



Bill Richardson
Governor

NEW MEXICO HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT
P.O. Box 2348
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-2348

Pamela S. Hyde, J.D.
Secretary

Contact Betina Gonzales McCracken 505 827-6245 or 505 699-4675
For Immediate Release

State Coverage Insurance (SCI) Eligibility Unit Celebrates First Anniversary in Las Cruces

SCI is Part of Governor Bill Richardson's *Insure New Mexico!* Solutions

Santa Fe, New Mexico, December 5, 2006 – The State Coverage Insurance Eligibility Unit is celebrating its first year of service by hosting an open house on Wednesday, December 6, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the West Las Cruces Income Support Division office, 655 Utah Avenue.

The Human Services Department's Medicaid State Coverage Insurance (SCI) Program has helped nearly 5,000 New Mexicans, most of them working adults, get affordable health insurance. SCI is a public/private partnership for adults who earn below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). The employer pays a \$75 monthly premium per employee and the employee pays \$0 to \$35 per month, depending on income, while the state and federal government pay the rest through the Medicaid program.

The SCI program has over 100 participating small businesses employing 50 or fewer people. They include Rio Valley Motors in Española, Sun Baked Biscuits in Alamogordo and Coa's My Book Store in Las Cruces. Most of the participating businesses are from Doña Ana and Bernalillo Counties, with 14 and 15 employers signed up respectively.

"The SCI program has provided me the opportunity to offer a quality health insurance program to my employees for the first time in 25 years," said Hale Huber of Sun Tech Services, Inc. in Las Cruces, who employs six people. "With SCI, I can offer health insurance that has reasonable and controlled out-of-pocket costs, while providing good health insurance coverage."

"We are off to a good start, and we anticipate that many more small businesses will soon look into State Coverage Insurance as a way to get affordable health insurance for their employees," said Pamela Hyde, Human Services Department Secretary. The SCI program is an integral part of Governor Bill Richardson's Five-Point Plan to close the uninsured gap, by expanding SCI to cover adults up to 300 percent of the FPL.

The 11-person Las Cruces SCI unit is located at the West Las Cruces Income Support Division office. Staff was recruited from the three Income Support Division field offices in Doña Ana County and perform similar work in SCI by determining employer and individual eligibility for the program.

(more)

Page 2....SCI Anniversary

The actual enrollment process is then handled by the *Insure New Mexico!* Solutions Center in Santa Fe and by the four health care organizations that provide the actual health care services to enrollees: Presbyterian, Lovelace, Molina and UNM-Hospitals.

The Las Cruces SCI unit is also gearing up to administer two more of the Governor's *Insure New Mexico!* Solutions: Premium Assistance for Kids and Premium Assistance for Maternity. For more information on the *Insure New Mexico!* Solutions now available please call 1-866-901-4538 or visit <http://www.hsd.state.nm.us/insure.htm>.

###