



March 15, 2020

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Department of Health and Human Services
Attention: CMS-9929-P
P.O. Box 8016
Baltimore, MD 21244-8016

Re: COVID-19 Special Enrollment Period

Dear Secretary Azar:

The New Mexico Health Insurance Exchange (NMHIX), also known as beWellnm, respectfully requests that the federal government open an Enrollment Period in response to the COVID-19 emergency. Doing so would be consistent with the Public Health Emergency declared by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham on March 11 and the National Emergency declared by President Donald Trump on March 13.

The importance of providing access to health care during this emergency cannot be overstated. Individuals deserve every effort from policymakers to eliminate barriers. This is especially important among those who are uninsured and under-insured. Giving individuals a new opportunity to enroll in health coverage is another tool to help stem the tide of COVID-19. The states of Washington and Maryland have already announced enrollment periods, and the federal exchange must quickly follow their lead.

We recognize that protecting the integrity of the health system, from insurance carriers to hospitals, is critical. Having an enrollment period does not have to undermine that priority, and opportunities will emerge through collaboration to accomplish all goals.

Please do not hesitate to contact our Exchange if we may be of assistance. We look forward to your support of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffery Bustamante".

Jeffery Bustamante
Chief Executive Officer
beWellnm, New Mexico's Health Insurance Exchange

cc: Administrator Seema Verma