

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health Underwriters and Licensed Agents Respond to Covered CA's Request for Assistance

Sacramento (December 5, 2013) Covered California reached out to California Association of Health Underwriters today for help in entering information from thousands of paper applications previously submitted by Exchange certified agents. The online application process was discovered to have glitches when the Exchange originally opened for enrollment in October 1, 2013, so paper application forms were requested by Covered California as a short term workaround. Since October, agents have filled out the 32-page paper form for thousands of new health care consumers and submitted them to Covered California by fax and U.S. mail.

Now, the data from applications need to be entered prior to the looming December 23rd statutory deadline and Covered California has turned to their certified agents for help in getting the application data entered into to their online system. Only when the data is entered online through the exchange will health insurers be notified of the new enrollments and be able to provide them with a premium notice of payment due. Consumers must send their payments, postmarked no later than December 31, 2013, to their health insurers for their coverage to be effective as of January 1, 2014.

Agents throughout California are voicing serious concern that there may, literally, not be enough hours in the day between now and December 23 to have all that data entered in time to meet the December 23rd application deadline. According to Brad Davis, President of the Sacramento AHU chapter, "Sure, we are leading the Nation in enrollment and our website is better than healthcare.gov-but we have hiccups. And those hiccups could be a sign of indigestion that no magic pill could fix. As 12/23 draws ever nearer, the concerns turn to fear, and the fear could soon turn to panic."

Most licensed health insurance agents are small business owners and are deeply entrenched in their local communities throughout California, and take their responsibilities personally. "Agents are expressing the frustration that many small businesses face when working with the desire to provide excellent customer service and yet dealing with the very real stresses of overtime and increased payroll demands."

There are more than 30,000 health insurance agents in California. To find a professional licensed and exchange certified Agent who is a member of California Association of Health Underwriters go to CAHU.org, click the Consumers link, and click the "Find an Agent" tab under the drop down menu.

The Sacramento Association of Health Underwriters (SAHU) is a local chapter of the California Association (CAHU) and the National Association (NAHU). Our vision is that every American will have access to solutions for health, financial and retirement security, as well as the services of insurance professionals to assist in navigating these areas. SAHU's mission is to improve our members' ability to meet the health, financial and retirement security needs of all Americans through education, advocacy and professional development. Please visit us at <http://www.sahu-ca.com/>.

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