



## KATAHDIN VALLEY HEALTH CENTER

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## NEWS RELEASE

SOURCE:

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### **HEALTH CENTERS MARK COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK** **Cover the Uninsured campaign focuses on helping America's uninsured children**

PATTEN, MAINE, April 24, 2007 – America's Health Centers are joining the groundswell of support for *Cover The Uninsured Week* (CTUW). The national campaign runs April 23 – 29<sup>th</sup> to galvanize support and public awareness about the need for affordable and reliable health care coverage. The participation of health centers in CTUW comes as more and more uninsured people look to health centers for their health care. Health centers provide care to one in eight uninsured people, and the number of uninsured health center patients has grown three times faster than the national population of uninsured.

The centerpiece of this year's CTUW campaign is the fate of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). For the past 10 years, SCHIP has provided health coverage to children whose parents are either not offered health insurance for their children through their job, or who cannot afford the insurance that is offered. Nationally, more than 300,000 of SCHIP-enrolled children receive care at health centers. Congress must reauthorize SCHIP in 2007 for the program to continue and President Bush, governors and members of Congress are discussing budget figures for the program's future. Experts say the current funding levels for these state programs—set in 1997—

are not adequate to keep up with the growing numbers of uninsured children, so it will take an increase in federal funding to cover youth currently enrolled in these programs, with more money needed to cover more uninsured children.

“We see the faces of the uninsured every day and know their stories,” said Durward Humphrey, Katahdin Valley Health Center’s executive director. “They are our hardworking neighbors and friends whose jobs do not provide them insurance or who cannot afford private coverage or do not meet the income requirements for public insurance or SCHIP. We are proud of our role in giving uninsured children and their families a health care home, where they can get all the health care services they need under one roof. You don’t need an insurance card to get in the door at a Community Health Center.”

“Sufficient funding for SCHIP is critical to our nation’s public health,” said Humphrey. “But just as important to coverage is access. To stay healthy, people of all ages need both coverage and a place to go for health care. In the U.S., we now know that 56 million people—including children—do not have access to basic health care services. This is a reality we must also try to change.”

Katahdin Valley Health Center is a proud member of the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC). To find out more about health centers, please visit our web site at [www.kvhc.org](http://www.kvhc.org) or [www.nachc.com](http://www.nachc.com).

***Katahdin Valley Health Center (KVHC) is a provider of high quality, cost effective primary health, dental, substance abuse and mental health care to the people in the Greater Katahdin Region. A Federally Qualified Health Center, KVHC is a nonprofit business governed by a board of directors, comprised of area volunteers, funded by a federal grant under Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. KVHC employs 65 people at its facilities in Houlton, Island Falls, Millinocket and Patten.***

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