



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Shorter Enrollment Period for Affordable Care Act this Year**

*Open Enrollment begins November 1st*

**Eau Claire, WI, October 31, 2017** –Open enrollment begins November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 for the 2018 health plans on [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov). Last year during the open enrollment period, 3,916 people in Eau Claire County selected a plan on the Marketplace (ACA/Obamacare). Unlike 2016, this year’s enrollment period is the shortened (December 15 instead of the end of January). Therefore, it’s important to start checking out what plans are available and find out if you are eligible for lower premiums or out of pocket expenses in the first few weeks of November.

On November 1, 2017, open enrollment for marketplace insurance begins nationwide allowing individuals to enroll in quality, affordable health coverage. Individuals must enroll or re-enroll before December 15, 2017 to have coverage begin January 1, 2018. However, there are some changes this year when compared to previous years.

### **Changes this year are:**

- Open enrollment will begin November 1, 2017 through December 15, 2017, with coverage to begin on January 1, 2018. **There will be no extended period** as in previous years to enroll after December 15, 2017 unless there is a “qualifying life event”. Examples include: getting married or divorced, having a baby or losing existing health coverage.
- Resources are available to assist you in enrolling, but they are limited.
- Phone and website operation hours on Sundays will vary due to maintenance.



“We want to help ensure that our residents have access to health services,” says Lieske Giese, Director/Health Officer of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department. “If you’re planning to enroll or renew your ACA plan this year, mark your calendar. It’s a busy time of year and would be easy to let the December 15<sup>th</sup> deadline pass and miss the opportunity to get coverage.”

There are several local health insurance agencies can offer help with enrollment. For a list of local resources, visit <https://localhelp.healthcare.gov/#/>. To learn more about the plans and sign up for insurance, you can also visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov) or call 1-800-318-2596; TTY 1-855-889-4325.

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