



A Service of the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange

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**MARYLAND HEALTH CONNECTION PARTNERS WITH GIANT FOOD
TO EDUCATE CONSUMERS**

*Shoppers in Maryland pharmacies to have access to information about
new health insurance marketplace opening Oct. 1*

BALTIMORE (Sept. 6, 2013) Maryland Health Connection, the state-based health insurance marketplace operated by the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange, announced today a new partnership with Giant Food in 100 stores statewide to provide information and raise awareness about the health coverage options beginning Oct. 1. The awareness and outreach partnership will provide information for shoppers in Giant pharmacies and Maryland Health Connection outreach events at local stores with navigators and assisters.

An estimated 14 percent of Maryland's population of 5.8 million, or 800,000, are currently uninsured. The state-based insurance marketplace will provide access to financial assistance such as premium tax credits to lower insurance premium costs and cost sharing reductions to reduce out of pocket costs.

"We're excited to increase awareness about the October 1st launch of Maryland Health Connection and we're grateful to Giant Food for working with us to achieve this goal," said Lt. Governor Anthony Brown. "We've worked hard to ensure that Marylanders will have some of the highest quality health care plans at some of the most affordable prices in the nation. Thousands of Marylanders qualify for no cost or low cost health care coverage, so I urge everyone to learn more about the Maryland Health Connection."

"With the countdown to open enrollment in progress, Maryland Health Connection is pleased to have Giant Food as a partner to educate consumers about the new health coverage options available through the insurance marketplace opening October 1 in Maryland," said Danielle Davis, director of communications and outreach. "Hundreds of thousands of residents will qualify for free or subsidized health coverage, and with the help of Giant Food stores in Maryland we will be able to reach as many of them as possible."

Maryland Health Connection will display and distribute education materials in Giant stores about health insurance coverage during the open enrollment period which runs from Oct. 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014 for individuals and families. Giant Food will collaborate with Maryland Health Connection and its six consumer assistance organizations throughout the state to organize outreach events during the open enrollment period when navigators and assisters will be available to speak with consumers about health coverage options and answer questions in local

stores. Individuals who enroll through Maryland Health Connection before Dec. 18 will have coverage beginning Jan. 1, 2014.

“Our awareness and outreach partnership with Maryland Health Connection reflects Giant’s commitment to fostering a healthy community,” said Gayle Shields, director of pharmacy operations for Giant Food. “As the nation’s capital grocer, we are continually looking for opportunities to better serve our customers. We are proud to join Maryland Health Connection and offer convenient places for Maryland residents to learn about the choices they have regarding their health care.”

An estimated 180,000 individuals are expected to enroll in qualified health plans during the first year of Maryland Health Connection’s operation. Statewide, nearly 100,000 Marylanders are expected to become newly eligible for Medicaid as a result of the expansion of Medicaid provided by the Affordable Care Act.

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About Maryland Health Connection: Maryland Health Connection is the marketplace for individuals, families and small businesses to compare and enroll in health insurance, as well as determine eligibility for Medicaid and other assistance programs, federal tax credits and cost-sharing reductions. Enrollment through Maryland Health Connection is scheduled to begin in October 2013, with insurance coverage beginning Jan. 1, 2014 for individuals and families. Enrollment for small businesses begins when the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) opens Jan. 1, 2014. For more information visit our website at www.MarylandHealthConnection.gov. Additional information about Maryland Health Connection, the enrollment process or selecting coverage can be found on our social media channels, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/MarylandConnect>; Twitter <https://twitter.com/marylandconnect> and YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/marylandconnect>

About the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange: The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) is a public corporation and independent unit of Maryland State government established in April 2011 in accordance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA). The MHBE has a nine member Board of Trustees that includes the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland Insurance Commissioner and Executive Director of Maryland Health Care Commission. The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange is responsible for the administration of Maryland Health Connection.

About Giant Food: Giant Food LLC, headquartered in Landover, Md., operates 169 supermarkets in Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia, and employs approximately 20,000 associates. Included within the 169 stores are 155 full-service pharmacies. Giant opened the first supermarket in the nation’s capital on February 6, 1936. For more information on Giant, visit www.GiantFood.com.