

Today, some of the first provisions of federal health care reform kicked in, ensuring coverage for children under 19 and for dependents up to age 26. In addition, a number of new consumer protections, such as free preventive care in new health plans, a prohibition on improper rescissions and lifetime limits, and a restriction of annual limits went into effect

The health care reform effort is complex and broad-reaching. It will affect every American in some way, and most consumers are confused about how it impacts their own health coverage, or how they can obtain health coverage, and when they will be able to take advantage of the new offerings. That is where the DMHC's Help Center can step in and help them find answers to their questions.

The DMHC Help Center accepts live calls from 7:00 a.m. to 7 p.m. during the week and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to respond to urgent issues. Its customer service advocates, analysts, nurses, and attorneys stand ready to help consumers find answers to their questions about health care coverage. If the Help Center cannot provide direct assistance, it will appropriately direct consumers to the entity that can best help them with their health care question or problem.

The Help Center's personnel are excited about the opportunity to expand their role of helping consumers find resolutions to their problems with their health plans, to also serve as California's main point of contact for consumers needing assistance in understanding how each provision of health care reform affects their coverage. The Help Center's services are provided at no charge, and will become an increasingly important resource for consumers as the evolving provisions of federal health care reform are phased in over the next few years.

To contact the Help Center, call 1-888-466-2219 or visit [www.healthhelp.ca.gov](http://www.healthhelp.ca.gov).