

HEALTH MATTERS

New High-Risk Pool Opens for Uninsured

One of the components of the much-talked about national health care reform law went into effect in Oregon, last week.

Individuals with preexisting conditions who lack insurance can now join a high-risk insurance pool to purchase health care coverage. The federally-subsidized pool is now another option to the Oregon Medical Insurance Pool, which is also meant to cover people with prior conditions who have trouble getting insurance.

Both plans offer different benefits. The Oregon plan is as much as 25 percent higher than individual market plans, while the federal plan costs about as much as the same plans. The Oregon plan also does not have the six month preexisting condition exclusion, and is available to individuals who do not qualify for the federal pool.

To qualify for the pool, an individual must have been lacking insurance for at least six months,

have a medical condition, and be a resident of the U.S. or be legally present. Applications are available at www.omip.state.or.us, or by calling 1-800-848-7820.

The plans range from \$221 to \$714 a month based on the applicants age range and plan choice, which would be higher without the federal subsidy. The pool will offer a choice of two comprehensive medical and prescription drug plans, with a maximum deductible of either \$500 or \$750. The annual out-of-pocket limit for both plans will be \$5,950.

Both pools are distinct from the state-run Oregon Health Plan, the demand for which is so high that there is currently a reservation list for people wanting to apply.

The federal pool is meant to cover individuals with preexisting conditions until health care exchanges go into effect in 2014 under the healthcare reform law.

Study Finds Racial Barriers to Treatment

Racism and racial expectations are obstructing back women in Portland from seeking depression care, according to a new study published in the American Journal of Public Health.

The findings revealed that study participants associated most depression treatments with a "white" health care system, and that the expectation of being a "strong black woman" has also deterred participants from acknowledging and seeking treatment for depression.

The study, which was conducted at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), involved participants in four private groups of women 18 or older who scored 15 or higher on the Patient Health Questionnaire Depression scale and have experi-

enced intimate partner violence. They were asked about their beliefs and experiences regarding the relationship between violence and health in general, mental health, depression, and depression treatments, as well as to discuss their recommendations for improving depression care.

In response to requests of study participants for more community-based depression programs staffed by African Americans, the research team created a pilot program at the Bradley-Angle House's Healing Roots Center to meet the need for culturally-tailored depression care programs.

The Northwest Health Foundation Kaiser Permanente Community Fund and the National Institute of Mental Health funded the study.

Take Action. Get Tested!



Multnomah County Health Department's HIV Community Test Site offers **confidential** HIV testing with or without your name at these locations:

Downtown Community Test Site

Call 503.988.3775 for an appt.
Mon | Thurs | Fri
426 SW Stark St., 6th Floor,
Portland, 97204

Northeast Health Center

Just walk in
Tuesdays | 5:30 - 7:15 pm
5329 NE MLK Jr. Blvd, 2nd Floor,
Portland, 97211

Se habla español: other interpretation by appointment.



Dr. Billy R. Flowers (above center) and his skilled staff are ready to help those in need.

THE SPINAL COLUMN™

An ongoing series of questions and answers about America's natural healing profession.

PART 11. EXERCISE: Does it help low back problems, or only make them worse?

Q: A friend of mine showed me a series of exercises designed to help her low back problems. Is it all right for me to use them, too?

A: It would be enlightening to know the number of people with qualified back problems (fixation on the spinal joints) who are told they only need to exercise. They are given a brief exam and a sheet of stretching exercises to follow. They are led to believe nothing else need to be done. This is only incomplete therapy, it is also therapy that could easily lead

to very disastrous side effects. When we exercise and stretch muscles without removing the cause of the spasms, it actually forces the body to degenerate faster. You are better off to have done no exercising at all. In Chiropractic, we know the exercise is an important part of health, but only after Chiropractic care has removed the spinal fixa-

tions that caused the problem in the first place. Then and only then can the spine be correctly stretched and strengthened without traumatizing muscles and nerves. For a safe, gentle accurate assessment of your spinal situation or for answers to any questions you might have about your health please call our office.

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