



CoverageForAll.org's U.S. Uninsured Help Line Reaches 100,000 Calls Milestone

Only "live" call center in country assists increasingly confused Americans following health care reform

San Jose, Calif. – October 18, 2010 – The Foundation for Health Coverage Education (FHCE)'s U.S. Uninsured Help Line 800-234-1317 received its 100,000th call last week, having experienced an uptick in queries from Americans about their options since the passage of health care reform six months ago.

The professionally-trained call-center counselors have been inundated with callers seeking information about both low-cost government-sponsored and private health coverage options. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week in 190 languages, the Help Line counselors walk callers through their public and private options by distributing the FHCE's 5-question Health Coverage Eligibility Quiz. The 100,000th call is a milestone and indicator that FHCE and its resources are as important as ever.

"We actually expected a decrease in queries after the passage of the landmark health care legislation in the spring, but instead we're finding the exact opposite," said Ankeny Minoux, President of the FHCE. "The combination of individuals coming to the end of their COBRA coverage and those who are confused by the implementation steps of health care reform make up the bulk of those calling us for help."

The 24/7 U.S. Uninsured Help Line found a niche when it was created as a solution to the problematic statistic that one-third of uninsured Americans were eligible for government-sponsored health coverage, but not enrolled. The WellPoint Foundation has been the primary funder of the Help Line since its inception and continues to offer its exclusive support to advocate the importance of one-on-one live assistance when dealing with health coverage needs. The Call Center receives an average of 3,000 callers per month and acts as a consumer support system for the non-profit's website, www.CoverageForAll.org. The website has likewise experienced a 20% increase in traffic in recent months, averaging 85,000 visitors per month.

"In 2004, the WellPoint Foundation partnered with FHCE to establish the first-ever national Uninsured Hotline and we could not be more pleased that one hundred thousand individuals have utilized this important tool to understand their coverage options," said Lance Chrisman, executive director of the WellPoint Foundation. "Our Foundation has provided more than \$1.7 million in funding to keep the call center

open 24/7 and we want to recognize FHCE for its continued commitment to the uninsured and on achieving this milestone."

Five years ago, the pioneering non-profit put the entire U.S. health insurance system on CoverageForAll.org, including applications for 176 government-sponsored plans in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. As the first website of its kind to offer information on every public and private health coverage program in the country, CoverageForAll.org has already had more than 2 million visitors. Both the Call Center and website offer consumers the chance to ask questions about the complex health coverage system and many changes that will be occurring over the next few years.

"When the government launched its own health care website in July, we figured it would pick up the slack of these queries," said Minoux. "However, the government's online function does not have a live counselor option. Along with the Call Center, CoverageForAll.org is configured differently and helps people actually figure out for which programs they qualify."

The U.S. Uninsured Help Line 800-234-1317 will not slow down now that it has reached 100,000 callers. The landmark simply motivates the call center staff and non-profit to continue providing answers and guidance for the most complex health coverage questions.

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About the Foundation for Health Coverage Education:

The Foundation for Health Coverage Education (FHCE) is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization with a mission to help simplify public and private health insurance eligibility information in order for more people to access coverage. In addition to its U.S. Uninsured Help Line (800) 234-1317 and website www.CoverageForAll.org, FHCE offers free consumer guides, such as the Health Care Options Matrix™ available for all 50 states.

About the WellPoint Foundation

The WellPoint Foundation is the philanthropic arm of WellPoint, Inc. and through charitable contributions and programs, the Foundation promotes the inherent commitment of WellPoint, Inc. to enhance the health and well-being of individuals and families in communities that WellPoint, Inc. and its affiliated health plans serve. The Foundation focuses its funding on strategic initiatives that address and provide innovative solutions to health care challenges, as well as promoting the Healthy Generations Program, a multi-generational initiative that targets specific disease

states and medical conditions. These disease states and medical conditions include: prenatal care in the first trimester, low birth weight babies, cardiac morbidity rates, long term activities that decrease obesity and increase physical activity, diabetes prevalence in adult populations, adult pneumococcal and influenza vaccinations and smoking cessation. The Foundation also coordinates the company's annual associate giving campaign and provides a 50 percent match of associates' campaign pledges. To learn more about the WellPoint Foundation, please visit www.wellpointfoundation.org.

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