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**For Release:
October 29, 2009**

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New Jersey Launches the 'Insured For Sure' Hospital Newborn Pilot Program Expedited NJ FamilyCare Coverage Available for Uninsured Infants

Under a pilot program at nine New Jersey hospitals, no newborns will leave the hospital without health insurance, Health and Senior Services Commissioner Heather Howard and Human Services Commissioner Jennifer Velez announced today.

Under the 'Insured For Sure' Hospital Newborn Pilot Program, hospital staff will verify if newborns have insurance coverage. The hospital will submit data to the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), confirming that a child is either covered by their parents' insurance or, if uninsured, a one-page NJ FamilyCare application is immediately submitted online to the Department of Human Services (DHS).

"New Jersey is a national leader in ensuring that children have access to health care," said Governor Jon S. Corzine. "This innovative partnership with New Jersey hospitals is a bold step, putting New Jersey ahead of the rest of the nation in ensuring that every baby gets the health insurance they need and deserve."

Currently, there is no uniform standard among hospitals in making sure every newborn has health insurance. Under the 'Insured For Sure' Hospital Newborn Pilot Program, hospitals will verify if newborns are insured, and if uninsured, staff will assist parents in filling out a streamlined application for NJ FamilyCare before they leave the hospital.

The program is designed to make it easy for parents to enroll their children. Not only will they receive assistance filling out the one-page NJ FamilyCare application, but there is no need for them to submit paperwork. The state will use the database system to monitor this process to make sure the enrollment is complete.

"In these participating hospitals, we can now guarantee that no New Jersey newborn leaves the hospital without health insurance," said Health and Senior Services Commissioner Howard.

"Having health insurance is the first step in ensuring the youngest New Jerseyans have a healthy start in life."

"New Jersey's hospitals have long served as valued partners in the state's effort to identify and enroll individuals and families eligible for subsidized insurance," said DHS Commissioner Jennifer Velez. "This pilot program provides the tools necessary for hospitals to expedite coverage to newborns and eliminate delays that might otherwise result in costly health care charges."

New Jersey Hospital Association President and CEO Elizabeth A. Ryan, Esq., said, "NJ FamilyCare can give New Jersey's children a healthy start in life, but there remain a number of families that fail to enroll. What better place to reach out to these families than the very hospitals they turn to when in need? Our hospitals are pleased to partner with the state in this collaborative effort to identify uninsured families, chip away at the obstacles they encounter and help them enroll their children in a healthcare coverage plan."

In addition to Saint Peters University Hospital in New Brunswick, where the program was announced today, the other hospitals participating in the six-month pilot program are: AtlantiCare

Regional Medical Center in Atlantic City (City and Mainland campuses); Capital Health System in Trenton (Mercer campus); Cooper Health System in Camden; Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch; Palisades Medical Center in North Bergen; Shore Memorial Hospital in Somers Point; and the Voorhees campus of the Virta-West Jersey Hospital.

This new initiative is another step in Governor Corzine's aggressive effort to ensure New Jersey residents have the health coverage they need. Just last week, Governor Corzine and U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius announced the launch of the 'Cover our Kids Community Campaign' to enhance NJ FamilyCare outreach efforts through community-based and faith-based organizations. The project involves multiple statewide training sessions to familiarize community leaders and local agencies with the program's eligibility requirements and application process.

In September, the Governor announced that the number of New Jerseyans without health insurance decreased by more than 11%, or 147,000 individuals, the second largest reduction in the nation between 2007 and 2008. At the same time, the number of uninsured in the U.S. rose by 1.5 percent, according to a U.S. Census report on income, poverty and health insurance coverage in the United States in 2008.

The Governor credited aggressive initiatives aimed at enrolling those without health insurance for the declining New Jersey rate. He also credited the decrease to the landmark New Jersey Health Care Reform Act of 2008 that he signed into law last July which expanded health insurance eligibility and provided more access to affordable health insurance for all children.

In June, New Jersey rolled-out the Express Lane Eligibility program which uses information from NJ-1040 tax forms to identify uninsured children. New Jersey is the first state to use the information gathered from the streamlined process to enroll children in the NJ FamilyCare program.

Earlier this month, the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(DHHS\)](#) named New Jersey the recipient of a \$988,177 grant to conduct a school and community partnership enrollment effort that includes the hiring of a school-based NJ FamilyCare facilitator to perform outreach to families with children who are eligible but not yet enrolled in the program. The funding is expected to be used for school district pilot programs and various community-based organizations assisting the districts' enrollment.

NJHA's Health Research and Educational Trust also received a \$988,177 grant under the same program. While the state's efforts will focus on the school districts, HRET will work in concert with the state to expand enrollment strategies at healthcare sites.

In addition, assistance from health providers such as hospitals, family planning clinics and Federally Qualified Health Centers has improved the ability to enroll eligible families.

NJ FamilyCare is administered by DHS as a free or low-cost program for income-eligible families. It covers children in families earning up to 350 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (about \$77,000 for a family of four) and parents earning up to 200 percent of FPL (about \$44,000 for a family of four).

NJ FamilyCare ADVANTAGE is a 'buy-in' program for children in families earning more than 350 percent FPL. The maximum monthly premium is \$411 for a family with three or more children.

For more information on the NJ FamilyCare programs, call 1-800-701-0710 or visit www.njfamilycare.org.

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