

# Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation

## SPECIAL INITIATIVES GRANTS

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

Through the Special Initiatives (SI) grant program, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation (Foundation) seeks to positively impact health or health care access for Massachusetts residents who have been economically, racially, culturally or socially marginalized.

As a responsive grantmaking program, SI grants allow communities and organizations that serve them to design and lead culturally relevant pilot programs that are aligned with at least one of the Foundation's strategic priorities: to promote access to quality care and coverage, access to behavioral health services, and the elimination of structural racism and racial inequities in health.

In 2021, the Foundation awarded the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC) a grant to expand its capacity to meet the behavioral health needs of its community through a multi tiered approach designed to:

- 1) Increase community service providers' capacity to provide behavioral health services to youth, adults and families in Chinatown
- 2) Increase Chinese immigrant youth, adults and families' access to culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health services

The initiative supported two BCNC staff to become certified as Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) trainers and then deliver MHFA trainings to other staff as well as youth, adults and caregivers. Toward the second goal, BCNC is providing individual counseling with a priority for individuals suffering from depression, anxiety, domestic violence, tobacco use disorder or other behavioral health needs. The services are provided by clinically trained staff who are fluent in Mandarin, Cantonese and English.



### PROGRAM IMPACT:

Overall, a total of **696 participants** received services through BCNC's Family Services program.

### THROUGH THE GRANT:

<b>12 parents</b> received group Therapeutic Interventions	<b>23 participants</b> received individual counseling
<b>35 staff &amp; interns</b> received MHFA training	<b>51 individuals</b> attended mental health workshops

"Culturally appropriate mental health services are not only about the ability to communicate with the client in the language the client feels most comfortable, it's also about having an understanding of the client's lived experience and different ways their culture influences their awareness of the need and receptiveness and challenges to seeking services. The grant from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation is helping us address inequities in access to care by expanding our capacity to deliver mental health prevention and services within an organization that the Asian community already trusts."

– Grace Shixin Su, director of Family Services, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center

