

Health and Enrollment Fair

PLANNING GUIDE

Health and enrollment fairs provide uninsured individuals access to basic preventive services and screenings and the opportunity to enroll in a low-cost or free health care coverage program. These fairs send a strong message about the importance of health care coverage and convey to the community that everyone should have access to health care services every day, not just during a health and enrollment fair.

The specific goals of health and enrollment fairs are to:

- Enroll eligible, uninsured children and adults in low-cost and free health care coverage programs
- Demonstrate the local health care community's commitment to helping people who are uninsured and to finding a solution for people living without health care coverage
- Encourage participants to make positive changes to their lifestyle and behavior in order to improve their overall health
- Raise awareness and concern about the importance of health care coverage as well as the personal and community consequences of being uninsured

By bringing doctors, nurses, dentists, other health professionals and members of the community together, a health and enrollment fair can inform uninsured individuals and others about health, prevention and available resources. Health and enrollment fairs also offer volunteer opportunities to individuals and organizations that want to help their uninsured neighbors.

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This guide is intended to help you plan a health and enrollment fair in your community. Campaign staff is also available to assist you in planning your activity. You can contact the national staff by phone at **1(877) 655-CTUW [2889]** or through e-mail at **info@covertheuninsured.org**. Additional event planning guides, collateral materials and information for uninsured individuals are available at **www.CoverTheUninsured.org**.

Keys to Success

As you begin to plan a health and enrollment fair, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- **Allow enough lead time for planning.** While a successful health and enrollment fair can be organized quickly, it's best to start planning as early as possible.
- **Form a planning committee.** There are a lot of local organizations that can help in planning a health and enrollment fair. (See the Getting Started section.) From identifying a location to providing free medical screenings, these organizations can help make the health and enrollment fair a success.
- **Choose a convenient location and time.** To ensure the greatest possible attendance, hold the health and enrollment fair at a location and time that is convenient, especially to those who are likely to be uninsured and in need of health care services.
- **Have trained staff on hand to enroll families.** In order to fulfill this year's goal of increasing on-site enrollment at health and enrollment fairs it is essential to have trained staff on hand to help families apply for public health care coverage programs and answer questions they may have about eligibility and the services the programs cover.
- **Ask local celebrities to attend.** There is no better draw than local celebrities, including athletes, actors, musicians, artists, television personalities and others in the community who are well-known and admired. These celebrities can help build attendance by engaging media interest in the event.
- **Work with the media.** The news media can help promote the health and enrollment fair and convey your messages about the importance of health care coverage. Some radio and television stations help sponsor health and enrollment fairs and may broadcast on site. For more information on planning media events and media outreach, download the *News Conference Planning Guide* at **www.CoverTheUninsured.org/materials**.
- **Tell stories of uninsured families.** While health and enrollment fairs offer immediate services to the uninsured, they don't solve the problem. It is important to continue to send the message that we must solve this problem. There is no better way to convey the importance of health care coverage than hearing from someone who is uninsured or a family that is covered by SCHIP. Work with local uninsured families who are willing to share their stories with the news media. Examples of these stories are available online at **www.CoverTheUninsured.org/stories**.
- **Promote the fair to ensure attendance.** In addition to broadcast media promotion before and during the event, it is important to get the message out to uninsured individuals and families in as many ways as possible by publicizing the fair at the places where they work, study, shop, play and worship. Promotional materials such as stickers and customizable fliers are available to order online at **www.CoverTheUninsured.org/materials**.

Getting Started

❖ THE FIRST STEP: FORM A PLANNING COMMITTEE

There are many individuals and organizations that can help plan and manage a health and enrollment fair. Be sure to include all necessary stakeholders, such as direct service organizations (e.g., clinics and community health centers), health care providers (e.g., doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists), and representatives from organizations interested in health issues and helping people who are not insured. Some of these organizations plan and implement health and enrollment fairs on a regular basis. Others have mobile health vans or other services you might include at your event. Still others can help you reach the individuals and families that you want to help and encourage them to attend the health and enrollment fair.

Examples of organizations and individuals you should reach out to include:

- Doctors, nurses, dentists and other health care providers
- Hospitals
- Health clinics
- Local health departments
- Community health centers
- Consumer advocates and groups that serve uninsured people
- Social service organizations
- Faith-based groups and leaders
- Employers and local labor groups
- Ethnic community groups
- Volunteer organizations focused on health or a particular disease
- State medical societies
- Educators, school personnel and PTAs
- College health programs (e.g., schools of public health, nursing and medicine)
- Student groups
- Potential business, media and organizational sponsors
- Local affiliates of:
 - American Academy of Family Physicians (www.aafp.org)
 - American Academy of Pediatrics (www.aap.org)
 - American College of Emergency Physicians (www.acep.org)
 - American Dental Association (www.ada.org)

American Hospital Association (www.aha.org)
American Medical Association (www.ama-assn.org)
American Nurses Association (www.nursingworld.org)
American Red Cross (www.redcross.org)
America's Health Insurance Plans (www.ahip.org)
Association of American Medical Colleges (www.aamc.org)
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (www.astho.org)
Catholic Health Association of the United States (www.chausa.org)
Federation of American Hospitals (www.fahs.com)
National Association of City and County Health Officials (www.naccho.org)
National Association of Community Health Centers (www.nachc.org)
National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (www.naph.org)
National Hispanic Medical Association (www.nhmamd.org)
National Medical Association (www.nmanet.org)

Tip

Hospitals and other organizations in your community are likely to have experience in conducting health fairs. Turn to these organizations for advice, and encourage them to become a sponsor or supporter.

❖ USE YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS

When reaching out to community organizations to ask them to join your effort, the best place to get contact information is through your own network of colleagues and friends. You may find that someone in your network has a relationship with someone at an organization you need to reach. If you are unable to find a contact through your personal or professional network, start with an organization's community relations or special projects department.

❖ ORGANIZE REGULAR MEETINGS

The planning committee should meet regularly during the weeks leading up to the health and enrollment fair. This committee is responsible for identifying and securing a location for the health and enrollment fair, ensuring that a sufficient number and variety of health services and screenings are available at the event, and promoting the fair through participating organizations and directly to the public. To streamline the planning and coordination of the health and enrollment fair, develop subcommittees to oversee such things as site logistics, media and promotion, crowd-building, volunteer coordination, services and exhibitors, fundraising, and evaluation. Ask each subcommittee to report their plans and recommendations to the full group by a specific date.

❖ RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS

The planning committee can help you find volunteers, who will be essential to ensuring that your health and enrollment fair is properly staffed, well attended and organized. Volunteers can help by signing in guests, offering refreshments, providing child care and assisting health care providers. Volunteers will be extremely helpful to you before the health and enrollment fair in terms of

publicizing the event in the community, tracking logistics, and setting up and breaking down the fair. They can also be helpful in getting people to the event by providing transportation. Volunteers with a medical background such as nurses, medical school students, physician assistants and doctors will also be needed.

A good way to begin recruiting volunteers is by distributing fliers throughout the community. Be sure to include contact information so interested parties can reach you directly. Possible places for volunteer recruitment include high schools; colleges; nursing, public health and medical schools; local businesses; places of worship; senior citizen centers; and local YMCAs and YWCAs. Many cities have local AmeriCorps or City Year groups comprised of full-time volunteers who are committed to important social causes and may want to be included in your efforts. Also reach out to community newspapers that might be able to run advertisements and community organizations that can offer their membership listservs, newsletters and Web sites as communication vehicles.

Once you have started building your volunteer bank, keep interested parties up to date on your plans. Get their contact information, including their phone number and e-mail address, and consider developing a weekly or biweekly listserv that details the progress of your planning effort and offers information about volunteer opportunities before and during your health and enrollment fair. Give volunteers an opportunity to attend planning meetings. Be clear about the tasks that must be performed and make assignments based on the abilities of each volunteer.

❖❖ SAY THANK YOU

Be sure to thank everyone involved in the health and enrollment fair, from those who help plan it to those who help clean up the venue once the fair has ended. Plans for thanking people should be integrated into your planning process so that immediately after the health and enrollment fair you are prepared to send letters, certificates of appreciation and other gifts to organizations, donors, volunteers and anyone else who helped make the fair a success.

Location, Location, Location

Among the first decisions the planning committee will need to make is choosing a location and determining the date and time of the health and enrollment fair. Choose a site that is equipped to handle booths and foot traffic, such as a:

- Hospital
- Community health center
- School
- Shopping center or mall
- Local stadium or sporting event venue
- Store parking lot
- Large place of worship

If you decide on an outdoor location, be sure to identify a back-up site in the event of inclement weather. Depending on the size of the health and enrollment fair, smaller venues can be considered, including a community center, neighborhood park or health clinic.

Be sure to consider such things as parking and access to public transportation, as well as the following:

- Site layout/spatial needs (include areas with privacy for screenings and examinations)
- Permit requirement for venue
- Insurance requirement for venue
- Adequate restroom facilities
- Access for the disabled
- Ease of equipment deliveries
- Security guidelines
- Power source availability
- Venue point of contact during event
- Set-up and clean-up requirements

Schedule the health and enrollment fair at a time that is convenient for working families, such as an evening or weekend. Also, be aware of other events taking place in the community that could affect attendance. Try to work around these events or piggyback on them. For example, if you are having a health and enrollment fair at a local sporting event venue, consider holding it a few hours before a planned event.

Health Services, Enrollment and Other Exhibitors

A successful health and enrollment fair should include a wide variety of services to attract participants. In addition to the types of health services most often offered at health and enrollment fairs, explore ways to make your event more attractive, such as inviting a local fitness expert, a dietitian or a mental health counselor to participate. Activities for children are also important to attract families.

Some possible health and enrollment fair services include:

- On-site Medicaid and State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) enrollment for eligible children and adults
- Immunizations for children and adults
- Medical screenings, services and/or information about:
- Pharmaceutical patient assistance programs
- Mobile health units

Blood pressure	Body alignment
Mammograms	Scoliosis
Prenatal care	Body fat density
Asthma	Bone density
Cholesterol	Foot care
Diabetes	Nutrition
Eye exams/glaucoma	Stress
Heart health	Substance abuse
HIV/AIDS	Tobacco use cessation
Oral health	Vision and hearing tests

- CPR demonstrations and class sign-ups
- Exercise information or demonstrations
- Free risk factor checklists, preventive care information and health-related services available in the community
- School health services
- Fitting for free bike helmets and/or child safety car seats
- Activities for children (e.g., face painting, moon bounces, clowns, etc.)
- Food and refreshments, music, or other entertainment

❖ KEEP IN MIND

Public health care coverage program information and enrollment are critical components of a health and enrollment fair. In some communities, the local health department or outreach workers can provide on-site enrollment in public health coverage programs such as Medicaid and SCHIP.

Health care professionals will need to be on site to administer some services. You will need to develop a referral list for health and enrollment fair attendees who are diagnosed with a serious disease or illness and need follow-up care. Work with your planning committee to create and confirm a list of local hospitals, clinics and community health centers that will treat uninsured patients. Also, consider having translators available for attendees who have limited English speaking abilities.

Many pharmaceutical manufacturers offer patient assistance programs, which make prescription drugs available at an extremely low cost or even no cost. Companies can have representatives staff a booth at your health and enrollment fair to enroll seniors and other eligible individuals in these programs, provide them with information about the programs, and refer people to **www.needymeds.com**.

In addition, www.covertheuninsured.org has developed state-specific guides about resources that are available for those without coverage, including information about free and low-cost coverage, low-cost prescription drug programs, COBRA, and health clinics. These materials are available to download and reprint at **www.CoverTheUninsured.org/individuals**.

Remember

Health and enrollment fairs provide uninsured individuals access to basic preventative services and screenings; however, it is imperative that individuals are also granted access to sufficient follow-up care in the event that a more serious health problem is identified.

❖ CREATE A HEALTH PASSPORT

Consider creating a “health passport” for each person who attends the health and enrollment fair. This portable document offers families an easy way to keep track of test results, immunization dates and regular checkups. It can be particularly helpful for those who do not have a regular primary care provider. To make the passport as useful as possible, include space to track information such as:

- Blood type
- Height and weight
- Severe allergies or reactions to medications
- Most recent blood pressure and cholesterol readings
- Dates of other tests with results
- Dates of immunizations
- Calendar of important preventive appointments such as mammograms, prostate exams, etc.
- Names and numbers of each health care provider seen in the last three years

Sponsors and Fundraising

∴ SPONSORS

To help lend credibility as well as resources to your health and enrollment fair, ask local organizations, corporations and media outlets to be sponsors of the event. If a recognizable, trustworthy sponsor lends its name in support of the health and enrollment fair, more people are likely to attend.

To identify potential sponsors and other participating organizations, develop a target list of leaders in your health care community, including hospital administrators; community affairs representatives from local health insurance companies; leaders of local community groups; directors of health clinics and/or community health centers; and local businesses such as pharmacies, health clubs and media outlets.

After creating a target list, consider where you or your colleagues might have a contact. Personal contacts can help you find prospects quickly and are often the best way to get your foot in the door. When speaking with potential sponsors, ask them if they know anyone who might be interested in your health and enrollment fair.

When approaching potential sponsors, be prepared with an initial request but also have some other ideas in mind in case they say no to your first request. The idea is to get them involved in some capacity so that they can learn about your efforts. The partnership can then grow over time.

Note

If a specific media outlet (i.e., a radio or television station) sponsors your health fair, other outlets will most likely not cover the event. This is fine, especially if your sponsor has a broad audience, but it is something to be mindful of as you forge partnerships with the media.

In addition to lending their name in support of your health and enrollment fair, organizations, corporations and media outlets can sponsor the event in other ways, including the following:

- **Promoting the health and enrollment fair to members, affiliates, customers, employees and uninsured families.** For example, ask an organization to include information about the health and enrollment fair in its announcements to members. A business can advertise the fair on its Web site or through posters or handouts in retail locations. (See the Building Attendance section.)

- **Providing volunteers to help plan and staff the health and enrollment fair.** The local chapter of the American Association of Pediatrics, state and metro hospital associations, local departments of health, and some local clinics have expertise in planning health and enrollment fairs and can be invaluable in helping you plan your event. Corporations may have corporate volunteer programs that can turn out volunteers and resources.
- **Offering their facility as the health and enrollment fair site.** For example, consider approaching a hospital or family of hospitals to act as the health and enrollment fair's host sponsor. (See the Location, Location, Location section.)
- **Providing health vans and mobile clinics.** These vehicles travel to health and enrollment fairs and offer a wide range of health services, including diabetes screenings, mammograms, blood and blood pressure testing, and basic checkups.
- **Giving in-kind donations such as printing, giveaways, food and refreshments, and advertising.** For example, ask a local grocery store to donate cookies and juice for health and enrollment fair attendees who give blood. Businesses can host a booth at the fair and give away promotional materials such as coupons or store advertisements.
- **Conducting a live radio or television broadcast from the health and enrollment fair.** If a television station offers to broadcast live from the fair, be sure you have visual elements such as balloons and clowns. Media partners can also print or broadcast PSAs or community calendar listings to promote the health and enrollment fair. (See the Engaging the Media section.)

There are endless opportunities for widespread community participation. Be creative!

Remember

In return for in-kind donations or simply lending their name in support of the health and enrollment fair, the names of sponsoring organizations should be prominently displayed at the fair and in any media materials. Don't forget to thank them after the event.

🔴 FUNDRAISING

Identify Needed Resources

When planning your health and enrollment fair, it is important to identify all possible costs related to the event. Brainstorm with your planning committee to compile a comprehensive list of items to include in the budget. The following is a list of budget items to consider:

- Venue
- Signage
- Promotional materials such as posters and fliers
- Sound system
- Power supply
- TV and VCR rental
- Supplies (medical, office, hardware)
- Mobile bathroom facilities (for an outdoor event)
- Chair, table and stage rental

- Refreshments for event attendees and volunteers
- Children’s entertainment
- Giveaways
- Event insurance
- Needle disposal services
- Photographer to document the event and provide photos that can be used as thank-you gifts and in newsletters of the organizations involved
- Security
- Thank-you gifts for volunteers and sponsors (T-shirts, gift certificates, notes of appreciation)

❖❖ LOCATE RESOURCES

There are organizations, businesses and media outlets that are willing to contribute to a health and enrollment fair, from being an official sponsor to donating supplies. Don’t be afraid to ask!

Fundraising is primarily about networking. Chances are, members of your planning committee will be able to make a financial contribution to your effort or provide in-kind support such as giveaways and refreshments. If not, they will probably have relationships with local businesses, organizations and others that can contribute.

Here are a few easy steps you can follow to locate resources for your event:

❖❖ STEP 1

Determine the needs for your health and enrollment fair. Make a list of what you need to hold the event. Use this list to create a budget that includes things like giveaways, refreshments, free services and equipment rental (e.g., tables, chairs and decorations). (See the Identify Needed Resources section.)

❖❖ STEP 2

Reach out to your planning committee members. Ask them if their organizations are able to provide any support, either financial or in-kind.

❖❖ STEP 3

Make a list of other prospective donors. Consult with your planning committee members for ideas, including recommendations for possible donors from their contact lists.

❖❖ STEP 4

Contact potential donors. It is best to have a conversation with potential donors over the phone to explain what you are doing and get them excited to participate and/or contribute. Follow up with a formal request letter and any supporting documents, such as information about your organization. If possible, this should be done by someone on the planning committee who has a relationship with the potential donor.

When discussing a potential donor’s involvement or contribution, don’t forget to think about the benefits of participation that you can offer donors, including public recognition on signs and in

media materials, and opportunities for passing out materials about their organization.

Don't be discouraged if your request is turned down. Be persistent and ask if they might know of another organization that might like to contribute. If your request is denied, send a letter thanking them for the time they took to speak with you and include information about your organization.

The next time you plan an event and are seeking donors, they may be able to help you.

Sports, Entertainment and Celebrity Involvement

The participation of high-profile celebrities from the entertainment or sports community can help generate interest in health and enrollment fairs. Consider reaching out to musicians, television and radio personalities, and athletes to serve as celebrity spokespersons at your health and enrollment fair. They can help you gain media attention and attract people to the event. Also consider securing the donation of entertainment and sports memorabilia from local teams, athletes and celebrities for giveaways, or inviting mascots of well-known sports teams to attend. Sports and entertainment celebrities who have had personal experience with being uninsured may be particularly interested in participating in your health and enrollment fair. Another way to involve the sports community is to work with a major or minor league team in your community to hold a health and enrollment fair immediately before or following a game.

To avoid negative publicity, it is important that any celebrity who is invited to attend or speak at your health and enrollment fair not have any major legal or public relations problems. Before you approach them to request their participation, talk to your planning committee members to determine if anyone has a connection to them and would be willing to make a personal appeal.

Building Attendance

To ensure a well-attended health and enrollment fair, begin your audience-building efforts early in the planning stages. Before getting started, think about the following questions: Who will be interested in attending this health and enrollment fair? Where and how can I most effectively reach them? Who can help promote the health and enrollment fair?

Once you decide on a location, date and time for your health and enrollment fair, register your event at **www.CoverTheUninsured.org**. This also allows us to promote your event nationwide to the media and to the public.

Involving the community is also a key component to publicizing your event. Decide where you are most likely to reach potential attendees, then develop a list of appropriate companies and organizations that may be willing to help spread the word about your event. Ask local organizations to mention the health and enrollment fair in their calendars, newsletters, meeting announcements and Web sites. Recruit volunteers to call local organizations and businesses, and post fliers in community centers, clinics, post offices, schools, libraries, places of worship, and college and university campuses. (See the Recruit Volunteers section.) E-mail is a tremendous resource for

inexpensive publicity. E-mail community organizations and ask them to forward the event information through their communication channels.

The media is also a powerful tool to inform community members about local events. Work with the media to build crowds for your health and enrollment fair and get pre-event coverage. Have your event listed on the community calendars of local newspapers, radio stations and television stations. (See the Engaging the Media section.)

Engaging the Media

Health and enrollment fairs provide compelling visuals for news and feature stories about uninsured Americans and the importance of health care coverage. The media can help publicize the event and build attendance while also conveying important messages about the uninsured to your community.

There are many ways the local media can cover your health and enrollment fair, but you must play a proactive role in informing them about your plans and encouraging their attendance. For example, offer reporters the opportunity to interview uninsured individuals from the community, local health care providers and hospital leaders.

❖❖ HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS FOR ENGAGING THE MEDIA IN YOUR HEALTH AND ENROLLMENT FAIR:

- Attendance is a key component to making a health and enrollment fair attractive to the media. Promote the event in advance through television, radio and newspaper community calendars.
- Encourage reporters who cover health and metro news to attend the health and enrollment fair.
- Alert photo editors to available photo opportunities. Be sure you have visuals at your health and enrollment fair, such as balloons and colorful signs.
- Offer a range of media coverage opportunities to local television producers, including preview stories on early morning news shows, live reports during noon newscasts, live reports during “Live at Five” newsmagazine programs, and summation stories during evening and nightly news. Keep in mind that each of these shows, although broadcast by the same local network, may involve a different producer.
- Invite a popular radio station to broadcast live from the health and enrollment fair.
- Offer media outlets the opportunity to profile an uninsured person or a doctor or nurse who cares for people who are uninsured. Or arrange for a family enrolled in SCHIP to share their story with the media. The family can highlight the ways being covered by SCHIP has helped them.
- Have an on-air television reporter take part in the health screenings at the health and enrollment fair to demonstrate some of the tests that uninsured Americans often go without.

❖❖ MAKE COVERING THE HEALTH AND ENROLLMENT FAIR EASY FOR REPORTERS

- Designate one or two key spokespersons from your planning committee to be available to talk to the press before, during and after the health and enrollment fair.
- Identify a health care provider who is willing to talk to the media about the fact that uninsured people live sicker and die younger than those with coverage.
- Identify one or two community members who are uninsured or a family who is covered by SCHIP and willing to talk to the media. (See the *Stories of People Who Are Uninsured* section.)
- Provide members of the media with a press kit containing information about the issue of the uninsured, the services offered at the health and enrollment fair, the organizations involved in planning the event, and bios of key spokespersons, including uninsured spokespersons.

Visit www.CoverTheUninsured.org to download the *News Conference Planning Guide*, *Guide to Working with the Media* and the *Guide to Editorial Placements*. These materials will provide more information and tools regarding planning a media event and media outreach.

Main Messages for Spokespersons

Go to www.CoverTheUninsured.org/messages to see the latest campaign messages and updates.

Stories of People Who Are Uninsured

Stories of people who are uninsured or families who are benefiting from SCHIP coverage, as well as the doctors and nurses who care for them, illustrate the struggles that real people face every day concerning their health care. These stories help educate the media, opinion leaders and the general public about the issue.

Having stories of real people told at the health and enrollment fair—especially to the news media—puts a human face on the issue and helps raise awareness about the fact that millions of people live each day without health care coverage and often face devastating medical and financial consequences as a result.

It is important to remember when working with uninsured members of the community that their experiences and struggles are not just an opportunity for media coverage. Being uninsured is a serious problem that they live with every day. Although there is no one solution to the problem of the uninsured, there are ways for these individuals to get help.

To find examples of stories of the uninsured visit www.CoverTheUninsured.org/stories.

Many community health centers, hospitals and other organizations in your area may be able to provide uninsured individuals with assistance in obtaining low-cost or free health care coverage, medical treatment and/or prescription drugs.

Cover the Uninsured Web Site

The *Cover the Uninsured* Web site offers many resources for planning health and enrollment fairs. Log on to **www.CoverTheUninsured.org** to:

- Download or order free materials for your news conference (See the *Cover the Uninsured Materials* section)
- Download or order materials for your health and enrollment fair
- Find answers to your questions or get technical assistance
- Find the most current list of supporting organizations
- View fact sheets and other information about the issue of the uninsured
- Register for a weekly news digest and updates about the campaign
- Find state-specific handouts on resources available for those without health care coverage
- Learn more about what you can do to help get America covered
- Register the date and time of your health and enrollment fair so that this information can be accessible to those who visit the site

Cover the Uninsured Materials

The following materials are available to help volunteers plan and promote their health and enrollment fairs. Materials are available to download or order at **www.CoverTheUninsured.org/materials**. There will be a limited number of free materials available for order from the Web site. Order early to be sure you receive materials for your event.

- **Flier** – Download and customize this flier to promote your event and build attendance.
- **Guide to Finding Health Insurance Coverage** – These state-specific guides outline help that may be available to uninsured individuals. Available for download in English or Spanish. Download this guide and distribute copies at your event.
- **News Conference Planning Guide** – While this guide focuses on planning a news conference, it also includes helpful tips and tools for conducting media outreach around your health and enrollment fair. Available for download. Supplements to this guide also available for download include the *Guide to Working with the Media* and the *Guide to Editorial Placement*.
- **Cover the Uninsured Listserv and News Digest** – Encourage your coalition members to sign up for this listserv and news digest to stay on top of the issue. Visit **www.CoverTheUninsured.org** to sign up.

Go to **www.CoverTheUninsured.org/materials** for a complete listing of all available materials.

Checklist

The following checklist is based on an eight-week timeline for planning. Take more time for planning if you have it, or condense the timeline if you have less than eight weeks to plan a health and enrollment fair. Just be sure to check all the items!

WEEK 8

- Identify potential planning committee members and schedule your first committee meeting.
- Begin researching possible venues. Visit each location and meet with location representatives to discuss core event components.
- Identify potential sponsors, including local media outlets, that might be able to provide funding and/or services for the health and enrollment fair.
- Draft a letter to potential sponsors and create a mailing list.
- Identify local celebrities who might attend the health and enrollment fair.
- Identify potential spokespersons from your committee.
- Compile a list of community organizations and health care providers that can help boost attendance and/or provide services at the health and enrollment fair.

WEEK 7

- Decide on a venue, date and time for your health and enrollment fair. Remember to choose locations and times that allow for maximum attendance by members of the community and press. If your planned venue is outdoors, secure an alternate location or select a rain date in case of inclement weather.
- Log on to **www.CoverTheUninsured.org** to register and post information about your event to promote attendance.
- Host the first planning committee meeting.
- Develop a schedule for regular (e.g., weekly or biweekly) meetings or conference calls.
- Establish subcommittees to manage portions of the planning, such as:
 - Site logistics – Supervise the set-up and clean-up, equipment rental, volunteer management and floor plan
 - Media and promotion – Pitch to the press, create media lists, write media materials, and provide media training for spokespersons
 - Crowd-building – Advertise the event to the community, local organizations, businesses and the media to increase attendance and recruit volunteers for the day of the event
 - Participant and exhibitor recruitment and management – Solicit organizations to provide health and enrollment fair services and information
 - Attendee services – Organize check-in and information booths with materials on follow-up care, medical screenings and testing, and enrollment
 - Sponsorship and fundraising – Ask organizations and businesses to sponsor the event through contributions or in-kind donations
 - Evaluation – Evaluate the effectiveness of the health and enrollment fair
- Create and distribute a contact sheet for all committee members, including work, home and cellular telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
- Find out what requirements are necessary to secure the venue.
- Draft an event budget based on expected contributions from your fundraising efforts.
- Visit the venue to discuss event components and work through site logistics. Be sure the location has enough power sources for booth participants.

WEEK 6

- Revise the event budget to include estimated costs related to the health and enrollment fair, such as equipment rentals (e.g., tables, chairs, signage, staging, power, etc.).

- Discuss fundraising needs with the planning committee.
- Draft and send invitation letters to organizations that you would like to participate.
- Draft and send invitation letters to groups that reach people who would benefit from attending the health and enrollment fair.
- Develop a media list.
- Continue to recruit volunteers for the day of the event.

🔴 WEEK 5

- Develop an e-mail listserv to update all interested participants. Provide weekly updates to generate interest and enthusiasm.
- Actively recruit participants to provide a variety of services, including enrollment in public health care coverage programs.
- Create a fact sheet for recruiting additional organizations that lists planned events, planning committee members, facts and statistics about the uninsured in your state and community, and information on local organizations.
- Designate spokespersons to attend the event and speak to the media.
- Log on to **www.CoverTheUninsured.org** to add details about your event, including secured speakers, special guests, screenings that are being offered, activities for children and entertainment.
- Identify community members who are uninsured or covered by SCHIP and willing to speak to the media.
- Meet with representatives from the event venue to clarify the site layout, the date of the event, set-up and clean-up times, security guidelines, a point of contact during the event, unforeseen fees, power source needs, and restroom locations. You may need to rent portable toilets to accommodate large crowds.
- Research and purchase event insurance, if needed. You can often do this through the venue management.
- Reach out to radio and TV stations that might broadcast from the health and enrollment fair. Begin by calling the stations' communications and community affairs departments. Schedule meetings to pitch the concept.
- Create a PSA script to be sent to local radio stations encouraging attendance at the health and enrollment fair. You can find a template script at **www.CoverTheUninsured.org**.
- Draw a map of the layout of the health and enrollment fair to show where booths and services will be located.
- Continue to recruit volunteers for the day of the event.

❖ WEEK 4

- Follow up with local businesses about funding opportunities and in-kind donations such as giveaways and refreshments.
- Finalize contracts with vendors, such as the event venue, equipment rental company, printers and transportation provider.
- Download materials at **www.CoverTheUninsured.org/materials**.
- Begin event promotion by finalizing your event details on the *Cover the Uninsured* Web site and sending community calendar listings to media contacts. Make follow-up calls.
- Print fliers and posters to post throughout the community. Fliers should be easy to read and should include the event date, time and location, as well as a list of services and participants. Be sure to provide fliers in languages appropriate to the community being served. Send them to each participating organization for distribution.
- Finalize the list of participants. Review the list to ensure that a range of basic services and health care information is provided. Design a sign that lists the sponsors to recognize them for their support.
- Begin to develop press materials, including descriptions of all the organizations involved in the event and the services they will be providing.
- Continue to recruit volunteers for the day of the event.

❖ WEEK 3

- Send official confirmation letters and kits to all participants with details of the event, including suggested arrival time, set-up instructions, contact information, power availability and parking.
- Conduct a final walk-through of the site with the venue representative to confirm specific participant requests such as power availability, a certain booth location or extra equipment.
- Print plenty of signs for the health and enrollment fair. If there is a walk from the parking lot to the event site, make sure it is clearly marked so that participants and reporters do not get lost and arrive late and frustrated.
- Contact groups who are responsible for crowd-building to ensure they have asked organizations to send out e-mail reminders and posted fliers throughout the community, including schools, recreation centers, libraries, places of worship, clinics, hospital emergency rooms, pharmacies, stores and businesses.
- Buy film or disposable cameras to document the event. If your budget allows, hire a professional photographer to take pictures of the event.
- Confirm volunteers. Assign working group members and volunteers specific duties before, during and after the fair. Assignments may include:
 - Set-up/tear-down
 - Volunteer management
 - Parking/security
 - Participant check-in and assistance
 - Attendee check-in
 - Information booth staffing
 - Follow-up care information

- Create a “day of event” checklist that includes a minute-by-minute timeline for the health and enrollment fair, a list of coalition and volunteer assignments, and important contact information. Make sure you will have enough volunteers and materials on hand.

❖ WEEK 2

- Finalize the health and enrollment fair layout, including entrances, exits, information booths, restrooms, power sources and booth numbers or names. Make copies for all participants and volunteers.
- Confirm arrangements and details with all vendors.
- Establish a system for measuring the number of attendees (e.g., a sign-in sheet).
- Draft a news advisory and press release. Get sign-off from spokespersons on press release quotes.
- Assemble press kits containing the press release, a listing of the day’s activities, a fact sheet, working group member descriptions, local resources for the uninsured, etc.
- Follow up with volunteers about their assignments for the day of the event.
- Provide media training to spokespersons, including uninsured spokespersons or families covered by SCHIP.
- Contact groups that are responsible for crowd-building to ensure they are continuing to reach out to the community.

Week of Event

❖ FOUR DAYS PRIOR TO EVENT

- Log on to **www.CoverTheUninsured.org** to confirm that all information about your event is accurate and listed clearly on the Web site.
- Fax or e-mail the news advisory; make follow-up calls to media contacts; and contact the local Associated Press daybook editor. (See the News Conference Planning Guide, available for download at **www.CoverTheUninsured.org/materials**.)
- Schedule pre-event media interviews for spokespersons. Consider assigning planning committee members to do interviews on various local radio stations during morning and evening drive times to promote the event.
- Send volunteers throughout the community to promote the event and encourage attendance.

❖ DAY BEFORE EVENT

- Place reminder calls to all media contacts. Resend the news advisory.
- Host final planning committee meeting to run through last-minute details.

❖ MORNING OF EVENT

- Check in with media contacts to confirm attendance. Distribute press release to those on your media list.

- Meet with volunteers to make final assignments and answer any questions or concerns they may have. If your budget allows, provide them a light breakfast such as muffins, donuts, juice and coffee.
- Place sign-in sheets for the media and others at the entrance to the health and enrollment fair. Have volunteers staff a sign-in table to be sure all attendees sign in.
- Ensure that the health and enrollment fair is set up according to the map layout, all signage is posted correctly, and all exhibitors have what they need to set up their booths.
- Enjoy helping families get connected to health care coverage!

❖❖ FOLLOWING THE EVENT

- Send thank-you notes to all participants, volunteers and sponsors.
- Return all rented equipment.
- Track media coverage.
- Organize folders and file contact lists and notes for future use.