Public Health Department Receives Recognition

Covered California, the Health Benefits Exchange for the state, contacted the local Public Health Department (PHD) asking about best practices contributing to our success in assisting residents applying for Medi-Cal and/or the Health Benefit Exchange.

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department is actively assisting residents in applying for health coverage/insurance under the Affordable Care Act. As of January 6, 2014, PHD:

- Assisted 2,137 (individuals/families)
- Submitted applications for 1,886 (individuals/families)
- Estimated that 1,818 individuals/families have become enrolled as a result of the applications

Takashi Wada, MD, MPH, noted “This impressive beginning in local enrollments is based in large part to the commitment and work of dedicated employees who understand how having health care coverage will promote health for our entire community.”

January 1, 2014 is the start date for expanded Medi-Cal and the Health Benefit Exchange under the Affordable Care Act. Residents are encouraged to apply for coverage/insurance. The Public Health Department has made it easy to apply. Simply schedule an appointment and bring essential documentation related to your residency and income. To learn more, residents are encouraged to contact their local Health Care Center:

- CARPINTERIA HEALTH CARE CENTER (805) 560-1050
- FRANKLIN HEALTH CARE CENTER (805) 568-2099
- SANTA BARBARA HEALTH CARE CENTER (805) 681-5488
- LOMPOC HEALTH CARE CENTER (805) 737-6400
- SANTA MARIA HEALTH CARE CENTER (805) 346-7230

Covered California complimented the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department by recognizing the outstanding numbers and asking about our strategies for success. Some of the contributing success factors include:

1. Departmental and staff commitment to the effort
2. Staff relationships with patients and community
3. Scheduling appointment for enrollments
4. Adding enrollment as a part of healthcare appointments
5. Communicating accurate information to the community
6. Additional funding for outreach and education
7. The Department of Social Services as our partner with out-stationed workers; “Buddy-system”

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