



PRESS RELEASE
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National Action for Health Justice Collaborative Continues to Provide Resources to Support Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Health Care Enrollment

WASHINGTON – The 2016 enrollment period for the federal and state [Health Insurance Marketplaces](#) begins on November 1, providing people across the country with the opportunity to shop, compare and enroll in health coverage.

[Action for Health Justice](#) (AHJ), a national coalition of more than 70 health groups including community-based organizations and health centers, is working to provide one-on-one assistance to those who need help navigating the enrollment process or require assistance in Asian and Pacific Islander languages in 22 states. This work is crucial to reaching Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AAs and NHPs), communities where one in three have difficulty speaking, writing, reading or understanding English.

During the first two Open Enrollment Periods, AHJ reached and enrolled nearly 850,000 AAs and NHPs and provided assistance in 56 languages. However, AHJ partners experienced challenges with in-language outreach, finding it difficult to clearly explain insurance terms and concepts in Asian and Pacific Islander languages. Partners found a lack of reference tools for those working with people who do not speak English very well, or at all, to provide concise and accessible definitions.

“As the only national coalition focusing on health care outreach for Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities, the work AHJ does is critical,” said Kathy Ko Chin, president and CEO of the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, a member of AHJ. “Our partners on the ground have the ability to reach those most in need, who would otherwise be left out of enrollment efforts due to language barriers. We are committed to reaching as many communities as possible this year.”

“During the last two enrollment periods, we have seen many language access problems faced by our communities,” explains Doreena Wong, project director of Health Access at Asian American Advancing Justice – Los Angeles, a member of AHJ. “As we enter into this third Open Enrollment Period, we will be closely monitoring the effectiveness of the marketplaces to ensure that our communities, especially our limited-English community members, have access to health coverage for their families and exploring possible enforcement options, such as filing administrative complaints, if needed.”

“Our member health center patients have greatly benefited from in-language tools like the glossary and ‘Coverage to Care’ toolkit translated by our partners,” said Jeffrey Caballero, executive director of the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO), a member of AHJ. “Without improved support for enrollment assisters and in-language resources like these, health center patients and other Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders continue to be at a disadvantage.”

In order to increase the effectiveness of in-person, in-language enrollment assistance, AHJ published a glossary of current commonly used health care terms. For more information about the glossary available in English and 12 Asian and Pacific Islander languages, visit <http://bit.ly/AHJ-glossary>.

Further resources from AHJ partners can be found on [AAPCHO’s](#) and [Advancing Justice – LA’s](#) websites, including translated materials and infographics. The “From Coverage to Care” toolkit mentioned above is available on the [Marketplace website](#).

In the upcoming enrollment period, AHJ will continue leveraging the expertise of navigators and community-based organizations who employ multilingual assistors to help with outreach, education and enrollment efforts across the country.

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