



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Federal Health Reform Comes to Rural Counties**

*New Low Income Health Program, Path2Health, will close the coverage gap for many*

Sacramento, Calif. (December 21, 2011) – The County Medical Services Program (CMSP) Governing Board announced today that the Board will expand health care coverage to an additional 30,000 low income adults living in 34 mostly rural counties beginning January 1, 2012 under *Path2Health* – a new Low Income Health Program. This coverage expansion will increase the number of low income adults served by Governing Board programs to nearly 90,000 by the end of 2013. The coverage expansion is made possible by the State of California’s Federal Medicaid “Bridge to Reform” Waiver. The Governing Board was just notified that Path2Health was approved by the federal government.

“The federal waiver makes it possible to bring the benefits of federal health reform early to many of California’s rural communities,” said Lee Kemper, Executive Director of the CMSP Governing Board.

Path2Health will provide no-cost health coverage to adult Californians who reside in the 34 counties and are at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level, or about \$10,890 annually for a single person. Implementation in the 34 mostly rural counties follows implementation that occurred in ten mostly urban California counties this past summer.

“Path2Health’s 34 counties represent regions with some of the highest levels of poverty and uninsurance in the state,” Kemper said. “Path2Health will provide many low income adults in these counties with needed health coverage. Others will benefit in 2014 when the federal Medicaid program is expanded by federal reform.”

Path2Health will provide coverage for medically necessary health care services, including primary care, emergency and hospital care, pharmacy services, and limited dental and vision care. It will also cover a set number of mental health and substance abuse counseling visits. Coverage will generally follow coverage provided under CMSP, a long-standing health coverage program serving indigent adults in the 34 counties. CMSP currently serves more than 60,000 low income adults each month.

Californians qualify for Path2Health if they are: a resident of one of the 34 counties Path2Health serves, have an income of up to 100 percent of the federal poverty level, are between 19 and 64 years of age, do not qualify for Medi-Cal, and meet federal citizenship and documentation requirements. More information about Path2Health is available at <http://mypath2health.org>.

## **About Path2Health**

*Path2Health is a Low Income Health Program (LIHP) sponsored by the County Medical Services Program (CMSP) Governing Board and authorized under California's 1115 Medicaid Waiver, which allows counties or a group of counties to expand health coverage to low income persons up to 133% of the federal poverty level using local and federal funds. It will operate as a two-year pilot project until the federal Accountable Care Act (ACA) expands Medicaid for single low income adults in 2014. Path2Health will expand no-cost health care coverage in 34 rural counties to uninsured, low-income adults with incomes up to 100% of the federal poverty level. Over the two-year pilot project, up to 30,000 additional uninsured low income adults are expected to enroll. County and federal funds will support the coverage expansion.*

## **About CMSP**

*The County Medical Services Program (CMSP) was established in January 1983, when California law transferred responsibility for providing health care services to medically indigent adults from the Medi-Cal program to counties. Smaller, mostly rural counties (populations below 300,000) were allowed to contract back with the State to provide health care services to the population. In 1995, California law was amended to establish the CMSP Governing Board, composed primarily of county officials, to govern and administer the CMSP program. CMSP is funded exclusively by Realignment revenue (motor vehicle license fees and sales tax) and limited county general revenue. The Governing Board operates CMSP under a services contract with each of the 34 member counties. The Governing contracts with Anthem Blue Cross and its subcontractors to administer CMSP medical, dental and vision benefits. The Governing Board contracts with MedImpact Health Systems, Inc., to deliver pharmacy benefits. More than 60,000 low income adults are currently enrolled in CMSP. For more information, go to <http://cmspcounties.org>.*

## **About the CMSP Governing Board**

*The CMSP Governing Board, established by California law in 1995, is composed of ten county officials and one ex-officio representative of the Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency. The Board is charged with overall program and fiscal responsibility for CMSP, which provides health coverage to indigent adults in 34 counties. The Board operates a small administrative office in Sacramento, California.*

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