



BlueCross
BlueShield

THE HEALTH OF AMERICASM

2017 THE HEALTH OF AMERICA

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT REPORT

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO



For nearly a century, Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies have been invested in making a difference in the communities where our members live and work. Today, our 36 independent, locally operated health plans insure 106 million individuals from coast to coast and beyond, representing every state, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

The privilege of serving one-in-three Americans also gives us a unique opportunity to marshal the resources needed to promote community investments in healthcare. Through volunteer efforts and partnerships, BCBS companies champion innovative programs so that schools, local clinics and charity organizations can accelerate solutions to improve a person's quality of life.

In 2017 we expanded our focus on the social and environmental conditions that influence health and wellness, concentrating our efforts on areas that lack easy access to employment, education, reliable transportation, nutritious food and healthcare services. BCBS data has been instrumental in our efforts to better understand the health needs of rural and urban communities where vulnerable populations may not have easy access to care.

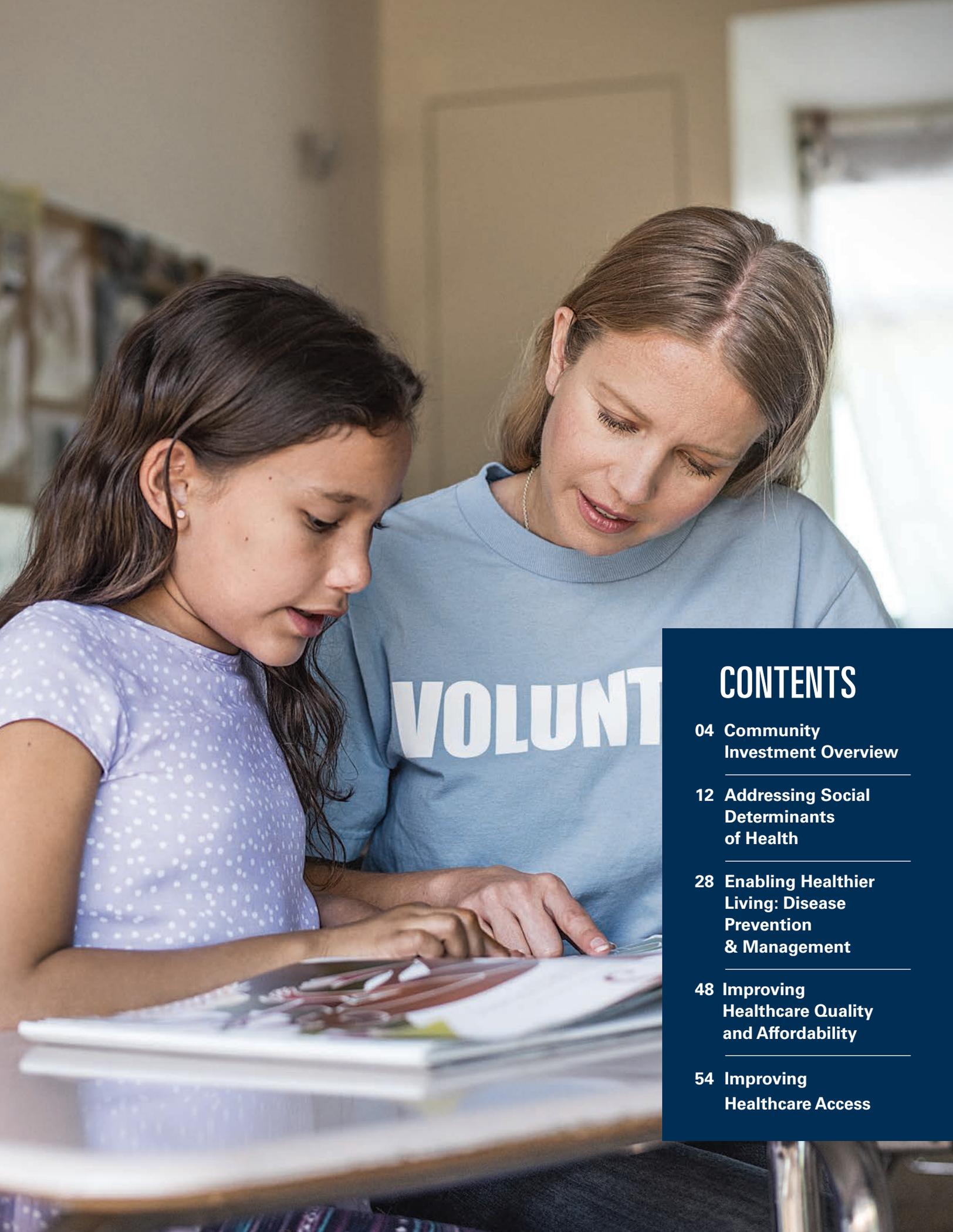
In this report you'll read about how BCBS companies reinforced their continuing support of preventive healthcare and sought innovative ways to combat increasing rates of chronic conditions, such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease. As part of our deeply held commitment to creating healthier communities, we also targeted the opioid epidemic by funding research and helping to prevent misuse and improve access to treatment.

Our employees have always been quick to mobilize wherever and whenever help is needed, and as Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria ravaged communities in 2017, countless volunteers banded together with BCBS Plans to donate relief supplies, money and time. In the pages that follow you'll read about our many contributions and investments to reaffirm the Blues' commitment to security and stability in every community across America.

Yours in good health,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott P. Serota". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Scott P. Serota
President and CEO
Blue Cross Blue Shield Association



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OUR RESPONSIBILITY, OUR PRIVILEGE

For nearly a century, Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) companies have provided secure and stable healthcare coverage to people in communities across the country, allowing them to live free of worry, free of fear.

As the insurer to one in three Americans, BCBS companies, their foundations and their employees stand committed to their local communities—where they also live and work. They do this by creating and supporting programs that drive positive health outcomes addressing some of the most pressing issues affecting our country today: community health disparities, the opioid epidemic and most recently providing aid to those in need after a catastrophic hurricane season.

2017 COMMUNITY IMPACT

The 36 independent BCBS companies insure more than 106 million members across all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

540K HOURS 
OF EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER TIME

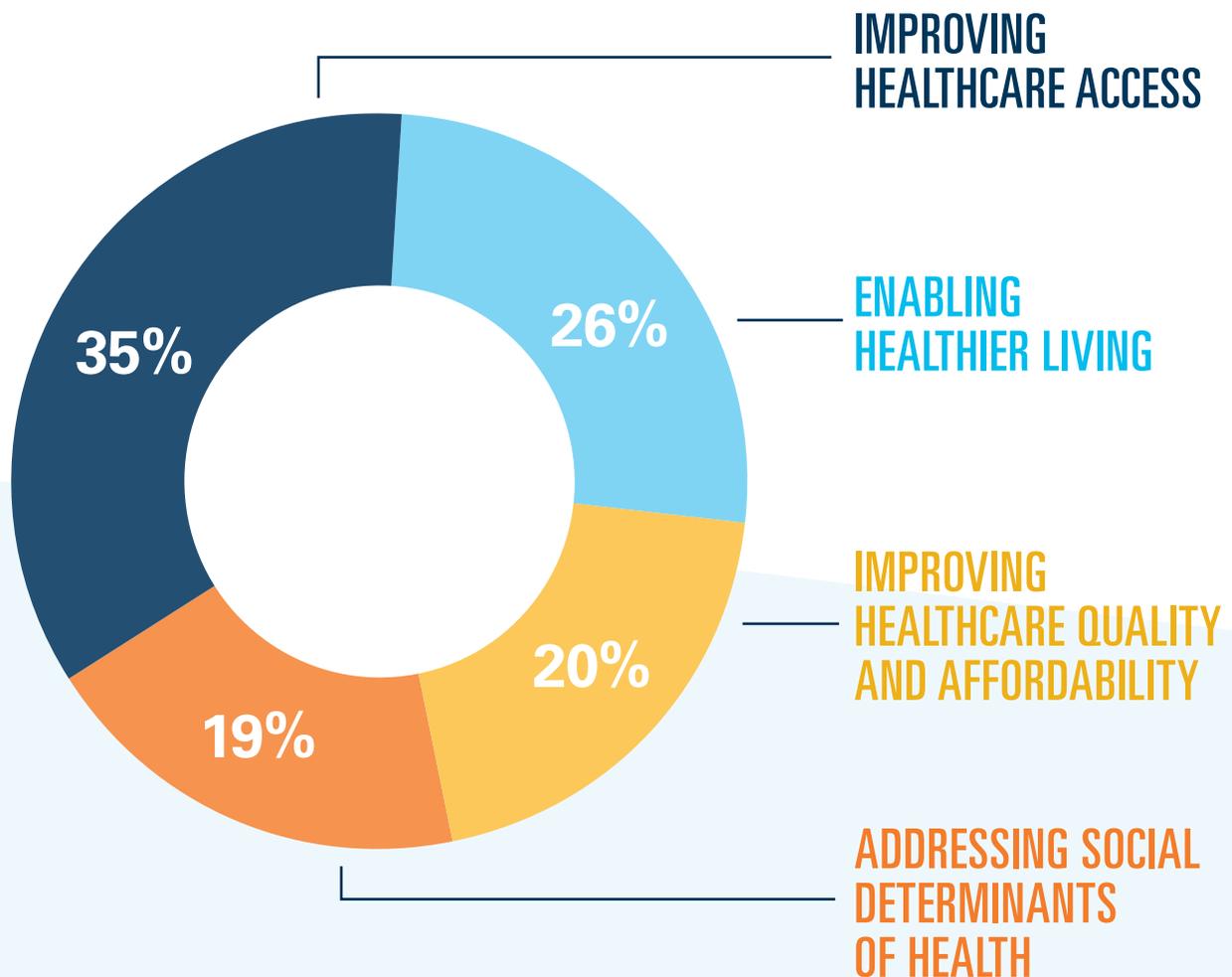
\$17M 
IN EMPLOYEE DONATIONS

\$5M 
IN DISASTER RELIEF EFFORTS

\$284M INVESTED IN **COMMUNITY HEALTH INITIATIVES**

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES ON WHAT MATTERS MOST

In 2017, BCBS companies and their foundations continued to support, invest in and build programs and partnerships that have the greatest impact on the health and well-being of all Americans in four key areas:



HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS LIVE THEIR HEALTHIEST LIVES

ADDRESSING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

The BCBS System has increasingly supported community programs that address social determinants of health—the environment in which people are born, grow, live, work and age—including access to employment, education, reliable transportation, nutritious food and places for physical activity—that affect a wide range of health and quality-of-life outcomes. From programs that provide resources and tools to communities in food deserts to programs that support partnerships between domestic violence agencies and community health centers, we recognize that addressing social determinants of health is one of the best ways to help our neighbors live their healthiest lives.

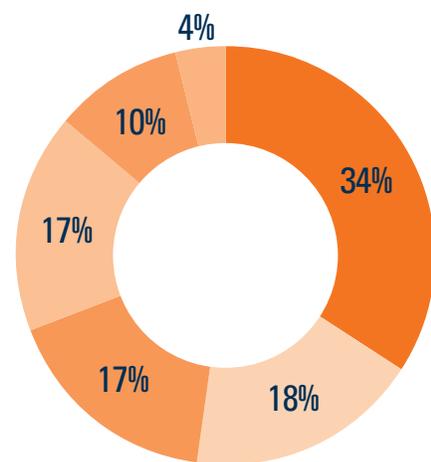
Overcoming Barriers to Health— One ZIP Code at a Time

A first-of-its-kind organization in scope and scale, the **Blue Cross Blue Shield InstituteSM** (BCBS Institute) combines a social mission with business innovation and insight to target barriers to healthcare that can be solved with technology and strategic alliances.

With a mission to improve healthcare access and outcomes, the BCBS Institute addresses the “ZIP code effect,” which shines a light on transportation, pharmacy, nutrition and fitness deserts in specific neighborhoods. Through these efforts, the BCBS Institute, along with BCBS companies, go beyond the walls of the traditional doctor’s office to reach into the daily realities of communities across the country.

For additional information regarding the BCBS Institute, please visit www.bcbs.com/Institute.

BCBS Programs Addressing Social Determinants of Health

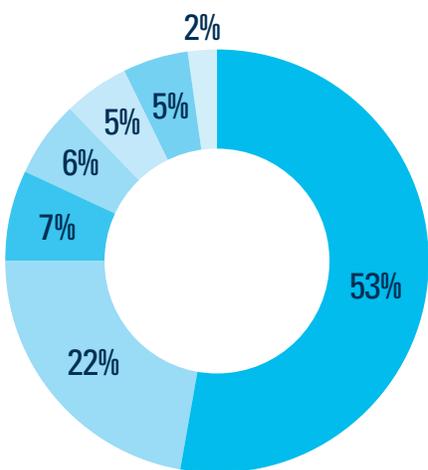


34%	Food Insecurity
18%	Education
17%	Homelessness
17%	Environment
10%	Community/Personal Safety
4%	Transportation

ENABLING HEALTHIER LIVING: DISEASE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT

Across the country, BCBS companies and their foundations support initiatives that are encouraging healthy habits, keeping chronic health conditions controlled and reducing the impact of poverty on health. Programs that support behavioral and mental health continue to comprise approximately one-quarter of all programs in disease prevention and management. Over the past year, BCBS companies and their foundations have increasingly focused their efforts on the national opioid epidemic, while obesity continues to be the number one focus area for program and investment support within the BCBS System. Local programs focus on reducing childhood obesity and encouraging schools and students to adopt healthy nutrition and exercise habits.

**BCBS Programs
Enabling Healthier Living**



53% Obesity

22% Behavioral/Mental Health

7% Heart

6% Cancer

5% Diabetes

5% Asthma/Lung

2% Dental/Vision

Responding to a National Crisis: The Opioid Epidemic

The misuse of opioids is one of the greatest public health crises facing the nation today. According to the Center for Disease Control & Prevention, more than 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.* As the healthcare partner to one in three Americans, BCBS companies and their foundations are working in every community to prevent opioid misuse, improve access to treatment and help patients move toward the path to recovery.

We remain committed to addressing the opioid epidemic in three critical ways:

1. Ensuring patients with opioid use disorder receive the best evidence-based, patient-focused care available.
2. Promoting awareness and prevention through community engagement and partnerships.
3. Fostering research partnerships with academic and professional institutions that are working to identify better ways to care for people with opioid use disorder and stem the crisis.

BCBS companies around the country support the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) National Drug Take-Back Day to help families remain safe by ridding homes of unused or expired medications. To take this a step further, in 2017, BCBSA and 12 BCBS companies partnered with Walgreens to expand a safe medication disposal program to 1,500 Walgreens stores nationwide with the goal of collecting 300 tons of unwanted medications over the next two years.

*Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic/index.html>

LEADING THE WAY TO BETTER HEALTHCARE AND BETTER HEALTH

IMPROVING HEALTHCARE QUALITY AND AFFORDABILITY

BCBS companies and their foundations are dedicated to providing all Americans with high-quality and affordable healthcare by funding research and educational resources. Local investments in 2017 supported programs that continue to build a strong frontline team of healthcare providers and bolster future healthcare innovation.

BCBS companies are making additional investments toward improving healthcare quality and affordability for everyone:

Blue Cross Blue Shield Axis®

National data capabilities that BCBS companies and their partners use to improve the delivery of care and outcomes for patients, examine and address trends in population health and power better informed decision-making for individuals, employers and healthcare practitioners.

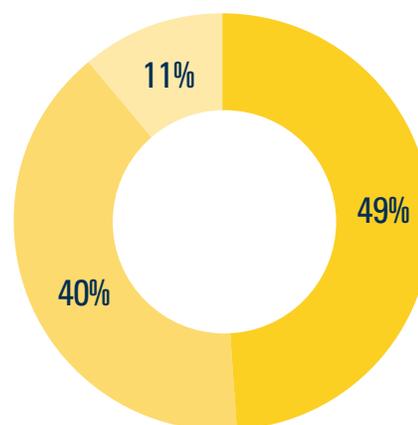
Blue Distinction®

A national program that recognizes doctors, hospitals and other healthcare facilities that are changing the way healthcare is provided to be more patient-focused, effective and affordable. These include centers of excellence and care delivery programs that are designed to improve healthcare quality and affordability.

Blue Health Intelligence®

Blue Health Intelligence® (BHI)* is the nation's leading health intelligence resource for delivering data-driven insights. BHI's capabilities come from our team of analytics experts and advanced technology, coupled with access to the largest interconnected BCBS database. BHI's data repository covers 180+ million unique member profiles—gathered through 10+ years of enrollment data—in a secure, HIPAA-compliant database representing every ZIP code in the United States. BHI's consultative analytics support, informatics and software solutions help fuel the programs and initiatives of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and individual BCBS companies resulting in healthier lives and more affordable access to safe, effective care.

BCBS Programs Improving Healthcare Quality and Affordability



49% Patient Education

40% Physician Education

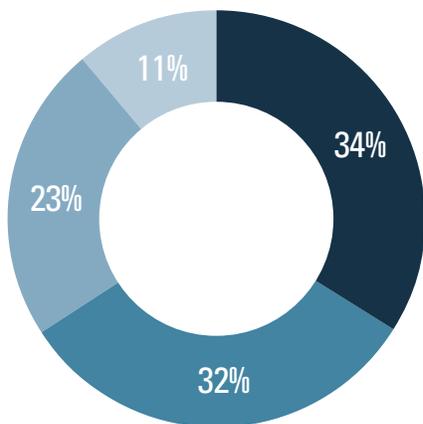
11% Medical Research

*Blue Health Intelligence (BHI) is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. BHI is a trade name of Health Intelligence Company, LLC.

IMPROVING HEALTHCARE ACCESS

From grant-based programs and partnerships with local community clinics to scholarships that help minority students pursue a career in the medical field, BCBS companies and their foundations are helping deliver healthcare to under- or uninsured patients in their communities. Over the past year, BCBS programs that support safety-net clinics nearly doubled from 18 percent in 2016 to 34 percent in 2017.

**BCBS Programs
Improving Healthcare Access**



34% Safety-net Clinics

32% Mobile Clinics

23% Physician Retention/
Recruitment/Financial Aid

11% Enrollment Education

Fostering Local Partnerships to Ensure No American Goes Without Care

Individuals who are uninsured—or those who lack access to care—often experience worse health outcomes and greater health disparities compared to their insured peers. Programs that support individuals who are under- or uninsured—such as safety-net or mobile clinics—can dramatically help improve the health and well-being of those individuals and communities across the country.

Recognizing the value of supporting healthier communities and reducing health disparities, BCBS companies are committed to ensuring no one in America goes without care by investing in programs and providing grants that support those in need.

IMPROVING COMMUNITY HEALTH WITH BIG DATA & BIG IDEAS

THE HEALTH OF AMERICASM

Other ways BCBS companies are committed to improving the health of all Americans is by uniting policymakers, community leaders, healthcare professionals and business leaders around data-driven insights to spark real change across the nation. Through advanced analytics and research, we are able to harness the power of big data—and big ideas—to uncover and share key health insights to meet complex health needs across the country. Here are three key components of The Health of America Initiative that are providing insights and solutions to improve the health of the nation.

Blue Cross Blue Shield Health IndexSM

The Blue Cross Blue Shield Health IndexSM is a preeminent measure of health that provides an unrivaled understanding about which diseases and conditions most impact Americans' overall quality of life. By identifying the impact of more than 200 health conditions, the BCBS Health Index provides a view of the health and wellness of a population down to the county level. Powered by data from more than 41 million BCBS commercially insured members per year from birth to age 64, this extensive resource makes a unique contribution to other available health data to support national and local discussions about how to improve health, health policy and healthcare practice in the U.S.

According to the BCBS Health Index, the top 10 conditions nationally, causing approximately 58 percent of commercially insured Americans' overall reduction in healthy, active years, are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 Hypertension | 7 Alcohol Use Disorder |
| 2 Major Depression | 8 Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) |
| 3 High Cholesterol | 9 Psychotic Disorder |
| 4 Coronary Artery Disease | 10 Crohn's Disease/ Ulcerative Colitis |
| 5 Type 2 Diabetes | |
| 6 Other Substance Use Disorder | |

By identifying the impact of more than 200 health conditions, the BCBS Health Index provides a view of the health and wellness of a population down to the county level

The Health of America Reports

The Health of America Reports are a series of in-depth, topical analyses using advanced analytics and BCBS Axis[®] Data to uncover key healthcare trends and drive the dialogue around healthcare quality, affordability and access for all Americans. These reports are the result of a collaboration between the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and Blue Health Intelligence.

Blue Cross Blue Shield Alliance for Health Research

The BCBS Alliance for Health Research enables access for some of the nation's top academic research institutions to Blue Cross and Blue Shield data resources—the country's largest collection of de-identified commercial insurance claims, healthcare professional and cost data. Tapping the power of this data, Alliance members are pursuing key research questions in healthcare. Their insights will help drive improvement across the healthcare system and—ultimately—make positive contributions to the health of all Americans.

For more information go to [HealthofAmerica.com](https://www.healthofamerica.com).





01

ADDRESSING **SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies support programs that address social determinants of health—the social, economic and environmental elements of our communities that can greatly influence our health—including income, education level, access to reliable transportation, nutritious food and places for physical activity.

BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF ARIZONA



NOURISHINGARIZONA.COM

Nourishing Arizona Week

Many Arizonans struggle to gain access to healthy food and make good nutritional choices—65 percent of Arizonans are overweight and nearly 14 percent are currently experiencing food poverty. From the results of a **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona (BCBSAZ)** commissioned survey, the following eating habits and perceptions were identified:

- Nearly 3 out of 5 Arizonans cook less than 10 meals a week at home
- 20 percent of Arizonans eat sugary foods simply because the items are within reach
- Nearly one-third of Arizonans feel that fruit and vegetables are too expensive to purchase regularly, yet the average price per serving of a fruit/vegetable snack is 34 cents, while a serving of an unhealthy packaged snack cost about twice as much at 67 cents.

BCBSAZ is committed to making a difference and encouraging a healthy lifestyle through its Nourishing Arizona program. Honoring the work of the program, Ariz. Governor Doug Ducey officially declared Nov. 4–10, 2017 as Nourishing Arizona Week.

During that week, BCBSAZ hosted four “Sugar Swap” events inviting the community to exchange foods with more than 7 grams of sugar per serving for \$5 in free produce. Healthy cooking demos were also offered to participants. The event aimed to educate Arizonans about the impacts of sugars on their health while encouraging healthier food choices. The sugary foods were composted and a local artist transformed the wrappers into a mixed-media mural measuring 4’ tall and 24’ wide.

BCBSAZ hosted four “Sugar Swap” events



BLUE SHIELD OF CALIFORNIA FOUNDATION

blue  of california
foundation

Blue Shield of California Foundation is an independent licensee of the Blue Shield Association

BLUESHIELDCAFOUNDATION.ORG

Domestic Violence & Healthcare Partnerships

Not only can domestic violence be life threatening, it also contributes to long-term health issues, mental health conditions, homelessness and cyclical behavior among children exposed to abuse.

A survey of Californians, which was commissioned by **Blue Shield of California Foundation** (BSCA Foundation), found that healthcare providers are one of the most trusted sources of help for those experiencing domestic violence. Recognizing the opportunity to greatly impact this critical issue, BSCA Foundation launched a statewide initiative to forge new partnerships between domestic violence agencies and community health centers in an effort to improve the way that both systems respond to the needs of survivors, contribute to prevention and advance community well-being.



One community health center saw patient disclosure rates about domestic violence go from 12 to 200 per year

With support from Futures Without Violence—a national anti-violence and advocacy organization—BSCA Foundation funded 19 collaborations with the aim of cultivating sustainable cross-sector relationships and developing new tools and approaches to end domestic violence and ameliorate its detrimental impact on health.

The landmark endeavor is improving lives and reaching more people and families by addressing root causes and looking beyond the traditional healthcare setting for answers.

HMSA FOUNDATION

hmsa
foundation

MAULIOLANETWORK.COM

Community Health Impact Using Social Networks

In what is Hawaii's first examination of the impact of socioeconomic networks on disease, Dr. Alike Maunakea, an Epigeneticist from the University of Hawaii's (UH) John A. Burns School of Medicine, and Dr. Ruben Juarez, an expert in social networks and behavior from the UH Economic Research Organization, are leading a study to prove that social and economic forces in a community can impact health. Their study, which is funded by the **HMSA Foundation**, focuses on Wai'anae, a community with the highest proportion of health disparities in the state and large Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations.

Conducted in partnership with MA'O Organic Farms—a nonprofit, 25-acre farm in Wai'anae—the study seeks to scientifically prove the community health impact of “aina” or land-based programs. MA'O is an acronym for mala (garden) 'ai (food) 'opio (youth) or youth food garden. The MA'O programs reconnect and restore the relationship between the land and the people to return abundance and prosperity to youth, to their families and to the community.

The study represents the start of a new line of research in Hawai'i that could enable community organizations to optimize their programs to more intentionally improve health and reduce health disparities for their

constituents. The HMSA Foundation believes this work will help to validate and lift up community voices in its effort to impact the social determinants of health.



The impact of socioeconomic networks on diseases of health disparities in Hawai'i has never before been measured

ANTHEM FOUNDATION



Anthem Blue Cross Foundation



Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation



Empire BlueCross BlueShield Foundation



Empire BlueCross Foundation



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia Foundation

WWW.ANTHEM.FOUNDATION

Smoking Cessation for Low-Income Housing Residents

Building on its longstanding relationship with the American Lung Association (ALA), the **Anthem Foundation** together with **Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia Foundation** and **Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation** developed a two year, nearly \$900,000 partnership to deliver smoking cessation programming in low-income housing units across 14 states. Reducing the use of tobacco and its harmful effects on consumers—along with their families and neighbors—builds on Anthem Foundation’s mission to create a healthier generation of Americans through strategic philanthropy.

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced a nationwide smoking ban in public housing that will go into effect on July 31, 2018. HUD has called for local public housing authorities (PHAs) to provide support services and programs to help residents comply with the ban by the deadline. Unfortunately, not all facilities are able to provide such measures for their tenants.

To address this gap—and what continues to be the nation’s number one, most preventable cause of death—Anthem Foundation’s support has mobilized



the industry-recognized “Gold Standard” of smoking cessation programs—Freedom From Smoking (FFS). The Anthem Foundation and ALA anticipate this unique partnership will be showcased by HUD as an example of how a public/private collaboration can be successful for both residents and PHA staff.

4,500 individuals who smoke—primarily living in government subsidized housing—across 14 markets will engage in the program

WELLMARK BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD



WELLMARK.COM/HEALTHYHOMETOWN

Healthy HometownSM Powered by Wellmark

When it comes to health, ZIP code may be more important than genetic code. Think about how your surroundings affect your health. Is processed food easier to fit into your hectic schedule than a healthy meal? Do you drive to the store rather than walk? In recent history, there have been staggering changes when it comes to our surroundings and daily activities, and it's affecting our health.

Healthy HometownSM Powered by **Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield** (Wellmark BCBS) was created to help communities change their environments and impact social behaviors. This initiative is designed to improve overall well-being by making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Healthy Hometown offers proven tools and techniques, available in the public domain, that have shown to be effective in terms of creating healthier communities and individuals. The tactics are easy for communities and organizations to access and implement. Through Healthy Hometown, communities can receive in-person, expert consultation and assistance. Since every community has different priorities, populations and

eat well

move more

feel better

budgets, Healthy Hometown can be customized easily for a community's level of interest and commitment. Healthy Hometown is free and available to all Iowa and South Dakota communities willing to do the work.

In 2017, Wellmark BCBS consulted with 17 communities to implement Healthy Hometown tactics, generating more interest in the program.



BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF KANSAS



BCBSKS.COM/PATHWAYS

Pathways to a Healthy Kansas

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas (BCBSKS) envisions Kansans living in healthy communities that provide the highest possible quality of life and well-being. Data show that increasing physical activity, eating healthy and avoiding tobacco are among the best ways to lower risk for developing many chronic diseases and to live healthier, longer.

Pathways to a Healthy Kansas is a major community grant program that provides community coalitions with the tools and resources needed to remove barriers and engage their communities in ways that turn healthy eating and tobacco-free, active living into a way of life.

Over \$535,000 in earned supplemental grants distributed to Round 1 communities since August 2016

Sixteen communities across the state have been awarded a three-year, \$100,000 coordination grant along with a variety of technical assistance and support. In addition, each community has the opportunity to earn supplemental grants of up to \$400,000 per community. In all, each Pathways community may receive up to \$500,000 in grants.

These coalitions are working within their communities on implementing health strategies across the sectors—or pathways—of community policy, resident/community well-being, food retail, healthcare, restaurants, schools and worksites. More than 360,000 Kansans have the opportunities to live healthier lifestyles through the Pathways initiative.



BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF MINNESOTA



THREESIXTYJOURNALISM.ORG

ThreeSixty Journalism

While Minnesota is one of the healthiest states, it also has some of the greatest health disparities in the nation. This is especially the case among communities of color and American Indians, people with lower incomes and those in rural areas. As public perception, stereotypes and the dominant mainstream narrative continue to influence policies and decision-making, the voices of communities most impacted by health inequities are frequently underrepresented in media coverage.



Through close collaboration, ThreeSixty Journalism and **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota** (BCBSMN) are working to change the dominant narrative on health by advancing a diverse pool of young storytellers. BCBSMN's partnership with ThreeSixty Journalism is seeking to reduce implicit biases in media, diversify storytellers and ultimately create more equity in our communities for present and future generations.

In partnership with BCBSMN, a multi-award winning broadcasting camp was created, incorporating ThreeSixty Journalism's media professionals and mentors to provide instruction to enhance students' reading, writing, presenting, and all-around journalism skills and support them in finding their own voice. During the broadcasting camp, BCBSMN shared stories of community-led organizations working to address health inequities across Minnesota. Each camper selected a story that resonated with them to research and prepare before going out to shoot a video story. Each of the student's stories was shared by the project's media partner, WCCO-TV.

In the span of just five days, the students created compelling video content on health equity that reached an audience of more than 79 million viewers.

BCBSMN believes that addressing the implicit bias in reporting is essential to creating an environment where positive steps to address inequities can thrive.

BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF KANSAS CITY



BLUEKC.COM

Healthy KC

Created as a partnership between **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City** (BCBSKC), the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce and a number of regional health and wellness leaders, Healthy KC aims to create a culture of health and wellness in Greater Kansas City. This collective effort advocates for real solutions that help shape individual, organizational and environmental health change through a collaborative, communitywide partnership. Healthy KC reaches across the community with five action teams: Healthy Eating, Active Living, Workplace Wellness, Tobacco Cessation and Behavioral Health.

Healthy KC launched Tobacco 21 (T21) to change the minimum age from 18 to 21 for sale and purchase of tobacco products and e-cigarettes across the metro area. Since its inception, 26 municipalities have passed T21, ultimately driving down tobacco use rates and improving health.

233 area companies received a Healthy KC Certification for Workplace Wellness

Recently, Healthy KC created Resilient KC to support behavioral health strategies. It explores the impact of adverse childhood experiences—such as abuse, neglect, being a child of divorce or a single parent



home, or growing up with a parent with mental illness or substance abuse—on adulthood. The initiative is one of 14 across the country to receive a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for further research.

BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF NORTH CAROLINA FOUNDATION



BCBSNCFoundation.org/COMMUNITY-CENTERED-HEALTH

Community-Centered Health

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation (Blue Cross NC Foundation) partners with, and invests in, clinical and community organizations to better understand and act on non-medical drivers of health, commonly known as social determinants.

In 2014, the Blue Cross NC Foundation launched its Community-Centered Health initiative and has invested more than \$2 million to support collaborations between clinical and community organizations with the ultimate goal of reducing health disparities and impacting health at the population level.



In 2018, the program is expected to more than triple in scope

Recognizing that a population can be defined by the boundaries of a neighborhood, a county and everything in between, the program's tenets include partnership between primary care and community-based organizations, significant inclusion of populations most impacted by health disparities to inform planning and decision-making and emphasis on policy and environmental change over program implementation.

In 2017, the Community-Centered Health initiative supported three robust community collaborations across the state that address upstream approaches to health including housing, healthy food access and racial disparities in birth outcomes. The program is expanding into additional communities in 2018 and is expected to more than triple in scope.

Health starts long before patients get to the doctor's office

REGENCE BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD IN OREGON AND UTAH, REGENCE BLUESHIELD IN WASHINGTON



WWW.REGENCE.COM

New Avenues for Youth

Since 1997, New Avenues has impacted the lives of more than 20,000 Portland individuals through a range of services that address basic needs and safety, provide opportunities for education and career and help youth achieve self-sufficiency. In 2017, **Regence BlueCross BlueShield** (Regence BCBS) invested in the expansion of this effort into East Multnomah County, including the agency's Youth Opportunity Center and Equity Cohort, which provides outreach to and wraparound supports for youth experiencing housing instability, programming for LGBTQ youth, youth in foster care and youth involved in sex trafficking.



Utah Food Bank's Mobile Food Pantry

It is estimated that more than 400,000 Utahns are food insecure, and one in every five children goes hungry. In 2017, **Regence BCBS** partnered with the Utah Food Bank to provide meals to these children via their innovative Mobile Food Pantry project. Each month, eligible children walk through a distribution line where Regence employees fill their bags with 20 pounds of food. Thanks to this critical partnership, children and families in Utah have a consistent, convenient source for the nutritious food needed to succeed.



Mary's Place Housing and Wellness Services

In Washington, **Regence BlueShield's** partnership with Mary's Place, which provides shelter, housing and health resources to families experiencing homelessness through a network of family shelters and day centers, allowed Mary's Place to grow its team of Housing and Health Advocates. These teams help families with issues, such as eviction prevention and move-in costs, as well as providing medical support, such as Popsicle Place, a program that supports families with children that have complex medical conditions like autism.



CAPITAL BLUECROSS



CAPBLUECROSS.COM

Beyond School Walls

As part of its commitment as a community-based health insurer, **Capital BlueCross** became the first company in Central Pennsylvania to partner with Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) for its Beyond School Walls program. The unique mentoring program allows middle school students from the Harrisburg school district the opportunity to participate in one-on-one mentoring in a professional environment.

Beyond School Walls is designed to create a trusting relationship between young adults and professionals, inspiring the students to see a future beyond high school. Employees volunteer to be a Big Brother or Big Sister and help teach professional and life skills. The students come to Capital BlueCross once

77 percent of Beyond School Walls students said their mentor helped them positively cope with everyday challenges



a month, where they attend workshops on effective communication, healthy relationships, goal setting and teamwork.

During an end-of-the-year celebration in 2017, the students and their mentors showcased their collaborative work, including vision boards of future career interests and anti-bullying public service announcements.

The program is enabling healthier living on multiple fronts, including mental health improvement, nutritional awareness through education and healthy meals and increased life skills. The program was so successful, it has been expanded at Capital BlueCross and has led BBBS to engage other companies in the region.



TRIPLE-S SALUD



SALUD.GRUPOTRIPLES.COM

Disaster Relief after Hurricane Maria

The destruction left in the wake of Hurricane María prompted **Triple-S Salud** (Triple-S) to immediately pivot and refocus its efforts and resources on addressing the pressing needs of Puerto Rico’s most vulnerable patients and communities.

Turning its attention to individuals on ventilators, oxygen and dialysis, Triple-S collaborated with Fresenius, the largest operator of dialysis centers in Puerto Rico and worldwide, and the National Guard to locate all of its 1,000 dialysis patients and ensure their access to life-saving care.

Just days after the hurricane, Triple-S also began contacting network providers to assess their needs and help them reestablish operations. Before a month had passed, Triple-S’ initiatives contributed to resumed operations in:

- 87 percent or 2,087 medical offices
- 89 percent or 54 of the 61 hospitals in Triple-S’ network
- 122 clinical laboratories
- 81 percent of the 1,051 pharmacies were processing prescriptions

Efforts by Triple-S and its employees helped 1,000 dialysis patients and isolated communities in 24 municipalities across Puerto Rico

More than 100 Triple-S volunteers participated in daily community outreach initiatives that brought medical care and supplies to isolated communities in 24 municipalities across the island. In addition, five Emergency Stop & Go Centers offered medical services to patients that were unable to reach their doctors and offered visits to elderly group homes.



BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF SOUTH CAROLINA FOUNDATION



LETSGOSC.ORG

Let's Go! SC

Let's Go! SC is a multi-year program which focuses on increasing the ability of six South Carolina communities to effectively work to make policy, systems and environmental (PSE) changes to enhance healthy eating and active living.

Through funding provided by the **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of South Carolina Foundation**, the Let's Go! SC initiative increased each community coalition's capacity to implement action plans that were developed to institute PSE changes.

44,000 people now live within one mile of a park or path enhanced by Let's Go! SC

These coalitions built and sustained momentum, evolved their membership as needed, leveraged additional funding for projects, built strong relationships with partners and planned their continued sustainability. All coalitions implemented projects that increased access to physical activity and healthy foods that met the unique needs of their communities.







02

ENABLING **HEALTHIER LIVING**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies are committed to improving the health and wellness of the communities we call our own by providing a variety of resources to organizations, schools, families and individuals to help create a healthier living environment for all. Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies also create local initiatives that are helping individuals and families adopt and maintain healthy habits.

ARKANSAS BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD



BLUEANDYOUFITNESSCHALLENGE-ARK.COM

Arkansans are up to the Challenge!

Better health and fitness can start anywhere. In 2018, the Blue &You Fitness Challenge celebrates 15 years of meeting people where they are and encouraging 30 minutes of aerobic-style movement on most days.

This free, three-month annual contest (March–May) asks participants to exercise and log their activity online to advance one virtual checkpoint on a map.

The goal is to stem the tide of preventable health problems by getting people more physically active. Past participants have reported improvements in blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, weight, energy, sleep, mood, stress levels and much more.

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield is a co-founder of the contest, along with the Arkansas Departments of Health and Human Services. Teams compete for bragging rights and a trophy.

In a yearly post-contest evaluation, participants report (on average):

- 95 percent who previously exercised one day (or less) per week, finished at three or more days a week
- 54 percent increased their exercise
- 42 percent say peers motivated them to complete the challenge
- 98 percent would participate again

Since official tracking began, 1,509 groups (94,642 participants) have taken the challenge. Currently, the amount of exercise recorded during the contest timeframe exceeds 250,000 hours annually.



BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF ALABAMA



BlueCross BlueShield
of Alabama

WWW.ALABAMABLUE.COM

Alabama Walk@School Day

In schools all across Alabama, children are forming a healthy habit for life and reducing childhood obesity through Alabama Walk@School Day (AW@SD), a school-based walking program created by **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama (BCBSAL)**.

AW@SD is an extension of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association's National Walk@Lunch Day (NW@LD), which BCBSAL hosts annually with events in four cities across the state. Like NW@LD, Alabama Walk@School Day encourages walking as an easy exercise to encourage increased physical activity among children.

Created in 2015, the Alabama Walk@School Day program was piloted in three schools and attracted nearly 3,000 student participants during its first year. Since then, more than 117,000 students and 187 schools have participated in the program.

AW@SD focuses on encouraging children to get active for at least 30 minutes a day. Schools that sign up for AW@SD either walk or participate in various physical activities during physical education classes or in schoolwide events during the school day.

144 PARTICIPATING
SCHOOLS IN 2017

92,565 PARTICIPATING
STUDENTS IN 2017

To help schools plan their events, BCBSAL makes available a toolkit that contains a social media guide, certificate and sticker template.

187 TOTAL NUMBER
OF PARTICIPATING
SCHOOLS SINCE 2015

117,589 TOTAL NUMBER
OF PARTICIPATING
STUDENTS SINCE 2015



BLUE CROSS OF IDAHO FOUNDATION FOR HEALTH



BCIDAHOFUNDATION.ORG/
COMMUNITY-HEALTH-CHAMPIONS

Community Health Champions

Community Health Champions is an innovative learning collaborative funded by the **Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health** and provides an opportunity for local mayors and their staff to explore, in-depth, how they can fight childhood obesity in their communities.

This invitation-only program brought together champion mayors throughout Idaho to learn best practices to fight childhood obesity, collaborate with other leaders from across the state and act to make big ideas happen.

Program sessions included inspiring and informative presentations from local and national experts while workshops focused on environmental and policy changes that can occur at the local level to address more access to healthy foods and increase physical activity.

Mayors were also provided the tools to have dialogue with their communities, understand their

community's assets, build collaborative partnerships and craft strategies that focused on programs, physical projects and policy changes to fight childhood obesity.

Change can start in our local communities



BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF LOUISIANA



WWW.BCBSLA.COM

Fighting Opioid Addiction: Drug Takeback

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana (BCBSLA) is forging partnerships to fight prescription painkiller addiction across Louisiana. In 2017, BCBSLA partnered with the National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators and the Louisiana Attorney General to expand safe drug takeback available around the clock through secure drop boxes located across the state.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, America is in an opioid epidemic and almost half of opioid overdose deaths happen to someone who is taking these drugs by prescription for pain relief. Safely disposing of unused or leftover opioids or other prescription drugs can lower risks of abuse or misuse and keep these drugs from falling into the wrong hands.

BCBSLA's drop boxes are a secure, anonymous way for people to safely dispose of unused, expired or leftover prescription medication, which can prevent it from being stolen or misused. BCBSLA has placed drug drop boxes in each parish of the state, which are taking 2 tons of pills out of circulation each year.

Louisiana residents can search for drug drop boxes in their area on an interactive online map: www.bcbsla.com/landing/safedruggedrop. BCBSLA also encourages individuals to learn more about opioids and how they can lower their risk by visiting www.EndTheEpidemicLA.org.



BCBSLA drug boxes are taking 2 tons of pills out of circulation each year

BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS



MASSACHUSETTS

WWW.BLUECROSSMA.COM

Healthy Living Rx Collaborative

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts' (BCBSMA) Healthy Living Collaborative, Dot Rx, combines the resources and expertise of six nonprofit organizations to make it easier for residents of Boston's Dorchester neighborhood to become more physically active, adopt healthier eating habits and spend time enjoying the outdoors.

Individuals and families that receive Dot Rx prescriptions from physicians at Codman Square Health Center have access to free or reduced-rate resources and activities at DailyTable, Dorchester YMCA, Healthworks Community Fitness and Appalachian Mountain Club's Outdoors Rx program.

Peer coaches recommend programs that best fit each family's needs and help them stay motivated and engaged. "I ask them to set specific, realistic goals, recommend Dot Rx programs to help them get there, and monitor progress," says Coach Charndra McKay. "I'm there to be someone they can reach out to and help them stay accountable." Coaches are recruited and trained by Union Capital Boston, a nonprofit that transforms social capital into opportunity by rewarding community engagement.

Although healthy prescription programs are not new, Dot Rx is the first to bring together a health plan, multiple nonprofits and a community health center

to design and test an approach that can impact the health of underserved communities. BCBSMA has committed \$1 million over two years in financial grants and pro bono support.



Dot Rx is bringing healthy living to underserved populations through unique collaborations

BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MICHIGAN AND BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MICHIGAN FOUNDATION



BCBSM.COM

Taking Action on Opioid and Prescription Drug Abuse in Michigan

Opioid and prescription drug abuse has reached epidemic proportions both nationally and in Michigan with the number of deaths from drug overdose tripling since 2012. Overall, more Michigan residents died in 2016 from drug overdoses than car accidents.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation are taking action by partnering with the Michigan Health Endowment Fund, the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan and the Superior Health Foundation to assist communities in implementing sustainable, evidence-based practices that address the growing epidemic.

Nine community coalitions throughout Michigan will receive a total of \$570,400 in funding through the Taking Action on Opioid and Prescription Drug Abuse in Michigan by Supporting Community Responses initiative. The partnership provides one-time grants up to \$75,000 to begin new projects or to enhance or expand existing projects aimed at reducing opioid and prescription drug abuse and harm.

Grants will support
projects in more than
30 counties in every
region across the state

Evidenced-based programs to address the opioid epidemic in local communities, ranging from education to law enforcement to clinical interventions, were considered for funding. The grants will support projects in more than 30 counties in every region across the state to identify and implement collective actions to prevent and reduce opioid and prescription drug misuse and address the harms they cause. Communities are expected to share the results from this initiative with other communities for possible replication.



BLUE CROSS & BLUE SHIELD OF MISSISSIPPI



BlueCross BlueShield of Mississippi

GETREADYTORUNMS.COM

Get Ready to Run School Program

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi's (BCBSMS) Get Ready to Run School Program and Kids' One-Mile Fun Run events are inspiring students and families to find the joy in being active and healthy.

Developed by health and wellness professionals at BCBSMS in cooperation with the Mississippi Department of Education, the Get Ready to Run School Program teaches students about running and other healthy habits through a free P.E. curriculum offered to schools with grades K-5.

Get Ready to Run gives students the opportunity to join thousands of other children to train for and experience a real road-racing event, complete with professional timing and finisher medals. Just as the P.E. curriculum is free to schools, there is no cost to register for students in participating schools. Participating schools also have the opportunity to earn up to \$2,000 to support their physical education programs.

The program began in fall of 2013 and is offered in central Mississippi as well as the Golden Triangle

and Pine Belt regions. To date, more than 134,300 students in more than 100 schools have taken part in the program.



MORE THAN

134,300

STUDENTS IN 100+ SCHOOLS ACROSS MISSISSIPPI HAVE BEEN IMPACTED

MORE THAN

\$30,500

HAS BEEN AWARDED TO WINNING SCHOOLS

BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF NEBRASKA



NEBRASKABLUE.COM/COMMUNITY

Fearless Grant: Mid-Plains Community College Area Suicide Prevention Initiative

In 2017, **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska** (BCBSNE) awarded Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC), a regional college system with campuses across North Central Nebraska, a Fearless Grant for their suicide prevention program. The award was part of more than \$150,000 given through the Fearless Grant program, which was created in 2016 to support innovative, dynamic projects that impact health and wellness, human services and education efforts across the state.

As mental health issues and suicide rates continue to rise across the state, MPCC developed a unified approach to preventing suicide, mitigating suicide ideation and suicide intervention at campus locations and the greater campus communities.

MPCC staff received QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Gatekeeper training, creating a network of individuals empowered to identify suicidal persons, implement prevention strategies and ensure that assessment referrals occur before suicide happens. Students were invited to attend presentations by a suicide prevention expert, who addressed warning signs and taught intervention methods.

Across all campuses, the Student Life staff developed a standard operating procedure for suicide

intervention, aligning with the Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Plan and collaborating with local health professionals, law enforcement, school systems, businesses and nonprofits.



On average, one Nebraskan dies by suicide every 1.5 days

THE HORIZON FOUNDATION FOR NEW JERSEY



KNOCKOUTOPIOIDABUSE.DRUGFREENJ.ORG

Knock Out Opioid Abuse—A Town Hall Series

Since 2008, there have been more than 11,000 drug overdose deaths in New Jersey, a vast majority of which involved opioids. Recognizing the need for educating New Jerseyans on this growing epidemic, The **Horizon Foundation for New Jersey** and the Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey are hosting a series of town hall meetings in collaboration with many local prevention and treatment organizations, as well as law enforcement, the medical community and community leaders.

Over the course of 21 town hall meetings in every region of New Jersey, the Knock Out Opioid Abuse Town Hall series provides residents an opportunity to more fully understand the impact the national opioid epidemic is having on their own communities. The series provides resources and information for people to make better decisions for loved ones and to better understand the link between opioid prescription drug abuse and rising heroin abuse. The series also highlights exemplary local programs that can be replicated throughout the state.

More than 4,300 individuals have attended the town halls, which are also livestreamed and reach millions more via news and social media coverage.

4,300 + ATTENDED THE TOWN HALLS SERIES



NJTV, New Jersey’s PBS member network, aired a half-hour special program to commence the town halls and will host a statewide town hall at the series’ conclusion.

A dedicated website, knockoutopioidabuse.drugfreej.org, provides a full schedule of the town halls, registration information and other prevention and treatment resources. All town hall meetings are free of charge and open to the public.

BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD OF WESTERN NEW YORK



WWW.BCBSWNY.COM

Summer City Fitness

With nearly 46 percent of Buffalo's residents living below the poverty level, a number of barriers, including safety, access and cost, can prevent individuals from getting the exercise needed to prevent disease and sustain a healthy lifestyle.

To help address these challenges, **BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York** partnered with the City of Buffalo and Mayor Byron W. Brown to launch Summer City Fitness, a free fitness series in an inner-city section of Buffalo's East Side—a community that has not yet felt the benefits of the economic resurgence that's taking place across other parts of the city.

From 2016 to 2017, there was a 176 percent increase in the average number of attendees per class

As the longest-standing and only health plan headquartered in Buffalo, BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York is passionate about its commitment to supporting a healthier way of life for the community it serves—particularly in areas where resources to do so are scarce.

In conjunction with civic leaders, BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York's Summer City Fitness kicked off as Buffalo's first urban fitness program. The program engages city residents in healthy activities by providing access to free fitness classes in a safe and accessible environment.

Featuring a variety of free classes, Summer City Fitness welcomed nearly 500 residents of every age, race and fitness level each week with community-based instructors from the East Side neighborhood in 2017.



BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF NORTH DAKOTA CARING FOUNDATION



BCBSND.COM/CARING-FOUNDATION

Rural Health Grant Program

Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota Caring Foundation (BCBSND Caring Foundation) supports innovative solutions to help improve the health of North Dakotans in small towns and consistently work to help improve North Dakota’s healthcare system.

BCBSND Caring Foundation’s Rural Health Grant Program provides funding for activities, supplies, programs and events that support the health and wellness of rural North Dakotans of all ages and demonstrate collaborative efforts involving rural providers and their communities. The goal is to encourage rural healthcare providers to be champions of healthy activities in their communities

MORE THAN

90 GRANTS HAVE BENEFITED RURAL NORTH DAKOTA HEALTHCARE SINCE 2001



and to show support in addressing North Dakota’s escalating problems associated with sedentary lifestyles, such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

Since the program’s inception in 2001, over 90 different grants have benefited rural North Dakota healthcare.

Grants fund programs in rural communities that encourage healthy activity



REGENCE BLUESHIELD OF IDAHO



YMCATVIDAHO.ORG/PROGRAM/ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE-AIR

Treasure Valley Family YMCA Artist in Residence Program

Regence BlueShield of Idaho proudly directs funds toward the Artist in Residence (AIR) program offered by the Treasure Valley Family YMCA. This year-round healing arts program is for people living with chronic illness, such as cancer and neurological ailments. Patterned after The Creative Center at University Settlement, AIR is founded on the belief that “medicine cures the body, but art heals the spirit.”

The no-cost workshops are taught in collaboration with local professional artists and focus on both the art and craft of many art forms to help people access their imaginations and creative resources. Drawing, painting, sculpture, creative writing, printmaking,



fiber arts, textiles and performance art are among the many mediums explored in the program. Workshops are designed to help reduce anxiety, ease fears and combat isolation and boredom that can come with a diagnosis, helping people be viewed as unique individuals rather than representatives of a disease. Supportive group settings nurture creative spirits and help participants discover and strengthen sometimes hidden artistic talents.

Positive outcomes for participants and family members include:

- improved feelings of self-worth
- increased focus on positive life experiences
- retention of social identify
- greater ability to express one’s emotional/mental state

The AIR program enriches the lives of its participants and their family members during a time when the journey can seem daunting. AIR connects unique people in a safe and nurturing environment and contributes to the betterment of the community. AIR participants feel less like patients and more like people who, “...don’t have to just survive, but can THRIVE!”

In 2017, AIR served 459 participants at three YMCA branch facilities and multiple local artist studios

HIGHMARK FOUNDATION



HIGHMARKFOUNDATION.ORG

Opioid Reversal Program

In an effort to assist municipal police departments with reducing the incidence of opioid drug overdoses, the **Highmark Foundation** awarded a \$50,000, one-year grant in support of the Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association (PDAA)/ Pennsylvania District Attorneys Institute (PDAI) to establish a naloxone administration program in 29 western Pennsylvania counties. This grant allowed police departments to purchase 1,098 doses of intra-nasal naloxone, a medication designed to rapidly reduce opioid overdose.

District Attorneys in these counties are responsible for completing applications along with a request for the number of doses, a completed agreement with the local EMS agency, agreements with participating police departments and a standing order prescription for naloxone. Naloxone is only distributed to trained officers. Upon approval, the PDAI provides naloxone vendor and ordering information to the district attorney. Quarterly reports are submitted to the PDAI regarding distribution and use of naloxone to determine the effectiveness of the program and assist with strategic deployment of naloxone in counties where it is most needed.



This is the second \$50,000 grant awarded to the PDAI by the Highmark Foundation as a result of the severity of the opioid crisis and its devastating effect on communities and families in Pennsylvania. The purpose of the grant was to remove barriers, provide greater access to naloxone and save lives.

SINCE 2015

5,187 INDIVIDUALS WERE SAVED AS A RESULT OF ACCESSIBLE AND AVAILABLE NALOXONE

BLUE CROSS & BLUE SHIELD OF RHODE ISLAND



BCBSRI.COM/COMMUNITY

Recess Rocks in RI

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island (BCBSRI) continues its dedication to combatting childhood obesity through a partnership with Playworks New England and the Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition, aimed at increasing physical activity in local schools through the power of play during recess. Rhode Island ranks fifth highest in the nation for overweight and obesity rates for 10–17 year olds with nearly one in every three children ages 2–19 in Rhode Island being obese (17 percent) or overweight (15 percent), according to data from Rhode Island KIDS COUNT.

Now entering its third academic year, the Recess Rocks in Rhode Island partnership has doubled from its initial work with 18 schools during 2016 to 36 schools in 2017. In 2018, the partnership will include 55 elementary schools from 21 districts across the state. BCBSRI has provided more than \$300,000 in grant funding to build and expand this partnership following the passage of a new state law requiring at least 20 minutes of recess per day in all Rhode Island elementary schools.

The partnership's goal is to change school culture and improve the health of children by leveraging the power of safe, fun and healthy play at school every day. A national study shows Playworks curriculum leads to increased vigorous physical activity, cooperation on the playground and in the classroom and decreased bullying and disciplinary incidents.



In 2018, Recess Rocks will expand to 55 schools across the state

BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF VERMONT



BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

BCBSVT.COM/CASEMANAGEMENT

Opiate Addiction Outreach Program

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBSVT) is committed to improving delivery care processes to meet the needs of its members, especially those with complex care management needs. To that end, BCBSVT directed its quality improvement team along with its integrated health team to analyze how quickly BCBSVT case management services were provided to local BCBSVT members through its opiate addiction outreach program.

The analysis reviewed the notification system that was in place to determine the speed with which case managers were alerted when a member was in need. By removing system bottlenecks and improving feedback loops, BCBSVT's integrated health team now receives notifications once every week instead of once every month when a BCBSVT member goes to the emergency room and is identified as needing additional follow-up care. This allows BCBSVT case managers more time to connect Vermonters in need to additional services and resources throughout the state.

In addition, BCBSVT partnered with Vermont Medicaid, other carriers and the Vermont Department of Health to create and implement new statewide opioid prescribing regulations. Within the first six months following the

implementation of the policy, the new regulations have resulted in 20 percent fewer opioid prescriptions and 25 percent fewer opioid pills dispensed.

This means that in over a year, BCBSVT members will receive 670,000 fewer opioid pills.



The integrated health triage team is notified weekly if a member goes to the ER and needs follow up, rather than monthly

PREMERA BLUE CROSS



PREMERA.COM

Premera Social Impact

Recognizing the importance between behavioral health and overall health, **Premera Blue Cross** (Premera BC) launched a \$3 million Social Impact Program aimed at supporting behavioral health issues, particularly in underserved communities.

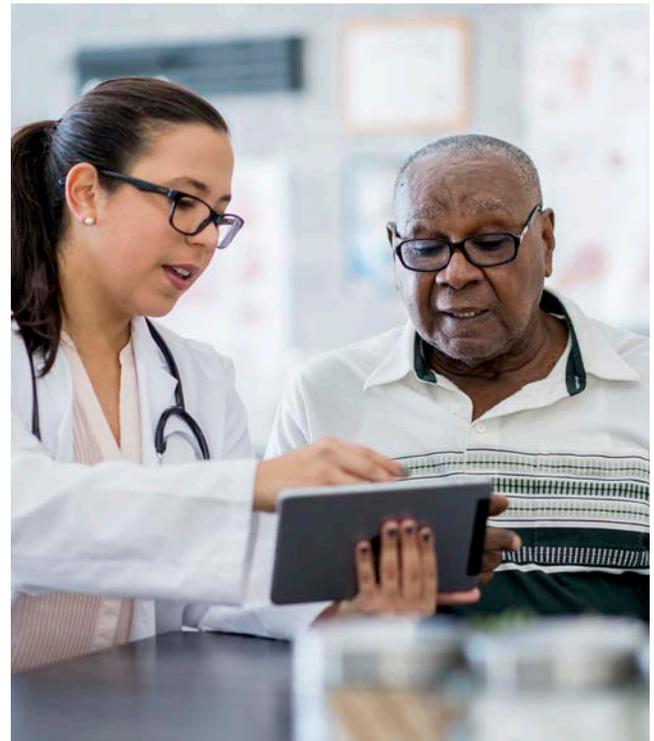
Based on data from Premera BC's recent national health index, and state and local community health assessments, health conditions such as depression, anxiety, mood disorder and substance abuse are common areas of concern. These conditions are nearly universal experiences of individuals with behavioral health problems, with the abuse most commonly occurring in childhood.

Premera BC, which serves Washington and Alaska, believes that overall health will improve by addressing behavioral health issues—especially for people of color and low-income populations where

For the majority of people who are suffering from psychological distress there is safe, effective treatment that can vastly improve their quality of life

community health data consistently shows treatment disparities exist. By treating behavioral health, people's physical health will improve—something that's good for the company and good for the community.

In March 2018, Premera BC announced that it is investing nearly \$40 million over five years to support efforts across Washington and Alaska to address a wide variety of behavioral health issues.



BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF WYOMING CARING FOUNDATION



BCBSWY.COM/COMPANY_INFO/FOUNDATION

Healthy Habits

In January 2015, **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming’s Caring Foundation**, in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club Alliance of Wyoming, implemented Healthy Habits—a healthy lifestyles program created to improve the health of Wyoming’s youth. This initiative is one component of the Triple Play curriculum developed by the Boys and Girls Clubs of America in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Healthy Habits is designed to teach young people about the benefits of eating right and being physically active while equipping them with the skills necessary to adopt healthier lifestyles, including how to make good food choices, shop wisely, cook, garden, remain active and share what they have learned with their families and communities. The youth are encouraged to take the steps necessary—both big and small—toward positive behavior change.

The program has served more than 2,800 youth between the ages of 6 and 18 at sixteen club sites throughout Wyoming annually.



Healthy Habits funded 151,453 healthy snacks and 75,399 meals to Wyoming children in 2017





03

IMPROVING HEALTHCARE QUALITY AND AFFORDABILITY

Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies are leaders in healthcare innovations, ensuring all Americans receive the high-quality healthcare they deserve. In addition to the 704 locally developed, patient-focused programs, we are designing and supporting community-based programs that facilitate the transformation of healthcare, including education programs that encourage positive patient/physician relationships, healthcare navigation tools for patients and medical research.

HEALTH CARE SERVICE CORPORATION



BlueCross BlueShield.
Illinois • Montana • New Mexico
Oklahoma • Texas

HCSC2017SRR.COM

Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Program

As part of Health Care Service Corporation's (HCSC) broader efforts to help its communities where its Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies operate (Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas), HCSC launched a pilot program to improve the screening rates for diabetic retinopathy—the most common complication of diabetes, which causes vision impairment and blindness. To help increase screenings, HCSC donated handheld digital cameras to two Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) in Illinois which serve populations where health and economic disparities are prevalent.

As part of the pilot program, clinical staff at participating FQHCs were trained to conduct the retinal screenings using the digital camera, enabling them to capture images without dilating the pupils with eye drops. The images were then transmitted to eye specialists who generally delivered a diagnostic report within 90 minutes.

Within five months of receiving the equipment, participating FQHCs screened nearly 800 patients as part of their regular primary care provider visits. Pathology reports showed that more than 11 percent needed to see a specialist as result of the exam. The screenings

were free and open to the community—whether the patient was a Blue Cross and Blue Shield member or not.

Prior to HCSC's donation and training, participating FQHCs did not conduct on-site screenings for diabetic retinopathy and had to refer patients elsewhere—decreasing the likelihood of patient follow-up because of having to miss work or find transportation to appointments with specialists. Building from this early success, HCSC plans to provide diabetic retinopathy screenings in other communities within its states to broaden the impact of the program.



It is estimated that early detection and treatment of diabetic retinopathy can reduce the risk of severe vision loss by 90 percent

EXCELLUS BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD



EXCELLUSBCBS.COM/COMMUNITY

Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Initiatives

Excellus BlueCross BlueShield (Excellus BCBS) supports dilated retinal eye (DRE) screening for diabetic patients throughout the upstate New York regions it serves. Excellus BCBS' DRE program allows diabetic patients to be screened for eye diseases, such as diabetic retinopathy, during their primary care appointment. Diabetic retinopathy is a leading cause of blindness in individuals who have diabetes, but often there are no symptoms in the early stages of the disease. If identified early, diabetic retinopathy is a treatable condition.

Retinal images are captured using special camera equipment in the primary care office



Retinal images are captured using special camera equipment in the primary care office. The images are then transmitted through a secure, encrypted, HIPAA-compliant network and viewed by a board-certified retinal specialist. Images can be used to screen for diabetic retinopathy, cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration and other retinal abnormalities that can lead to vision loss and blindness.

This far-reaching program creates the potential to screen more than 6,000 new patients by 2021. By making screening convenient and available in the primary care setting, this program addresses barriers to care, such as conflicting work schedules, lack of transportation and inadequate access to an ophthalmologist. Through this initiative, more patients who have diabetic eye disease can be identified and receive the necessary treatment to prevent blindness.

Excellus BCBS
2021 goal: prevent
blindness in more
than 6,000 diabetic
patients across
upstate New York

INDEPENDENCE BLUE CROSS FOUNDATION

INDEPENDENCE BLUE CROSS
FOUNDATION

Independence 

IBXFOUNDATION.ORG

Nursing Internship Program

The Independence Blue Cross Foundation's Nursing Internship Program is an innovative approach to preparing nurses to be future leaders in healthcare. Through its unique model that emphasizes experiential learning and competency-building, the Nursing Internship Program provides undergraduate nursing students with experiences and skills to not only provide exceptional patient care, but also to lead efforts to change the way healthcare is delivered.

Through the program, nursing students spend 10 weeks working in one of two non-traditional healthcare settings, including community health centers and in business areas at Independence Blue Cross. Through these practice settings, nurse interns are exposed to career paths that go beyond hospital walls into the communities where patients live. Nurse interns also participate in several professional development sessions led by the Independence Blue Cross Foundation and complete a research poster project.

The program was evaluated in 2017 by Widener University's Leadership Center for Nursing Education Research to evaluate its model, impact, and potential for scale and replication. The evaluation resulted in numerous positive outcomes. With the model validated, the Independence Blue Cross Foundation seeks to expand the program locally and see it replicated nationally.



Through the program,
nursing students spend
10 weeks working in non-
traditional healthcare settings





04

IMPROVING **HEALTHCARE ACCESS**

Our partnerships with local community health clinics focus on patient-centered primary care, address medically underserved areas and reach patients of all cultural and economic backgrounds. Additionally, Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies are providing education and funding resources to build a strong front-line team of future doctors, nurses and other healthcare providers.

THE FLORIDA BLUE FOUNDATION

Florida Blue 
Foundation

WWW.FLORIDABLUEFOUNDATION.COM

Chronic Care Home Visits by Community Paramedics

In Seminole County, Florida, 15.5 percent of the county's residents under the age of 65 have no health insurance and many more are underinsured. On limited incomes and often living away from public transportation, these residents, many of whom have chronic health conditions, find traveling to receive medical care difficult.

Through a partnership with the **Florida Blue  Foundation** and the Health Council of East Central Florida, an innovative home visit program—Chronic Care Home Visits by Community Paramedics—provides much needed healthcare to the uninsured and underinsured residents in East Central Florida who need regular medical visits, but have mobility or transportation limitations.

After physicians at federally qualified health clinics order scheduled follow-up home visits, the Chronic Care Home Visits by Community Paramedics assigns paramedics to perform home safety inspections, food and medication reviews, patient condition evaluation and other services permitted under a paramedic license.

Just finishing its first year, the three-year initiative has three main goals: achieve a 3 percent reduction in high utilizer calls to 9-1-1, connect at least 50 percent of the 9-1-1 utilizers to community services that can assist them and reduce hospital readmissions from an average of 4 to 3 percent.



This program provides health care via paramedics to uninsured and underinsured **Seminole County** residents

By working in partnership with nonprofit partners, the Florida Blue  Foundation is delivering creative and effective ways to improve healthcare for underserved, underinsured and low-income individuals across the state.

CAREFIRST BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD



CAREFIRST.COM/COMMUNITY

Northern Virginia Partner Collaboration

While Northern Virginia includes some of the nation's wealthiest counties, it also contains communities experiencing major economic disparities. These areas are often overlooked when discussing traditional barriers to care and socioeconomic circumstances driving health outcomes, but like so many communities throughout the **CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield** (CareFirst BCBS) region, disparities do exist.

As part of ongoing efforts to increase access to care for much needed healthcare services, CareFirst BCBS contributed \$275,000 to six Northern Virginia nonprofit community partners who are adopting a collaborative approach to increasing access to healthcare services. These organizations—Arlington Free Clinic, A-SPAN, Medical Care for Children Partnership Foundation, Neighborhood Health, Northern Virginia Family Service and NOVA Scripts (NSC)—are implementing and expanding programs to address a range of health needs, including dental, behavioral health, pediatric care, primary healthcare, access to prescriptions and respite care for homeless individuals. The collaboration will increase available services to more than 2,400 under- or uninsured patients.



In addition to its recent grants, CareFirst BCBS has invested more than \$4 million in total giving to these six nonprofit community partners since 2008.

CareFirst BCBS supports its community partners in Northern Virginia to expand healthcare access to more than 2,400 under- or uninsured patients

BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD OF TENNESSEE HEALTH FOUNDATION



BETTERTENNESSEE.COM

BlueCross Power of We Scholarships

The BlueCross Power of We Scholarship program aims to build a more inclusive healthcare workforce in Tennessee and ultimately help reduce health disparities throughout the state. Each year, three outstanding minority college students who are studying for careers in healthcare earn \$10,000 to help continue their academic careers.

Funded by the **BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Health Foundation** (BCBSTHF), the scholarships are presented in partnership with the Memphis chapter of the National Association of Health Services Executives. They recognize not only achievements in academics, but also community service and leadership.

BlueCross Power of We scholarships provide a much-needed resource for minority students who may not have had the same opportunities as others.

Since 2013, BCBSTHF has helped 15 promising students continue their studies in the fields of nursing, medical technology, pharmacy and more.

The scholarship program aligns with **BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee's** (BCBSTN) larger diversity and inclusion efforts, which extend from its own workforce to community partnerships and initiatives.

In July, BCBSTN held a public event recognizing the 2017 BlueCross Power of We Scholarship winners, which included a panel discussion on health disparities featuring healthcare experts from the Memphis area. Panelists addressed factors driving health disparities, such as the social determinants of health and the relationship between mental and physical health, along with potential solutions. The discussion also touched on the importance of cultural competency and representation in fields like healthcare, further illustrating the need for the scholarship program.



\$105,000 invested
in Power of We Scholarships
since 2013



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