

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT DECISION: WHAT IT MEANS FOR VERMONT

The U.S. Supreme Court today, in a 5-4 decision, upheld the landmark Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), the most sweeping health care reform law in generations. Over the next few years, the Affordable Care Act will extend health insurance coverage to 30 million uninsured Americans. Already, thousands of seniors in Vermont have received assistance with paying for their prescription drugs. Thousands of young Vermonters are now insured under their parents' plans until their 26th birthdays. Tens of thousands of Vermonters are receiving preventative screenings without paying a deductible or copay. And for millions of Americans, an end is in sight to the discrimination that has made being a woman a pre-existing condition. Key reforms still to come will boost competition among insurers for Americans' health dollars, and hold down insurance companies' administrative costs and other inflationary pressures.

How the Affordable Care Act Already Has Helped Vermonters

Over 5,000 Young Adults: As of December 2011, 5,000 young adults in Vermont have gained health insurance coverage under their parents' plans. Because of the Affordable Care Act, children under the age of 26 without job-based health insurance coverage are able to secure coverage under their family's plan. This has impacted [3.1 million young people](#) across the country.

Over 7,000 Medicare Recipients: Since the ACA became law, more than 7,000 Medicare recipients in Vermont have received a \$250 rebate to help cover the cost of prescription drugs when they hit the donut hole. Since 2010, Vermonters on Medicare have saved nearly \$8 million on their prescription drugs. In the first five months of 2012 alone, more than 1,400 Medicare recipients in Vermont have received a 50 percent discount on their brand-name prescription drugs when they hit the donut hole, saving Vermont seniors an average of \$710 each.

Over 81,600 Medicare Recipients: Under the Affordable Care Act, more than 81,600 Medicare recipients in Vermont have received free preventive services or free annual wellness visits. The Affordable Care Act has provided 54 million Americans – including 115,000 Vermonters – with private health insurance with [preventive service coverage](#) without paying a deductible or copay.

215,000 Vermonters: The Affordable Care Act bans companies from imposing lifetime dollar limits on health benefits, alleviating a key concern of cancer patients and people suffering from chronic diseases. In Vermont, 215,000 people already have been freed of worrying about lifetime limits on coverage. These include 87,000 women and 46,000 children.

Vermont has received nearly \$40 million to support efforts to implement critical health reforms in Vermont:

- **\$1 million** in Planning Grants to [support research and planning](#) to build a better health insurance marketplace in Vermont;
- **\$18 million** in Exchange Establishment Grants to help Vermont [implement provisions](#) of the Affordable Care Act;
- **\$5.3 million** from the Prevention and Public Health Fund to support effective policies in Vermont to help Vermonters lead longer lives;
- **\$10.9 million** to help create new health center sites in medically underserved areas, help health centers increase the number of patients served, and expand preventive and primary health care services. There are 57 existing community health centers in Vermont;
- **\$70,000** to support outreach to eligible Medicare beneficiaries about their benefits;
- **\$500,000** to support Aging and Disability Resource Centers;
- **\$286,7000** for Family-to-Family Health information Centers to support families with children with special needs;
- **\$1.6 million** for Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Programs to bring health professions to meet with at-risk families in their homes;
- **\$1.8 million** from the Pregnancy Assistance Fund to provide a network of support services for pregnant and parenting teens and women.