



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HHS announces \$600,000 to help Nebraska consumers navigate their health care coverage options in the Health Insurance Marketplace

The Affordable Care Act is working for millions of Americans who are able to access quality health coverage at a price they can afford, in large part because of the efforts of in-person assisters in local communities across the nation. People shopping for and enrolling in coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace can get local help in a number of ways, including through Navigators.

Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell today announced up to an anticipated \$600,000 in Navigator grant awards to Nebraska Navigators. These awards support preparation and outreach activities in year two of Marketplace enrollment and build on lessons learned from last year. In total, HHS announced \$60 million in Navigator grant awards to 90 organizations in federally-facilitated and state partnership Marketplaces.

“In-person assisters have an impact on the lives of so many Nebraskans, helping individuals and families access quality, affordable health coverage,” said Secretary Burwell. “We are committed to helping Nebraskans get covered and stay covered with in-person assistance in their own communities.”

Nebraska Navigators that received awards today include:

- Community Action of Nebraska, Inc.
- Ponca Tribe of Nebraska

According to a recent outside [survey](#), a variety of assisters, including Navigators, in both state-based and federally-facilitated Marketplaces were responsible for helping an estimated 10.6 million consumers apply for coverage in Marketplace plans, Medicaid, or the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) during the first Open Enrollment period. Assisters tend to help those consumers in communities with the most challenging or complicated enrollments, and according to another [poll](#), Latinos in particular valued the assistance of in-person help. Navigators provide unbiased information to consumers about the Marketplace and other public programs in a way that recognizes the cultures of the communities they serve. Navigators were selected to receive these awards through a competitive grant process based on their ties with the communities they will be serving and other standards such as effectiveness and program integrity.

In addition to helping eligible individuals and their families enroll in coverage, Navigators help consumers compare their health coverage options including helping them determine whether they are eligible for public programs such as Medicaid and CHIP. They also guide consumers—many of whom have never had insurance before—on accessing and using their new coverage, among other important functions.

These awards build on lessons learned from the first year of Marketplace operations.

- Navigator grantees must maintain a physical presence in the Marketplace service-area, so that consumers can easily access face-to-face assistance.
- Navigator grantees are required to be trained on and comply with strict security and privacy standards to ensure that consumers' personally identifiable information (PII) is protected, as was the case last year. In no case will Navigators obtain a consumer's PII without the consumer's consent.
- In addition to quarterly and annual reporting, Navigators will also be required to submit to HHS weekly progress reports detailing their progress and activities in the communities they serve.
- Based on feedback from the assister community, HHS is incorporating new elements into this year's required training, such as a course on advanced Marketplace issues with detailed information on topics such as how to help college-age students enroll in coverage and re-enrollment. HHS is committed to providing Navigators with on-going technical assistance and training opportunities throughout the year.

In addition to Navigators, Marketplaces make other resources available to consumers to help them access Marketplace coverage, such as certified application counselors, non-navigator assister personnel (also known as in-person assisters), and agents and brokers. Consumers in federally-facilitated and state partnership Marketplaces can visit [Find Local Help](#) to find assistance in their area.

For a list of HHS Navigator awardees or more information about Navigators and other Marketplace resources, please visit: <http://cciio.cms.gov/programs/exchanges/assistance.html>

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