll an individual in the most appropriate health insurance coverage based on income and other criteria.

The County aims to make the enrollment process as simple as possible for residents – whether they are completing the process on their own online, or with the help of an enrollment counselor by phone or in-person. Additionally, Agency staff are posted within community-based organizations to make it easier for residents to
obtain assistance. All options are detailed on the county’s health coverage website:
www.smcgov.org/healthcoverage.

“Our partnerships with trusted, community based organizations – such as Ravenswood Family Health Center in East Palo Alto and Healthways in Redwood City – will help us reach uninsured residents who deserve access to quality, affordable health insurance,” said Srija Srinivasan, San Mateo County Health System Director of Family Health Services and the Health Coverage Unit. “Health insurance helps people stay healthy by covering preventive services such as flu shots and services to treat more chronic conditions such as diabetes. By focusing on the pockets of uninsured in our county, we can target our efforts to the communities in which we can have the most impact toward our goal of health insurance coverage for all.”

The deadline to renew or enroll in Covered California health insurance is January 31, 2016. To avoid any gaps in coverage or a tax penalty, you must enroll by December 15, 2015 so coverage will begin on January 1, 2016.

A list of enrollment locations and times as well as the languages spoken at each center is available at www.smcgov.org/healthcoverage. Local in-person enrollment assistance is available by calling (650) 616-2002 or 1 (800) 223-8383. San Mateo County residents can also enroll directly through Covered California’s website: www.CoveredCA.com.

###