



## ALAMANCE COUNTY Health Department

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### **2017 Affordable Care Act Health Insurance Marketplace Open Enrollment** *New Options for Health Insurance Assistance in Alamance County*

**BURLINGTON** – The 2017 open enrollment period for health insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Health Insurance Marketplace (Marketplace) is taking place until January 31, and consumers in Alamance County have more options for assistance than ever before. This year the Elon-Alamance Health Partners (EAHPs), who have been trained as Certified Application Counselors, are working with the Alamance County Affordable Care Act Workgroup to offer free appointments at the Health Department and Alamance County public libraries. The EAHPs are recent Elon University graduates completing a year of service in community health in health-service agencies across the county such as the Health Department, Alamance Regional Medical Center, Healthy Alamance and Impact Alamance.

Assistance is also available through other agencies representing the ACA Workgroup. Legal Aid Navigators are offering appointments at the Family Justice Center and Piedmont Health has appointments available at their Community Health Centers. Trained personnel can guide consumers through the application process and answer questions they may have about the Marketplace. To sign up for a free appointment, call 1-855-733-3711 or go online to [www.nchealthconnect.org/local-help/schedule](http://www.nchealthconnect.org/local-help/schedule).

“We’re pleased to have so many options this year for people who need help signing up for health insurance,” says April Durr, Director of Community Impact for United Way of Alamance County, which participates in the ACA Workgroup. “Getting people insured meets United Way’s goals by making sure they have access to health care at a price their family can afford.”

Marketplace options have changed for 2017. United HealthCare and Aetna are no longer available for Alamance County; Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) is the current option. Alamance County residents who had Marketplace coverage with United HealthCare or Aetna in 2016 will be switched to a similar BCBSNC plan. They must go to [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov) and make the first payment by December 31 to avoid losing coverage, regardless of payment arrangements made in 2016.

Many features of the ACA will remain in place for 2017. People with pre-existing conditions cannot be denied coverage, and young adults can stay on their parent’s plan until they turn 26. All insurance plans on the Marketplace must cover doctor visits, prescription drugs, emergency room visits and hospital stays, birth control and pregnancy care, and treatment for mental illness or



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substance abuse. Payment assistance is available for individuals making \$12,000 to \$48,000, and for families of four making \$24,000 to \$96,000. People who qualify for insurance through the Marketplace but choose not to purchase it will still have to pay a penalty. For more information about the ACA, go to [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

**##ACHD##**



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