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Live 24-Hour Help Line Launched To Reduce Number of Colorado's Uninsured

Private citizen started foundation and help-line citing that one-fourth of State's 687,000 uninsured are eligible for public coverage but not enrolled

After discovering that nearly one quarter of Colorado's estimated uninsured are eligible for government health insurance but aren't enrolled the Foundation for Health Coverage Education (FHCE) has expanded its 1-800 Uninsured Help Line to offer eligible Coloradoans access to information about available public and private coverage.

"Research shows that many Coloradoans have access to programs, but they're either unaware of the programs or need help signing up," said Philip Lebherz, founder of FHCE. "This service provides live counselors to help simplify the eligibility and enrollment process in order to help more people obtain the coverage they need."

A close look at the 687,000 Coloradoans reported to be without health insurance reveals that the truly uninsured number is only 180,000. The rest of this identified population is comprised of those eligible for public insurance programs (161,000) but not signed up, those temporarily uninsured because of transitions in employment (125,000), and those earning \$50,000 or more annually (221,000) who prefer to pay as they go or think insurance is too costly. The Help Line (800-234-1317) provides live one-on-one assistance and is staffed 24 hours a day seven days a week with friendly information specialists and interpreters who speak multiple languages and offer basic screening for both public and private health insurance. The information specialists help callers identify their potential options and connect them to program representatives. The call center can directly refer the customer to the appropriate state sponsored program according to various medical conditions and guide the caller to obtain the appropriate health coverage.

"So many public health care programs and government mandates have been created by well-meaning legislators to help those in need, yet there is little awareness on this progress," said Philip Lebherz, founder of FHCE. "The eligibility and enrollment process can be confusing. It is our goal to make anyone living in Colorado aware of his or her options and show them how to sign up," said Lebherz.

The U.S. Uninsured Help Line is just one of several community outreach services offered by the FHCE.

In addition to educational seminars for health and social service related professionals, the FHCE also offers a free brochure such as the Colorado Health Care Options Matrix.

The Foundation for Health Coverage Education (FHCE) is a non-profit (c) 3 private organization based in San Jose, California. The FHCE was founded in response to the increasing number of uninsured who are eligible for programs but not enrolled.

Its mission is to simplify public and private health insurance eligibility information in order to assist more people in accessing health coverage.

For more information please contact the help line at 800-234-1317 visits their web site at www.coverageforall.org.