



28 Patient and Consumer Groups Urge the Administration to Implement a Special Enrollment Period for Healthcare.gov

Washington, D.C., April 1, 2020 – 28 patient and consumer groups representing millions of people nationwide with pre-existing health conditions issued the following statement regarding the administration’s decision not to initiate a special enrollment period so that individuals without health insurance can obtain coverage on healthcare.gov:

“Our organizations, representing tens of millions of Americans with disabilities and serious and chronic health conditions, are deeply troubled to learn that the administration opted not to issue a special enrollment period for the healthcare.gov marketplace in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. We urge the administration to reconsider this decision and immediately initiate a 60-day special enrollment period under the Affordable Care Act as the nation fights to protect its citizens from this virus.

“As research shows again and again, access to comprehensive health insurance means access to timely, medically-necessary health care. If someone without health insurance today contracts the COVID-19 virus, they may be forced to make the difficult decision to not be tested and treated due to fears about

the cost of care. That puts our entire society – particularly the people with that we represent – at risk. All Americans need immediate, reliable access to quality, affordable health insurance.

“Eleven states and the District of Columbia have already created special enrollment periods to accommodate an urgent increased need for coverage. The federal government, which oversees the individual exchange for 38 other states, has not. Which state you live in should not determine your access to health care, especially at this time of national crisis.

“We urge the administration to create a special enrollment period for the healthcare.gov marketplace without delay. If they choose not to, Congress should enact legislation directing this action. The health of our nation is at risk.”

Signing organizations:

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Kidney Fund
American Lung Association
Arthritis Foundation
Cancer Support Community
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Epilepsy Foundation
Hemophilia Federation of America
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
March of Dimes
Mended Hearts & Mended Little Hearts
Muscular Dystrophy Association
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship
National Health Council
National Hemophilia Foundation
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Psoriasis Foundation
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Susan G. Komen
The AIDS Institute
United Way Worldwide
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease