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ACA OPEN ENROLLMENT BEGAN TODAY FOR 2024 COVERAGE; LOCAL ENROLLMENT ASSISTANCE WILL ALSO INCLUDE SCREENING FOR NEW MEDICAID ENROLLEES

Greenville – Open Enrollment (OE) to choose an Affordable Care Act (ACA) health-insurance plan for 2024 has begun – though this year’s free expert help from Access East (AE) staff in choosing, and signing up for, an ACA plan, is a little different.



With Medicaid expansion coming to North Carolina on Dec. 1, the AE Certified Marketplace Navigators’ program will be screening all ACA insurance seekers to see if they might instead qualify for Medicaid under the state’s expanding qualifications for Medicaid enrollment.

“Access East Navigators and Assisters will be leading Medicaid expansion screening and enrollment efforts for the entire ECU Health hospital system, and really, for all of eastern North Carolina,” noted Shantell Cheek, AE Director for Uninsured Programs, which includes the ACA Navigators.

“We are excited to play this pivotal role in Medicaid expansion, assisting eastern North Carolina consumers through the application process,” added AE President Debra Thompson. “This is our tenth year leading ACA navigation in our region, and for eastern N.C., this is a much needed step forward in addressing the challenges and needs of the uninsured and underinsured.”

Initially, the Navigators program will screen its database of last year’s ACA enrollees to see if any of those people appear now to qualify for Medicaid. Once Medicaid expansion “goes live” on Dec. 1, however, the online ACA enrollment process will begin automatically flagging ACA insurance seekers who instead qualify for Medicaid, sending their information to the state Medicaid office, to begin the Medicaid enrollment process.

The new OE to buy a 2024 ACA plan on the federal Health Insurance Marketplace will close Jan. 16, 2024; however, consumers wanting their ACA coverage to begin Jan. 1 will need to enroll in a plan by Dec. 15, 2023. As with previous years, consumers who last year chose a plan will *still* need to choose one again during this OE, or risk being automatically enrolled in a new plan that may not adequately meet their needs.

AE Navigators’ free enrollment assistance includes help, in English or Spanish, in choosing the best, most cost-effective 2024 health-insurance plan for consumers and their families, and in determining if financial assistance is available to help pay for coverage, as it continues to be for most North Carolinians.

Navigators are grant-funded, and provide impartial assistance, receiving no commissions regardless of which insurance plan a consumer might choose.

Consumers have several options in scheduling one-on-one Navigator enrollment help: in person, by phone, or by WebEx or Zoom. To schedule a Navigator appointment, call (252) 847-3027 or visit www.NCNavigator.net. Appointments are preferred, though walk-ins will be accepted.

OFFICE HOURS FOR ACA AND MEDICAID-EXPANSION ASSISTANCE

ACA Open Enrollment for 2024 insurance runs through **Jan. 16, 2024**. Free Navigator assistance is available 8 a.m-5 p.m. weekdays; **appointments are preferred**, though walk-ins will be accepted:

There will be **no** Access East office hours Nov. 23-24, nor Dec. 25-26, in observance of the holidays.

SCHEDULED ENROLLMENT EVENTS

- ◆ **Nov. 8 | Wednesday | 9 a.m.-4 p.m.**
Event location will be provided with appointment.
Appointments are **required** for this Greenville event; call (252) 847-2821 to schedule.
- ◆ **Nov. 11 | Saturday | 9 a.m.-noon**
JOY Community Center Clinic, 700 Albemarle Ave., Greenville

BRING WITH YOU TO ENROLLMENT EVENTS:

1. Social Security numbers for each family member, or document numbers for legal immigrants
2. Employer name(s) and phone number(s)
3. Income information for every member of a household who is working, or who has income and needs coverage
4. Information about any health insurance any household member might have