

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Department of Vermont Health Access  
January 22, 2013

Contact: Seán Sheehan  
Contact Phone Number: 802-585-6339  
Contact E-mail Address: Sean.Sheehan@state.vt.us

**Vermont's Exchange Receives \$2.2 Million Federal Grant for In-Person Enrollment Assistance Program**  
*Vermont Health Connect on schedule to open Navigator Application Process in March 2013*

WILLISTON, VT – Last Thursday, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded the State of Vermont \$2.2 million to fund Vermont Health Connect's in-person assistance program. The in-person assistance program will train and fund individuals across the state to serve as Navigators to help eligible Vermonters learn about their health coverage options and enroll in a plan.

Opening for enrollment this October, Vermont Health Connect will be the marketplace for individuals, families, and small businesses to compare health coverage options, enroll in the plan that's right for them, and secure financial assistance. Vermonters will have the opportunity to compare plans and enroll through the Vermont Health Connect website, call center, or in person with the help of trained Navigators. Vermont Health Connect expects up to 266,000 individuals will enroll in public and private health plans during the Exchange's first year. Up to one-third of eligible Vermonters are expected to want in-person assistance, and this grant ensures that such help will be readily available.

Vermont Health Connect anticipates many diverse and qualified organizations will help Vermonters find and select a health plan that fits their needs and budget. An October 2012 Request for Information found that hundreds of organizations across the state are interested in providing this type of enrollment assistance.

"We are fortunate to live in a state with a rich array of community groups and social service agencies," said Mark Larson, Commissioner of the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA). "Thanks to this grant, we'll be able to leverage these organizations' existing expertise and connections to assist Exchange-eligible Vermonters and bring quality health coverage to more people."

To secure certification for offering enrollment assistance, organizations will participate in an open, competitive application process starting this March. Organizations will detail their ability to meet certain criteria and support operations, management, reporting, and compensation of Navigators. Individuals interested in serving as Navigators and offering in-person assistance will be required to fulfill comprehensive training requirements.

Vermont was one of 11 states to receive an Exchange Establishment Grant last week. Other recipients are California, Delaware, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, and Oregon. More information on the Exchange Establishment Grants can be found at [ccio.cms.gov](http://ccio.cms.gov).

Thursday's grant award illustrates continued federal support of Vermont's effort to build an Exchange that serves Vermonters well. HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius said, "Starting in 2014, Americans in all states will have access to quality, affordable health insurance and these grants are helping to make that a reality."

###