

# HEALTH CARE ACCESS & HEALTH INSURANCE

## 1) ADVOCACY FOR ACCESS

*Berkshire Medical Center 413-445-9480  
Hillcrest Campus  
165 Tor Court  
Pittsfield, MA 01201*

The goal of Advocacy for Access is to increase awareness of health insurance options for the uninsured and underinsured in southern and central Berkshire County. There are many state programs that help people with little or no health insurance get the health care they need for free. Advocacy for Access can advise people of which programs they should apply for and help them fill out the applications.

## 2) ECU-HEALTH CARE

*71 Hospital Avenue 413- 663-8711  
North Adams, MA 01247  
Contact: Chip Joffe-Halpern*

Ecu-Health Care is a health care access organization whose mission is to help **North County residents** obtain health care services. Services include outreach and case-management to help residents enroll in all public health programs. Also offers a reduced fee health care access program, through the voluntary efforts of the physicians of North Berkshire, available to income eligible residents of North Berkshire and Southern Vermont who are not eligible for a public health insurance program. Director Halpern welcomes volunteers/interns to help with tracking and followup of referrals to health care programs.

## 3) HEALTH LAW ADVOCATES, INC.

*30 Winter Street, Suite 940 617-338-5241  
Boston, MA 02108 Fax: 617-338-5242*

Health Law Advocates is a non-profit law firm affiliated with Health Care for All, a statewide consumer advocacy organization. Health Law Advocates provides free legal advice and representation to vulnerable people who meet specified income guidelines seeking access to adequate health care. Some issues covered are: denials of payment for treatment or equipment by health insurers, including Mass Health; problems with COBRA (continuation of health insurance after leaving a job); problems with access to free care through hospitals and community health centers; denials and termination of health insurance coverage; and medical billing or collection problems.

#### **4) THE INSURANCE PARTNERSHIP**

[www.insurancepartnership.org](http://www.insurancepartnership.org)

*354B Turnpike Street 1-800-399-8285  
Suite 204  
Canton, MA 02021*

The Insurance Partnership is a state program that can help small businesses in Massachusetts (those with 50 or fewer employees) provide health insurance for their employees by paying for part of their costs. In addition, the Insurance Partnership will pay most of an income-eligible employee's share of the premium cost.

#### **5) MASS HEALTH**

[www.mass.gov/dma](http://www.mass.gov/dma)

*1-800-332-5545*

Pays for health care for certain low- and medium-income people living in Massachusetts, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Families with children under age 19
- Children under age 19
- Pregnant women
- Disabled people
- Adults who work for a qualified employer
- People who are HIV positive

Applications are available at the Department of Transitional Assistance at 75 South Church Street in Pittsfield (413-236-2000) and at 37 Main Street in North Adams (413-663-1100). Help with applications may be obtained at Advocacy for Access or Ecu-Health Care (see listings in this directory), or by contacting the social work department of any hospital. The nearest office of Mass Health is the Mass Health Enrollment Center in Springfield, MA at 333 Bridge Street (01103). This office can be reached at 800-332-5545 or 413-785-4100.

#### **6) SHINE PROGRAM (SERVING HEALTH INSURANCE NEEDS OF ELDERS)**

*c/o: Elder Services of Berkshire County, Inc. 413-499-0524  
66 Wendell Avenue 1-800-544-5242  
Pittsfield, MA 01201*

The SHINE Program offers free information, counseling and assistance to help Medicare beneficiaries understand benefits, billing, claims, appeals and all available insurance options. (See also Lee Council on Aging and Lenox Council on Aging.)

**7) VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PREVENTION, ASSISTANCE, TRANSITION  
AND HEALTH ACCESS**

*200 Veterans Memorial Drive, Suite 6 (802) 442-8541*

*Bennington, VT 05201-1949 Fax: (802) 447-6972*

*Hours: Monday-Friday, 7:45 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.*

Federal and state programs for individuals and families under the poverty level:  
Medicaid, food stamps, emergency aid, aid for needy families with dependent children (RUFA),  
and general assistance.