**BlueCross BlueShield Data Innovation Challenge: Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q1. Where can I learn more about the BCBS Data Innovation Challenge?**

You can learn more about the BCBS Data Innovation Challenge here: <https://www.bcbs.com/bluecross-blueshield-data-innovation-challenge>

**Q2. Where do I apply for the BCBS Data Innovation Challenge?**

The application page can be accessed here: <https://databox-client-staging.herokuapp.com/applicant/login>

**Q3. When are applications due?**

The application portal will be open from April 30 to June 25.

**Q4. When will winners be chosen?**

Following application submissions, finalists will be announced around the end of July. After an internal test period to validate each finalist’s hypothesis and presentation on their findings to BCBSA and BHI leadership, the winning organization will be announced around the end of October. Dates are subject to change*.*

**Q5. What is the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association?**

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association is a national federation of 36 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide health care coverage for one in three Americans. BCBSA provides health care insights through [The Health of America Report](https://www.bcbs.com/about-us/capabilities-initiatives/health-america-initiative/health-america-report) series and the national BCBS Health Index. For more information on BCBSA and its member companies, please visit [bcbs.com](http://bcbs.com/). We also encourage you to connect with us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/BCBSAssociation), check out our video*s* on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/user/bluecrossblueshield), follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/BCBSAssociation) and check out our[blog](https://www.bcbs.com/the-health-of-america/articles)*.*

**Q6. What is Blue Health Intelligence?**

Leveraging the power of medical and pharmacy claims data from more than 190 million Americans, [Blue Health Intelligence](https://bluehealthintelligence.com/index.php/#180-million-people) (BHI) delivers insights that empower healthcare organizations to improve patient care, reduce costs, and optimize performance. Our team of data analysts, clinicians, IT experts, and epidemiologists provide analytics, software-as-a-service, and in-depth consulting to healthcare stakeholders. Blue Health Intelligence is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and carries the trade name of Health Intelligence Company, LLC.

**Q7. Why was this challenge created?**

We are looking to extend the value of our existing data and resources to organizations that can meaningfully impact the triple aim, while simultaneously providing value to our more than 100 million members. The Blue Cross Blue Shield is a catalyst for change, and it wants to leverage this opportunity to engage with the broader market in a way that has never been possible before.

“The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies across the country are committed to making health care more accessible, more affordable and simpler to support the health of America,” said Bob Kolodgy, executive vice president and chief financial officer for BCBSA and BHI board member. “A major roadblock in advancing innovative solutions to improve how our health care system works is a lack of access to data.”   
  
“By providing a leading-edge company with BHI’s dataset and state-of-the-art analytic resources and technologies, they’ll be in a position to develop meaningful solutions that don’t just break through barriers, but also increase patients’ access to care, make health care work more efficiently, and improve health,” said Swati Abbott, CEO of BHI.

**Q8. What are the “use cases” applicants should address?**

The Challenge is looking for novel solutions and ideas which will leverage access to BHI data to impact one or more of the following areas:

1. Identify, predict, and prioritize members and providers for real-time interventions
2. Use data to address barriers to care
3. Manage the dynamic individual process of care

After a series of interviews with BCBS and industry leadership, we have identified three use cases that are ripe for healthcare innovation. All applications will be measured against the degree that it will advance and disrupt the identified use cases.

**Q9. What constitutes identification, prediction, and prioritization of members and providers for real-time interventions?**

In order to foster better quality and more efficient care, we must be able to identify and predict members who are likely to need care and can be helped by engaging early and in a focused manner. We must also understand where variance in care delivery exists and be able to support the delivery of safe, consistent care to members. Identifying these opportunities often requires new algorithms and identification techniques involving:

* 1. Machine learning
  2. Integration of different data sources (EHR, social data, financial data, genomic data for example)
  3. New approaches to real time data (ADT data, Utilization alerts, etc.) integration into analytics
  4. New approaches to pattern recognition in datasets.

**Q10. What constitutes use of data to address barriers to care?**

Barriers to care are real and varied. Often the best most efficient care cannot be achieved only because patients can’t manage the context of their lives to include the time and ability to get the right care at the right time. Those barriers include:

* 1. Social barriers
  2. Emotional and behavioral barriers
  3. Access barriers, including geographical barriers (rural areas for example)
  4. Cultural and language barriers
  5. Complexity barriers (our system is extremely complex and that limits available of health care)
  6. Other barriers including such items as loneliness, isolation, competing priorities, etc.

**Q11. What constitutes the dynamic individual process of care?**

In some ways, the objectives of analytics and patient care are opposites. Analytics are the discovery, interpretation, and communication of meaningful patterns in data and the process of applying those patterns toward effective decision making. Patient care is often the discovery of and intervention into low probability but high consequence events. How does one properly use analytics to impact the individual’s journey through health care, including:

* 1. Optimal decision making by the patient and the care giver
  2. Proper transitions from one caregiver to another and from one site to another
  3. Proper management and decision making of chronicity and secondary prevention (avoiding relapses and recurrences)
  4. Proper lifestyle management to the individual
  5. Other factors that impact the individual patient journey.

**Q12. How will the finalists be selected?**

Companies completing an application will be evaluated on how well they address one of the proposed use cases, the effect their solution will have on members, plans, and society, their ability to implement the proposed solution at scale, the degree to which the proposed solution is novel, the value that leveraging BHI data is likely to bring, and the extent to which BHI and BCBSA resources are required to support the initiative.

**Q13. Does my organization have to already be addressing one or more of the outlined use cases to apply?**

While demonstrated experience with regard to addressing one or more of the outlined use cases is favorable, it is not necessary to apply. Demonstrating experience at scale in similar use cases will be considered in the selection process. However, all organizations with a novel idea to leverage BHI data with their solution to impact one or more of the outlined use cases are encouraged to apply.

**Q14. Does my organization have to be mature to apply?**

The chosen organizations will collaborate with The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and Blue Health Intelligence to make use of the most relevant data to address their proposed use case. The outlined use cases are significant challenges for our members, plans, and society. In aiming to address these use cases, applicants should have the ability to implement their solutions at scale.

**Q15. How many times can I apply?**

Each applicant (i.e. a company or entity) can submit one submission to the challenge. Have multiple ideas? Select the best one for submission.

**Q16. What is the prize awarded to winner?**

The winner will receive access to a subset of the database of more than 5 billion covered procedures, and support and advice from BHI for six months. The winning company will also receive mentorship and advice from BCBS companies’ and leaders of the Health Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS).

**Q17. How is the winning organization chosen?**

Once finalists are selected, each organization will be given the opportunity to validate their hypothesis by means of a two-month test period using a specialized data extract from BHI’s national data warehouse. Upon completion, each organization will summarize their results for Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and Blue Health Intelligence leadership.

**Q18. When will data testing take place for the finalists?**

The finalists will have the opportunity between August 2019 and October 2019 to access a set of relevant data and validate their proposed use case. Specific details will be mutually decided upon between Blue Cross Blue Shield Association/Blue Health Intelligence leadership and the selected organizations.

**Q19. What data from Blue Health Intelligence is available for testing?**

The BHI data warehouse is a rich source of clinically enriched healthcare claims and membership data. Overall, more than 195 million members are represented with close to 58 million active members. This includes an unparalleled data volume with more than 984.6 million facility claims, 13.6 billion professional claims, and 4.6 billion Rx claims. Over 27 million members have continuous enrollment in each of the last two calendar years (CY 2017 and 2018).

The BHI data warehouse:

* Includes over 10 years of history
* Contains conformed data augmented with Episodes of Care and other clinical enrichment
* Represents every 3-digit ZIP code in the United States

Member and pricing data are de-identified to protect patient and partner privacy. All data used for BHI analytics undergoes four levels of certification, including an independent third-party actuarial review, to ensure the strongest foundation of statistically reliable data. All data used for BHI analytics undergoes four levels of certification, including an independent third-party actuarial review, to ensure the strongest foundation of statistically reliable data.

**Q20. How will the data be made available?**

Teams within BHI will work with the selected finalists to prepare and provide access to the more appropriate datasets.

**Q21. I am interested, but am having trouble applying. Where can I go for help?**

1. First time users will need to create an applicant account (Click login, sign up via the databox homepage OR directly via: <http://databox.healthbox.com/applicant/sign-up>) using your email address and a password of your choosing
2. New accounts require email confirmation.
3. You can save your application and complete it during multiple sittings. In progress applications will be accessible directly from your dashboard. When complete, please click submit.
4. Applications can be submitted with blank data fields, please ensure that all fields have been completed before submitting. Users will not receive a confirmation that the application has been submitted, though the status of the application will change from “in progress” to “complete” on the user’s dashboard.
5. If you have additional questions or need help completing an application, please contact [blake@healthbox.com](mailto:blake@healthbox.com)

**Q22. Who is Healthbox?**

Healthbox is supporting BCBSA and BHI on operating this challenge. [Healthbox](https://www.healthbox.com/), a HIMSS Innovation Company, is a healthcare advisory firm that leading organizations trust withinnovation and digital strategy development and execution. Healthbox drives innovation from the inside and out, helping organizations build internal innovation programs in addition to assessing the commercial potential of employee-led projects. We also help them look to the market to find solutions to implement or invest in. Through both approaches, Healthbox provides the tools and support needed to improve care and support organizational growth. We are proud to work with industry leaders who share our passion for building, harnessing, and advancing solutions to empower the reinvention of healthcare.

**Q23. Who is HIMSS?**

HIMSS is a global advisor and thought leader supporting the transformation of health through information and technology. As a mission driven non-profit, HIMSS offers a unique depth and breadth of expertise in health innovation, public policy, workforce development, research and analytics to advise global leaders, stakeholders and influencers on best practices in health information and technology. HIMSS encompasses more than 77,000 individual members and 630 corporate members. Healthbox, a HIMSS Innovation Company, is a healthcare advisory firm that leading organizations trust with innovation and digital strategy development and execution.

**Q24. I have a question that is not addressed above.**

Our team is happy to assist at any time with outstanding questions or concerns. Contact Blake Miner (blake@healthbox.com) with any additional questions you may have.