



COVER MAINE NOW!

Veterans Day, 2013 Fact Sheet

Maine Veterans Would Benefit from Accepting Federal Health Care Funds

Although Veterans Day is the day we as a country set aside to honor our veterans, we should show our respect and gratitude for the sacrifices they have made for our country each day of the year.

We can show our respect and gratitude by ensuring that all of our veterans have access to the health care they need. Contrary to popular belief, not all veterans are eligible for services through the Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system. In fact, nationwide **one in ten** veterans are uninsured and do not use VA health care services, so they don't have access to the coverage they need and deserve.

There are thousands of veterans in Maine who are uninsured and who struggle to get access to quality, affordable care. The state legislature can change this by accepting new federal funds to provide health coverage to **69,500** Mainers who will likely be uninsured otherwise. Here's how accepting federal funds would impact Maine veterans:

- Approximately **2,700** Maine veterans who do not have health insurance today could be covered in 2014 if Maine accepts federal funds that have already been set aside for our state.¹
- Approximately **1,000** family members of veterans would also gain coverage through these new federal funds.²
- **1,800** Maine veterans who have incomes below the federal poverty level (\$11,490 for an individual) will not receive any subsidies in the new insurance marketplaces. These low-income men and women have fallen into the so-called "coverage gap," which can be closed if Maine accepts federal funds.³
- Maine veterans who live in rural areas are less likely to get care because they are farther from VA facilities. With access to care through MaineCare, they would be far more likely to have and see a doctor within their community.
- Uninsured veterans are more likely to have complex health problems. In fact, **40%** of veterans without insurance report having unmet health needs.⁴

For thousands of Maine veterans, accepting access to affordable, quality care could mean a timely cancer diagnosis, treatment for a debilitating chronic disease, or simply the ability to talk to a doctor who is close to their home. Please share these facts with your legislators and ask them to help cover veterans now!

¹ Jennifer Haley et al., "Uninsured Veterans and Family Members: State and National Estimates of Expanded Medicaid eligibility under the ACA." Urban Institute, 2013. Available at:

http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2013/rwjf405143

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Jennifer Haley et al., "Uninsured Veterans and Family Members: who are they and where do they live?" Urban Institute, 2012. Available at: <http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412577-Uninsured-Veterans-and-Family-Members.pdf>