SEPTEMBER 2026

MARKETPLACE INSTABILITY THREATENS AFFORDABLE COVERAGE

Regional, nonprofit health plans are rooted in the communities they serve and reinvest nearly every premium dollar in patient care. Operating on margins of just one to three percent, regional plans utilize 94 cents of every premium dollar for care delivery. The local, provider-aligned care model allows regional health plans to deliver high-quality, affordable coverage to millions of consumers but is increasingly challenged by significant policy changes and market shifts.



Federal policy changes are creating existential financial pressures. The expiration of enhanced premium tax credits and new eligibility, enrollment and verification requirements have resulted in:

- **Decreased coverage**, with Marketplace enrollment down 13% from 2025[1]
- **A shift toward less comprehensive coverage**, with a 10 percentage point increase in bronze and a 14 percentage point decrease in silver plans[2]
- **A sicker, more costly risk pool**, as younger, healthier enrollees go uninsured
- **Higher administrative costs**, as plans adapt to new federal requirements

The cumulative impact leaves regional health plans with an impossible choice: raise premiums, cut benefits or pull out of the communities they have served for decades. Health plans cannot indefinitely absorb these costs. Fiduciary responsibilities and state solvency requirements require plans to maintain financially sustainable products.

Rising prices have real world consequences:

- **Higher health care costs**: 80% of Marketplace enrollees report increased cost of insurance[3]
- **Skyrocketing deductibles**: Increased to nearly $4,000 between 2025 and 2026[4]
- **Growing pressures on household budgets**: Over 50% of Marketplace enrollees report cutting other expenses to pay for health care[5]
- **Increasing burden of untreated chronic disease and uncompensated care**: nearly 50% of Marketplace enrollees are concerned about paying for routine care[6]

Regional, nonprofit plans have served the Marketplace since its inception and stayed committed to their communities while other insurers have exited. **Prolonged marketplace instability threatens their ability to remain in the market, leaving communities and consumers without local, high-quality affordable coverage options.**

1. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) | 2. CMS | 3. KFF | 4. KFF | 5. KFF | 6. KFF

**All accessed September 8, 2026.*

For more information, please contact **ACHPadvocacy@achp.org**.