

News Release

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Obama administration and states move forward to implement health care law *Administration makes resources available to help states implement Affordable Insurance Exchanges*

Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced today a new funding opportunity to help states continue their work to implement the health care law -- the Affordable Care Act. When the law is fully implemented in 2014, the affordable insurance exchanges will provide people and small businesses with one-stop shops to find, compare and purchase affordable, high-quality health insurance. Today's announcement makes more funding available to build all models of affordable insurance exchanges available to states. HHS also issued further guidance today to help states understand the full scope of activities that can be funded under the available grant funding as they work to build exchanges.

"The federal government and our state partners are moving forward to implement the health care law," Secretary Sebelius said. "This new funding opportunity will give states the resources they need to establish affordable insurance exchanges and ensure Americans are no longer on their own when shopping for insurance."

The funding opportunity announced today will provide states with 10 additional opportunities to apply for funding to establish a state-based exchange, state partnership exchange, or to prepare state systems for a federally facilitated exchange. To date, 34 states and the District of Columbia have received approximately \$850 million in Exchange Establishment Level One and Level Two cooperative agreements to fund their progress toward building exchanges.

Under the new announcement, states can apply for exchange establishment cooperative agreements through the end of 2014. These funds are available for states to use beyond 2014 as they continue to work on their exchanges. This ensures that states have the support and time necessary to build the best exchange for their residents.

The guidance HHS issued today provides information on the exchange-building activities that states can fund with establishment cooperative agreements. The guidance can be found at: <http://cciio.cms.gov/resources/factsheets/hie-est-grant-faq-06292012.html>.

HHS will conduct regional implementation forums in coming months to assist states and stakeholders on the work to be done in building exchanges, and to address their questions. HHS will also engage with tribes, tribal governments, and tribal organizations on how exchanges can serve their populations.

For more information on exchanges, including fact sheets, visit

<http://www.healthcare.gov/news/factsheets/2011/05/exchanges05232011a.html>

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