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For Immediate Release

Human Services Department Participating in Eyewitness News 4 Health Fair

Qualified families can apply for health care and food assistance programs

Santa Fe, January 25, 2006 – The New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD) will be reaching out to the thousands of visitors at this year's Eyewitness News 4 Health Fair, which begins Friday in Albuquerque at Expo New Mexico. "This is a perfect opportunity to reach the many New Mexico families we know are eligible for the Medicaid and the Food Stamp programs, but are not enrolled," said Pamela Hyde, HSD Secretary.

Governor Bill Richardson has declared 2006 as "The Year of the Child" and would like to see every child, ages zero to five, have access to health care coverage. "There are 21,000 children under five years old in New Mexico who are currently uninsured," said Hyde. "The Medicaid program can help close that gap, since 75% of those children qualifies for the low-cost or even no-cost Medicaid health care program."

Children in families whose income is below 235% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) qualify for Medicaid. For example, a family of four with a yearly income below \$45,473 could sign their children up for state and federally funded health care program.

Presumptive Eligibility Medicaid Onsite Application Assistance workers will be at the HSD booth at the health fair. This means families who bring the proper paperwork can sign their children up for Medicaid on the spot. The paperwork includes:

- Birth Certificate(s),
- Social Security Card(s),
- Four weeks of recent income proof (check stubs), and
- Proof of residency.

Information will also be available for the State Coverage Insurance (SCI) Program, a public/private health care plan for adults ages 19-64 whose income is below 200% of FPL. Lovelace SCI, Molina Health Care and Presbyterian Health Services administer the SCI program.

And, in an effort to help decrease the hunger and food insecurity rates in New Mexico, families can apply for the food stamp program at the health fair on Saturday. "This is a program that helps families with incomes below 130% of the FPL make ends meet by helping them put nutritious food on their families' breakfast, lunch and dinner table," said Katie Falls, HSD Deputy Secretary. A family of four with an income below \$25,155 a year could qualify.

The HSD booth is located in spot 1021 at The Eyewitness News 4 Health Fair, which is open Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Lujan Exhibit Hall at Expo New Mexico in Albuquerque.

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