



## 28 Patient and Consumer Groups Urge the Administration to Implement a Special Enrollment Period for Healthcare.gov

Washington, D.C., April 1, 2020 – 28 patient and consumer groups representing millions of people nationwide with pre-existing health conditions issued the following statement regarding the administration’s decision not to initiate a special enrollment period so that individuals without health insurance can obtain coverage on healthcare.gov:

“Our organizations, representing tens of millions of Americans with disabilities and serious and chronic health conditions, are deeply troubled to learn that the administration opted not to issue a special enrollment period for the healthcare.gov marketplace in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. We urge the administration to reconsider this decision and immediately initiate a 60-day special enrollment period under the Affordable Care Act as the nation fights to protect its citizens from this virus.

“As research shows again and again, access to comprehensive health insurance means access to timely, medically-necessary health care. If someone without health insurance today contracts the COVID-19 virus, they may be forced to make the difficult decision to not be tested and treated due to fears about

the cost of care. That puts our entire society – particularly the people with that we represent – at risk. All Americans need immediate, reliable access to quality, affordable health insurance.

“Eleven states and the District of Columbia have already created special enrollment periods to accommodate an urgent increased need for coverage. The federal government, which oversees the individual exchange for 38 other states, has not. Which state you live in should not determine your access to health care, especially at this time of national crisis.

“We urge the administration to create a special enrollment period for the healthcare.gov marketplace without delay. If they choose not to, Congress should enact legislation directing this action. The health of our nation is at risk.”

Signing organizations:

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American Diabetes Association  
American Heart Association  
American Kidney Fund  
American Lung Association  
Arthritis Foundation  
Cancer Support Community  
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation  
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation  
Epilepsy Foundation  
Hemophilia Federation of America  
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
March of Dimes  
Mended Hearts & Mended Little Hearts  
Muscular Dystrophy Association  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship  
National Health Council  
National Hemophilia Foundation  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
National Organization for Rare Disorders  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
National Psoriasis Foundation  
Pulmonary Hypertension Association  
Susan G. Komen  
The AIDS Institute  
United Way Worldwide  
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease