

# PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

ADVOCACY & SERVICES SINCE 1995

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November Issue  
#209

OREGON HIV CASE MANAGEMENT

## World AIDS Day 2017 Reflections

This year we again wrapped our building in an AIDS Ribbon in honor of World AIDS Day. I have to admit that it was with mixed emotion. While I am humbled daily by the dedication and fierce advocacy of Partnership staff and all those working in the field of HIV care and prevention it is hard not to feel defeated by all the attacks our community has taken almost daily in the last year. Then I remember what one of our incredibly passionate Partnership employees has said about their work; that with every health insurance enrollment we complete we are taking part of the resistance. It is sad that ensuring that everyone has access to healthcare is seen as part of the resistance but today it is. We know we have come incredibly far with tools now available to those living with HIV, to ensure access to health care through health insurance and a generous and strong ADAP program (thank you CAREAssist!), a collaborative and comprehensive continuum of care services in Oregon, incredible advances in HIV medications for those living and PrEP becoming more available and utilized. It is with the the knowledge that we have come so far collaboratively to support our shared values of providing compassionate, competent and affirming care that inspires me. I hope that you find what continues to inspire you and your work.

In appreciation and solidarity,

Julia Lager-Mesulam, LCSW  
Partnership Project Director



### Next Meeting

**Next Meeting  
December 12th**

**2018 Planning,  
Data Linkage  
Project  
MCHD HIV  
Services**



The Oregon Health Authority recently announced the release of their End HIV Oregon Sponsorship Program Awards. Eligible organizations may receive up to \$10,000 to support projects that will help OHA and its community partners reach the collective goal of ending new HIV transmissions in Oregon. Eligible organizations or their fiscal agent must have 501c3 status and be able to provide documentation or must be a for-profit business that can demonstrate ties to affected communities.

Projects must address one of the key objectives of End HIV Oregon: testing, prevention, treatment, and promoting health equity/reducing HIV-related stigma. Organizations that serve diverse communities, such as people of color, LGBTQ, and people who inject drugs, will be prioritized.

The hope for these projects is to provide extra capacity to organizations with strong ties to affected communities, to help them accomplish shared goals related to ending HIV transmission.

For more information or to apply, go to [www.endhivoregon.org](http://www.endhivoregon.org).

### **Compassionate Allowances: Fast-Track Help to Those Who Need It Most**

By Alan Edwards, Social Security Public Affairs



We are committed to processing disability claims as quickly as possible in all cases, but our initial claims process typically takes three to four months. If you suffer from a serious medical condition that prevents you from working, time is of the essence when it comes to receiving a decision on your disability application.

In some cases, we're able to expedite the application process through our Compassionate Allowances program. Social Security uses [Compassionate Allowances](#) to identify people whose medical condition is so severe that they obviously meet our disability standards. Under the Social Security Act, we consider you disabled if you can't work due to a severe medical condition that is expected to last at least one year, or result in death.

Many of the claims in our Compassionate Allowances Program are approved based on medical confirmation of the diagnosis alone; for example, pancreatic cancer, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), and acute leukemia. Acting Commissioner Nancy A. Berryhill said it best: "Social Security is committed — now and in the future — to continue to identify and fast-track diseases that are certain or near-certain to be approved for disability benefits."

Today, almost 500,000 people with severe disabilities have been approved through this fast-track disability process, which has grown to include a total of 228 conditions. Recently, three new Compassionate Allowances conditions were added to the list: CACH — Vanishing White Matter Disease-Infantile and Childhood Onset Forms, Congenital Myotonic Dystrophy, and Kleeftstra Syndrome.

Our Compassionate Allowances program speeds help to people with severe conditions. If you or someone you know has a severe disabling condition, don't wait. Go to our Compassionate Allowances [website](#) for more information about the program, including a list of all the conditions.

## **Provided by Oregon Health Authority, 12/6/17**

### **New survey shows 94 percent of Oregonians have health insurance**

*Federal actions could reduce coverage, officials warn*

Nearly 94 percent of Oregonians have health insurance, according to a report released today by the Oregon Health Authority. The findings come from the biennial Oregon Health Insurance Survey, which asks people in 9,000 Oregon households about insurance coverage, access to care and health care use.

The survey, conducted between March and August of 2017, found that nearly 3.7 million Oregonians have health coverage. That's an increase of 10 percentage points since 2014 when the Affordable Care Act and the individual mandate went into effect.

While levels of insurance coverage in Oregon remain stable since the previous survey in 2015, state officials expressed concern that recent federal changes jeopardize Oregon's ability to sustain current coverage rates.

This year the federal government shortened the open enrollment period for individual coverage by six weeks. In addition, Congress has failed to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which covers approximately 120,000 children in the state.

"With less than two weeks left of open enrollment, now is the time for Oregonians to shop and enroll in 2018 health insurance before the Dec. 15 deadline," said Jean Straight, acting director of the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services. "This is the only chance for most individuals to enroll in health insurance for 2018 and missing the Dec. 15 deadline could lead to them being uninsured for all of 2018."

Jeremy Vandehey, acting director of health policy for the Oregon Health Authority, agrees with Straight's concerns.

"The percentage of people in Oregon with health insurance remains above the national average, but we worry that proposals at the federal level could significantly increase our uninsured rate or shift costs to Oregon and other states," Vandehey said. "One example of this is Congress' failure to renew federal funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program. We are using state funds to continue CHIP coverage through April, but are counting on Congress to renew federal funding and prevent a disruption of care."

According to the Oregon Health Insurance survey released today, nearly half (47 percent) of Oregonians are covered by private group policies. More than one-quarter of Oregonians (26 percent) receive health coverage through the Oregon Health Plan, which includes Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program and the Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment program. Another 15 percent have Medicare coverage; 5 percent have individual coverage and 6 percent are uninsured.

There was a decrease of 0.9 percentage points in the number of Oregonians who have health insurance from 2015 to 2017. The decrease is not statistically significant, and likely reflects changes in the way the data was collected and analyzed in 2017 versus earlier years. In 2017 the analytic team used a more sophisticated method of collecting and weighting the data, which likely represents a more accurate picture of the number of people insured in the state.

Other highlights of the 2017 Oregon Health Insurance Survey:

- The proportion of Oregonians with gaps in health coverage remained the same from 2015-2017
- Health insurance coverage differs by age
- Younger adults are less likely to have coverage compared to older adults
- About 88 percent of young adults in Oregon have health coverage

Oregonians who need individual coverage have until December 15 to sign up for individual coverage through [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov).

Oregonians who are eligible for Medicaid benefits can enroll anytime during the year through the [OregONEligibility website](http://OregONEligibilitywebsite).

## Things to think about before applying for disability benefits

By Alan Edwards, Social Security Public Affairs



Social Security is with you throughout life's journey. We're here for you if the unexpected happens. We are there for you when you finally stop working as well. We provide vital financial support to tens of millions of American workers, primarily through retirement benefits. But we're also there for you if the unexpected happens and a serious medical condition stops you from working and being able to support yourself and your family.

In such cases, you may qualify for Social Security disability benefits, which replace a portion of lost income when a worker becomes seriously disabled. Here are three of the key factors we use to determine if you may qualify for Social Security disability benefits:

- You must have a lasting medical condition so severe that it prevents you from doing the work that you did in the past or adjusting to other types of work;
- Your physical or mental impairment(s) must have lasted or be expected to last at least a year or result in death; and
- You must have worked long enough — and recently enough — in jobs covered by Social Security.

To learn more about disability benefits, please visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/disability](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disability).

You become eligible for Social Security benefits by working and paying FICA taxes, which translate into Social Security "credits." How many credits you need to receive disability benefits depends on how old you are when you become disabled.

For example, if you become disabled at age 31 or older, you generally must have earned at least 20 credits in the 10 years immediately before you became disabled. Twenty credits are equal to five years of substantial earnings. Younger workers may qualify with fewer credits.

To see how many credits you have earned and to estimate future benefits, please log in to or create your *my* Social Security online account at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount).

Those who have not worked enough to qualify for Social Security benefits may be eligible for help through our Supplemental Security Income program, or "SSI." SSI provides financial assistance to disabled children and adults, as well as the aged and blind people, who have little or no income or resources. Learn more about SSI at [www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi).

**Save the date-March 29, 2018  
2018 Meaningful Care Conference in Portland, Oregon.**

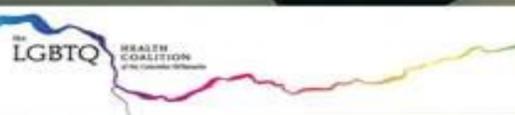
The Meaningful Care Conference is a day-long training event for healthcare and social service professionals, the Meaningful Care Conference aims to promote LGBTQ+ cultural competency in health care and social services, share current LGBTQ+ best practices in health care and social services, and to develop and diversify networks of LGBTQ+ culturally competent health care and social service providers. [www.meaningfulcare.org](http://www.meaningfulcare.org).



**LGBTQ+  
MEANINGFUL CARE  
CONFERENCE  
MARCH 29, 2018  
PORTLAND, OREGON**

**2018 MEANINGFUL CARE CONFERENCE IS A DAY-LONG TRAINING EVENT FOR HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONALS TO PROMOTE LGBTQ+ CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES, SHARE CURRENT LGBTQ+ BEST PRACTICES IN HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES, AND TO DEVELOP AND DIVERSIFY NETWORKS OF LGBTQ+ CULTURALLY COMPETENT HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS.**

**REGISTER NOW AT  
[WWW.MEANINGFULCARE.ORG](http://WWW.MEANINGFULCARE.ORG)**



## Resources for Open Enrollment– December 15th Deadline

NASTAD has created the [NASTAD PrEP Cost Calculator](#).



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# Welcome!

NASTAD PrEP Cost Calculator

If you are considering PrEP for HIV prevention, this site can help you pick the **best** marketplace health plan for you.

[Get Covered America](#) offers the latest news we should be aware of and marketing materials to promote open enrollment.

**GET COVERED AMERICA**

[HOME](#)
[LATEST NEWS & PRESS](#)
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HEALTHCARE.GOV HAS A NEW DEADLINE THIS YEAR: **DECEMBER 15**

Sign up for the latest health care updates.

Email Address <sup>o</sup>

ZipCode

**SUBMIT**

HealthCare.gov
 [Individuals & Families](#)
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2018 Open Enrollment runs from Nov 1 – Dec 15. Are you ready?

[GET READY TO APPLY](#)
[GET READY TO KEEP/CHANGE](#)

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[FACT OVERVIEW](#)
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This issue, and issues from January 2011 on, can be found electronically [here](#)