

LAWRENCE MILLER
Chief of Health Care Reform



State of Vermont
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

TO: HCHC, SCHW, SCF, HROC, JFC
FROM: Lawrence Miller, Chief of Health Care Reform
Date: October 26, 2015
RE: Vermont Health Connect Monthly Report

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lawrence Miller".

I am pleased to submit the sixth monthly report in conformance with Section C.106 of the budget bill.

This report serves as the re-cap of key operational and enrollment metrics for September while also outlining what Vermonters can expect for the upcoming 2016 Open Enrollment starting on November 1. In order to provide the most up-to-date information available, it also covers project development work and efforts to address the State Auditor's recommendations through October 16.

Even so, new updates continue to roll in by the day.

Last Monday (10/19), we received confirmation that our technical teams had successfully addressed defects revealed in this month's testing of automated renewal functionality. Having mitigated the threat of unexpected and unfixable issues arising during testing, we were able to close a risk that had been identified in this monthly report, and in past reports.

On Tuesday (10/20), we received formal approval from CMS to utilize a direct enrollment approach for operation of our Small Business Health Options (SHOP) Marketplace in 2016.

On Wednesday (10/21), we completed deployment of the system updates that are now allowing us to generate renewal files.

In short, it was a busy week and a week that bolstered my optimism that the difference between last year's open enrollment and this year's will be night and day.

To be clear, we don't expect 100% smooth sailing. We expect that there will be cases that can't be processed until customers provide more information; that call volume spikes will occasionally result in higher than average wait times; that there will always be some number of transmissions to the carriers' and payment processor's systems that result in error.

We do expect, however, that smooth sailing will be the rule and not the exception. Vermonters should expect that their 2016 subsidies and plan options will be available at the start of Open Enrollment; that their calls will generally be answered promptly; that their change requests will typically be processed

promptly. And they should expect that, when challenges do arise, customer service staff will be on hand to help.

Earlier this year we mapped out a “Plan A” renewal plan based on allowing Vermonters to use self-service plan selection during open enrollment, with the option of easily renewing online, by phone, by paper, or by doing nothing and simply allowing their current health plan to roll into a new coverage year. We also prepared a contingency plan which consisted of a major staff augmentation to manually process over 20,000 applications.

I am pleased to report that we are following Plan A.