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### **MSU Extension provides roadmap to understanding Affordable Care Act ("ObamaCare")**

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Recent healthcare reform legislation means millions of Americans have more health insurance options than ever before. Yet research shows that many people are uncomfortable, overwhelmed and intimidated when it comes to understanding the Affordable Care Act and making important decisions about health insurance coverage.

To help people better understand the Affordable Care Act and its options, [Michigan State University Extension](http://MichiganStateUniversityExtension.org) is hosting a series of weekly unbiased educational webinars and launching a new website to explain changes in the insurance landscape. The classes are free and open to the public. A current list of upcoming webinars can be found at [aca.msue.msu.edu](http://aca.msue.msu.edu), a website developed by MSU Extension to guide people through complicated issues such as insurance mandates, tax penalties, available subsidies and the new insurance marketplace.

Through these online workshops, participants will learn how to analyze what they need and want from healthcare providers, compare plans, calculate how health insurance will affect their financial budgets and, ultimately, apply the information and knowledge gained to make smart choices. Consumer workbooks are available in Spanish and English.

"We aren't trying to push consumers to select any one specific plan," said MSU Extension educator Brenda Long. "We hope to teach people skills they can use so they can decide the plan that best fits the needs for themselves, their families or their employees."

Long, who is leading the MSU Extension effort, says that, with the Affordable Care Act in the public spotlight, this is a great opportunity to help Michigan residents take control of their personal and family financial needs.

"Finding your way in this new landscape can be extremely difficult, whether you've been insured your whole life or are faced with finding coverage for the first time," Long said. "Our webinars are like a map and a compass. They empower people by eliminating the intimidation factor, giving people answers to key questions and explaining the key steps in the process."

To find information about the workshops, go to [aca.msue.msu.edu](http://aca.msue.msu.edu) or contact Kelly Masters to arrange for an interview with Ms. Long or another appropriate Michigan State University Extension educator.

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