

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Marketplace Open Enrollment Partner Meeting
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Beth Lynk: This call is being recorded. And we are really excited to have everyone here today. Good afternoon on the east coast good morning for those kind of beyond the west coast and really, thank you for joining us for this weekly Health Insurance Marketplace Partner call. My name is Beth Lynk. I'm the Director of the CMS Office of Communications and I just want to note for folks who are on the line, please feel free to tell us what organization you're with in the chat box and perhaps any fun holiday traditions that you're planning to share. We really appreciate all of your work. I'm really looking forward to working with you as this Open Enrollment continues. I do want to note we, as we discussed last week, we had a really important milestone, with the December 15th deadline. But we are not done. Coverage and Enrollment continues, and so we want to really remind consumers at every chance that we get that consumers can enroll in coverage until January 15th, 2022. And that's that final Enrollment deadline, and we know it's going to be here before you know it, and so that's why we really want to encourage people, particularly as they're spending time with friends and family over the holidays and taking some time away, to remind their friends their family and loved ones to get covered and that it's more affordable and accessible than ever, thanks to the American Rescue Plan. That's why this week, and kind of going into the holidays, our theme is Give the Gift of Healthcare. You'll have resources, messages, and graphics to share that and then next week, our Week of Action is Start the New Year Healthy and we encourage folks to be festive and join us in both of those two Weeks of Action. We've got a really great call and some wonderful speakers today. First, we're going to hear from Dr. Ellen Montz, who is the incredible Deputy Administrator and Director of CCIIO, which runs the Health Insurance Marketplace. After we hear from Deputy Administrator Montz, we will hear from a number of key Partner organizations that have been doing great work this entire Open Enrollment period and really will kick us off into the New Year right. We'll hear from Miss Mackenzie Marshall, the Federal Relations Associated Families, USA, and Miss Heather Hodge, who's Senior Director of Equity Access Engagement and Health Approaches for The YMCA of the USA. At that point, we'll turn the call over to Lisa Carr in the Partner Relations Group who will provide some updates on new resources and we'll take any questions. So, with that, I want to introduce and provide a really warm welcome to Dr. Ellen Montz Deputy Administrator and Head of CCIIO. So glad for you to be here with us today.

Ellen Montz: Thanks Beth. Good afternoon folks and I can say that I am on the west coast, so we can all officially say good afternoon here. So, I'm really, really excited to be here to talk with you today about our success so far, as Beth noted, during this Open Enrollment. This year truly does continue to be an Open Enrollment period like no others. And I know folks have-you've probably heard it a million times, but it bears repeating that you know this Open

Enrollment really comes on the tail end of our successful Open Enrollment period that we had- you know our special Enrollment period that we had this year- in response to the pandemic and show just how incredibly valuable Marketplace coverage has been through folks through an incredibly difficult time, and continues to be, as we see additional folks signing up for coverage and people coming back and re upping their plans. So just a few updates- kind of operational updates and then a few other words. Operationally, we've had a really smooth experience for consumers, this year. Really proud of our team, and then the work that you all do to help us figure out how to make kind of the [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) experience better. And so, this year, we had no planned downtime and other years we had no unplanned downtime. Other years we couldn't say the same, but that is again to the credit of the work that you all do to help us and we do continually improve this experience. We were able to be there for consumers, whenever they really wanted to shop for health care. And what I will say about what has struck me about what we're seeing in Enrollment and as we move on, is truly that kind of need and that demand for this affordable coverage that we're able to provide on [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov). And I think obviously so much of that is due to the assistance from the American Rescue Plan. And that it's created this historic affordability of coverage of kind of driving these positive experiences and when folks come to [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) to shop and find that there are really incredible options. And thanks, to the work that all of you do to number one, get folks to the front door right, get folks to want to sign up for coverage, to get there, and two, the work that you all do to help guide individuals and help guide consumers through the process of signing up for health care. Those are two very important and necessary steps there, and you all do so much of the work to help us make that a success. And I will note that we are obviously- we're not done yet, and we have several weeks to go in this Open Enrollment period. The Administrator of CMS and I had a quick call with the team earlier this week saying thank you for all the work that has been done to get us through the mark of the 15th for coverage effective January 1st. And I think we both noted, you know we're not done yet, let's finish strong. And so, I would provide that same message to you all and it's one I think we're all going to be really happy to do. I'm just seeing what a success; this Open Enrollment has been thus far. We kind of look to the end and say we can really make this one, truly truly historic. I will add something that we're really excited to announce, which is additional resources to our Navigator program of approximately \$10.2 million that we announced last week. And that's in response to this extension of our Open Enrollment period and really in response to the true value (inaudible) I think I'll close out by saying that noted, we won't be announcing kind of our new numbers or the outcome of our numbers from the 15th today but look forward to those numbers, you know in this week. I hope we can all do two things with them. One, to really celebrate the work that we have done thus far and appreciate it all the incredible work that has happened to get folks the life-saving coverage that they truly need. And two, kind of use that as a motivation again to finish strong. So, with that, I will stop and just thank you all again for your incredible efforts. We can all I think smile and know we're doing a really great job of closing out the year and starting the new one fresh, so thank you. I think Beth that I'm turning it back to you.

Beth Lynk: You sure are, and thank you so much, Dr. Montz for leadership and all of the great work this year. I know we've got a number of folks who have been doing Open Enrollment for a long time and hearing you say off the bat you know that this has been such a smooth Open Enrollment period is certainly a testament to the entire team at CCIIO and the entire team at

CMS. So, really great work. So, I am now going to turn the call over to our two wonderful Partners from Families USA and to The YMCA. I'll turn it to Mackenzie Marshall and then Mackenzie will then turn it to Heather who will turn to Lisa Carr afterwards. Thank you so much for joining us Mackenzie.

Mackenzie Marshall, Families USA (she/her): Hi, thank you so much. So as folks know, access to comprehensive affordable health care coverage is essential. Coverage offered through [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) or your state's Marketplace includes protection for people with pre-existing conditions as well as robust set of essential health benefits such as preventive services like prescription drugs, maternity care, behavioral health services, and more. It could help healthcare consumers afford routine health care services and more urgent care when they get sick, including care for COVID-19. Comprehensive coverage can also protect the consumers' financial security by preventing them from having to pay high out-of-pocket costs for critical care. And, as was just mentioned by Dr. Montz in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress passed the American Rescue Plan Act, which includes provisions available during 2021 and 2022 that make comprehensive coverage more affordable and accessible to millions of Americans. The law eliminates premiums for many low-income people who are already eligible for health care plans through the Marketplace, and reduces premiums for further individuals and families through tax credits. It's important that those who've already enrolled or who are considering enrolling in health care coverage through the Marketplace visit the website and learn about their new options under the American Rescue Plan Act provisions. When it comes to how we at Families USA contribute to the Open Enrollment effort, the Families USA Communications Team posts on our social media channels about the importance of signing up for coverage during each Open Enrollment Week of Action. Our posts reach over 19,000 Twitter followers, 14,000 Facebook followers and 1,300 followers on Instagram. So, we reach a pretty broad audience of folks across the US and we found that during each Open Enrollment period, that our tweets and our posts receive above average engagement from our audiences, so people across the country really do know how important it is to sign up for coverage and those that are engaging with those posts are learning more about how to make sure that they're accessing the Marketplace. On our website, we also have a couple of different tools- the Enrollment Assister Resource Center- which has a large collection of resources for Navigators and consumers. And then we also post on our Insights Column about the importance of enrolling and giving more information to consumers, generally, and if you ever want to check any of that out it's at familiesusa.org. But if anyone has any questions for anyone at Families, please feel free to reach out and thank you so much for having me on the call today, and with that I'm going to turn it over to Heather.

Heather Hodge, Y-USA (she/her): Thank you Mackenzie and thanks so much for having us today. Excited to share a little bit and hear the exciting progress that's being made as we're all moving towards the January 15th deadline. So, I approached a couple of talking points today, based on the themes that are this week and next week around the Gift of Healthcare and then Starting the New Year Healthy. I wanted to reinforce really the importance of information from trusted sources about health care coverage options and making sure that coverage has an opportunity to meet your community's needs, regardless of whether that's you know at the State level or in your local communities. And when we were talking about trusted sources of

information, obviously driving people to the plentiful resources that have been created by CMS but also thinking about how you all are maybe looking for messengers to share information within communities and thinking about the role of community organizations, like The Y, and helping to share information with the communities that they serve. And I point out this piece specifically as you know we're going through this Open Enrollment period during a time where we're obviously also providing a lot of education and information around COVID vaccine and other services, we wanted to just help point out the fact that community organizations, like YMCA, can really serve as an opportunity for you to distribute information through Partner organizations. And just a quick background about The Y. We are a federated nonprofit, so there are about 800 separate 501(c)(3)s around the country that have physical locations in about 2700 communities. So, if you're not sure where to find your nearest YMCA and to see what opportunities you may have to partner with them around sharing the information available for Open Enrollment, you can go to ymca.org and find your Y. It's going to be the easiest way for you to get to a local YMCA and talk to them about the opportunity to help promote. If you haven't thought about The Y as a resource for education campaigns, that'd be a great place to do that. They're always looking to be able to share information with the communities that they serve. And as we look to Starting the New Year Healthy, oftentimes you know, in the work that we do in The YMCA, we know that, with a New Year oftentimes comes a new health goal. And with that in mind, it's going to be really important as we think about those first 15 days in January when, just traditionally, people tend to be more goal oriented and setting goals around health improvement. And this is a great opportunity to promote seeking coverage. So, we just wanted to make sure we're linking that with the idea of folks who are out there really starting to look at behavior changes that can be a little bit healthier. That's a great time to also talk to them about coverage. So, The Y is really set up, and it is a very busy time for us to think about how we can support the communities that you serve or the individuals that you might be navigating to services. We can support them on their health journey and really try to focus on sustainable ways to help behavior change stick. And so, you know as you think about that, think about the ways in which you know YMCAs are. We see an influx of a lot of new folks at the start of the New Year, so just an opportunity again for sharing that and making sure people have access to the information they need to make an informed decision about their coverage options. And, last but not least, the great thing about, one of the benefits if you will, at least from our perspective, with the public health emergency is that you know YMCAs have typically been very much in-person providers of services. But, as I'm sure all of us experience, a lot of our services are now available virtually as well, so, even if your local YMCA, you may not have a YMCA in your community, it may be worth reaching out to nearby YMCA because they may be able to hold information sessions or other types of services to help you provide those opportunities for information on Marketplace and seeking coverage. So just wanted to take a couple minutes, again to thank everybody for including us today. We are very excited to be able to partner. You can come to ymca.org and find a neighboring Y to help make sure that you're able to distribute that information across their communities. And with that I will turn it back to Lisa Carr. Again, thank you so much for having The Y, we really appreciate it.

Lisa Carr: Wonderful. Thank you so much Heather and Mackenzie. We are so glad that you're with us today. I'm going to share some basic information and some updated information that we have on the Marketplace. We are putting more information on our on our key website all the

time now. We're so thrilled that we've been able to add a lot of information on our website, both on [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) and on our Marketplace website, which is [Marketplace.cms.gov](https://www.Marketplace.cms.gov) -right up here, you can see our website address. This is our Partner Tools and Toolkits page. And this is a lot of information we have about the Champion for Coverage program but just really for anybody that wants information about the Marketplace and wants to share that information with others. We have an Event in a Box. This is a physical event- it's physical materials that you can share when you do events, when you do outreach. It's everything from stickers with QR codes, fact sheets, posters in English and Spanish, and five different ethnicities, so we really encourage you to check that out those. Events in a box are still available and we'd be glad to send those to you for free. The materials are free, the shipping is free, so we hope that you will check that out. Just click this link here on [Marketplace.cms.gov](https://www.Marketplace.cms.gov) under Outreach and Education, you'll see this right here. And you'll see downloadable materials. This is the same material that's in the Event in a Box, but you can just print this at home, so you don't have to ship it if you don't want, you don't have to get in the mail, you can just print it right at your home and share that with others. We have a reference sheet and talking points, and then we have lots of information about our Theme Weeks and we're really excited about these two weeks. We know that people have been highly engaged in these. They've been using them as an opportunity to start conversations with those in their organization, those that they're doing outreach and education and enrollment with, but also, just friends and family. Now's a great time to share the information with those that you know don't have health insurance. So, we have two weeks on here now. We have the Give the Gift of Healthcare week, which is this current week. We have the toolkit here along with the toolkit for Start the New Year off Healthy. Both toolkits include talking points a drop-in article that is called Five Things that Consumers Should Know about the Marketplace, has social media posts both the graphic and the text. We also have under here all the December graphics. You can click on here for a zip file for all of our December graphics you can use. As you share the information on social media or through emails if you want to add some graphics to your emails, it's all there- use it as you see fit. We also, of course, post a lot of our graphics and our social media posts on [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) on both the Facebook and Twitter page, so we encourage you to like and share and go ahead and share that information with others. We appreciate that support. You can see here are the other Weeks of Action and feel free to use any of these, although we've been focusing on weeks, one week at a time, these Theme Weeks. If you're a faith- based person and you want to share something at your congregation this weekend as you're meeting with people who are uninsured, we have language that specifically fits that population. Same with gig workers. If you're in touch with gig workers that are uninsured, LGBTQ, small business Saturday, of course, Early Childhood Educators, Latino, men, rural, the Black community, as well as pre-existing conditions/disability and Veterans day. As you're meeting with folks, and you want to have specific talking points, we have those for you and we encourage you to check those out and use them as you see fit. And we also have some transcripts that we've just added. We added the December 9th transcript, so if you missed that webinar, we'd be glad to have you click on that. You'd be glad to see what it looks like. The transcripts are right there. Those of you who are on the call or webinar last week know we had some technical issues with Amazon web services not working well and that impacted us, so there's no recording for last week, but this one will be on there soon. So, keep checking back if you miss them. If you have any questions and you want to follow up with us, we're at Champion@cms.hhs.gov and we can go ahead and give you whatever information

you're looking for. You can get that right there. So that's what the partnership website looks like- lots of great information there. And I'll just share really quickly, [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) has some really helpful information on there, including information about COVID which is on a lot of people's minds so as you all are looking for more resources, a lot of folks I knew are working on COVID so here's a section Marketplace Coverage and Coronavirus. We also know if you're looking to find local help, you click here it's a quick start guide, some information on savings and then information on acting by January 15th. Many of you know that there is a phone number here an 800 number. It's available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in English and Spanish. We have a language line for 240 plus languages and it's free, so we encourage you to share this phone number with folks if they're having a hard time trying to enroll them on the website, on [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov). They can just go ahead, of course you can Get Coverage by clicking here, but if they're having a hard time with that, go ahead and call our 800 number. You can also sign up for updates. We encourage folks to do that as well, and the whole website turns to Spanish if you click Español. I know some people have had questions, so feel free to send in your questions, through the Q&A box and to the chat box, we'll take your questions next. But I want to make sure that people know about window shopping. If you type in window shopping in the search button, you will see this Preview Plans and Prices Based on Your Income. You can shop for plans before you go ahead and do the eligibility information. If you want to see which plan might be right for you, please check all the plans. There's four levels: bronze, silver, gold, and platinum. We encourage you to check the prices for each level, because they are different. And lots of information about those levels are on [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov), but we thought you'd want to know about this window-shopping tool which is one of the most popular parts of our website. It allows people to check everything out before they go ahead and enroll. So, we'll go ahead and take any questions that folks may have. And while we're waiting for those questions, I just wanted to share that we will not have a call on Thursday, not this Thursday and not next Thursday either. A lot of folks are out for that week between Christmas and New Year's, so our next call is going to be January 6th at 3pm Eastern. We'll have some special guest speakers for you, at that point. And next week, we're going to be sending you a video from one of our special leaders at CMS and we will be sending that to you on January (*December*) 27th Monday, when we normally send you the Listserv notice. And we encourage you to share that video with your members and others that would be encouraged by the message. So, it's easily shareable as well, and we hope that you'll come back and join us next Thursday. I don't see any questions that have come in just yet, so I'm going to turn it to my colleague Tasha Bradley.

Tasha Bradley: Thank you all for joining us today. I just want to reiterate what Lisa said, that we will not have a call this Thursday, December 23rd and we will also not have a call on Thursday, December 30th. But we will share this special message with you all early next week. Our next Partner call will be on Thursday, January 6th at 3pm and we hope you can join us. January 2nd-8th Week of Action is the Young Adult and Young Families Week of Action. We will also highlight youth on National Youth Enrollment Day, which is on January 7th. We want to wish you guys all a happy and healthy holidays and Merry Christmas to those who celebrate the holiday and we look forward to connecting with you again in the New Year. Thank you for joining us all.