

How to Hold a Successful Outreach Event

Desired Objectives

1. To significantly increase awareness and effectively deliver information about the benefits of the Affordable Care Act
2. To increase enrollment in public and private insurance programs

Overview

Successful outreach events must be thought about strategically and include a few key components. An “outreach event” is *any event or place where one can interact with consumers with the goal of motivating them to enroll in health insurance*. There are four major types of outreach events:

- **High-Traffic Events:** Any place where there is high pedestrian foot traffic (examples include: hospitals, clinics, tribal offices, public transportation hubs, etc.)
- **Community Events:** Any place where the community that you are trying to reach gathers (examples include: pow wows, fairs, sporting events, etc.)
- **Organizational Meetings:** Any place that has membership including your target outreach communities (examples include: local clubs with membership, faith based organizations, etc.)
- **Door-to-Door Events:** Any event where you physically go door to door and speak with consumers.

Constituency-Specific Outreach

Things to consider:

- Consider the consumer’s level of health insurance literacy and communicate appropriately.
- Follow the proper channels when working with Tribes. Seek approval and participation from tribal leaders.
- To identify the cultural/educational barriers in your communities and develop a strategy to overcome them, you have to talk with the people you are there to serve, and listen to what they are saying.
- Present the Affordable Care Act as an empowerment tool for AIANs that will give them the power to improve their health by choosing the level of health coverage they receive and increasing their options for treatment.

Messaging

After you think about the ways in which you can reach consumers, there are some key messages to deliver:

1. Under the ACA, everyone needs to be covered or have an exemption.
2. IHS is not considered to be health benefits coverage.
3. AIANs can claim an exemption on Form 8965 when they file their federal income tax, or they can apply for an Exemption Certificate Number from the Marketplace.
4. If you don’t get covered or get an exemption, you may have to pay a penalty.
5. Financial help is available as tax credits to pay for health insurance premiums.
6. Free, in-person assistance is available.

7. Tribal members and their families can enroll at any time during the year. Others can only enroll during Open Enrollment which started on November 15, 2014 and goes through February 15, 2015.
8. The ACA is a benefit for our patients in addition to their eligibility and access to IHS services and is a part of the federal responsibility for healthcare.
9. In states with expanded Medicaid, more AIANs than ever will qualify for coverage.
10. Consumers who purchased Marketplace insurance in 2014 need to review, update, compare, choose and enroll by December 15, 2014 for coverage to begin January 1, 2015.

Setting up an Event

1. Pick a location and event type and confirm logistics (space, table, parking, etc.)
2. Recruit some help. Volunteers, partners, or staff can contact potential participants
3. Create and print your materials (flyers, eye-catching signs, etc.)
4. Promote/advertise your event throughout the community
5. Final confirmations, materials preparation. Gather your team together to check in before the event
6. Have a successful event!

Materials

Consider what kind of materials you want people to take with them when they leave. You can create a simple fact sheet with some of the key messages above encouraging people to take part. Also see the links provided in the attached Guide to Holding an Enrollment Event. Include phone numbers for local assistance centers or call-in help for languages that are spoken in your community.

Publicity and Outreach

Create flyers promoting your event and have them available at locations where it will be seen by community members such as post offices, tribal buildings, other events. Encourage local groups and to publicize your event in their meetings and/or newsletters. Ask local radio stations and community newspapers to promote the event. Be sure to obtain clearance from IHS Public Affairs for public service announcements.

Holding the Event

The Agenda can be flexible depending on the traffic and repeated throughout the event. Speakers should give an overview and provide basics about the ACA, the Marketplace, and Medicaid, the exemption, and go over forms and discuss the benefits of health insurance. Application counselor staff should follow the same format but on an individual basis. Remember that the goal is to educate consumers so that they will know the benefits of health care coverage, their options, and be motivated to take action. For enrollment, use the attached Guide to Holding an Enrollment Event.

Evaluation and Reporting

Select a monitor to observe and provide feedback throughout the event and after the event. Hold a post event meeting to discuss lessons learned about what worked and what didn't.