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## **Empowering Healthy Communities**

### *Medicaid Awareness Month Brings Focus to Essential Health Coverage*

In recognition of the vital role Medicaid plays in the lives of millions of Americans, including children, adults, pregnant women, seniors, and individuals with disabilities, Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department (BLDHD) and the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA) are coming together this April to raise awareness about the comprehensive benefits Medicaid offers.

BLDHD is encouraging residents to explore how this program enhances the health and well-being of our communities. Medicaid provides healthcare to over 90 million Americans, ensuring Michigan residents have access to affordable care, whether for routine check-ups or health challenges.

“For many individuals, the fact that they don’t know what is available to them, what to expect, or how to enroll is a barrier to pursuing insurance,” says Dan Thorell, Health Officer at the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department. “Others know they qualify for Medicaid but may have their application denied without a clear explanation.”

### **Ready to Help**

Through a referral to Community Connections (CC), a free program offered by BLDHD, families can be paired with a Community Health Worker (CHW) who will help to walk them through the process. Minor mistakes in the online application process can result in denial of Medicaid access, but with the help of a local CHW, individuals and families can secure the Medicaid plan that best fits their needs.

- Medicaid covers services offered through Medicaid Health Plans.
- The Health Insurance Marketplace is a federal website where people without insurance can learn about available private insurance plans, such as Blue Cross or Priority Health. To explore this more, visit [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov).
- Healthy Kids provides free health insurance for pregnant women and children ages 0-19. This coverage can include doctor visits, dental and vision services, lab fees, prescriptions, hospital expenses, and other services normally covered by Medicaid.
- Michigan Child (MChild) helps to provide health insurance coverage for uninsured children ages 0-19, offering similar services as Healthy Kids. The cost is \$10 per family per month.
- Healthy Michigan Plan is another option that provides health care benefits to Michigan residents at low cost so more people can have health care coverage. If you do not qualify for other health care coverage, Healthy Michigan Plan could be right for you.

With numerous options and eligibility requirements, BLDHD is here to answer questions about Medicaid eligibility or enrollment. Simply call 1-833-674-2159 to speak with a local representative who will guide you through the health insurance enrollment process with ease or can help answer any questions you might have.

For more information visit our [Community Connection webpage](#). Click [here](#) to access request a Community Health Worker contact you. To explore the insurance options detailed above go to [mi.gov/mibridges](http://mi.gov/mibridges).

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