Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Announces 6 Substance Use Disorder Treatment Centers Earn Blue Distinction Center Status

BOSTON, Feb. 19, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA) today named six substance use treatment and recovery centers in its network as Blue Distinction® Centers for Substance Use Treatment and Recovery – a new designation under the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program.

The six facilities are:

- Baldpate Treatment Center - Georgetown, MA
- Gosnold Thorne Counseling Center - Falmouth, MA
- Harrington Memorial Hospital - Southbridge, MA
- High Point Treatment Center – New Bedford, MA
- New England Recovery Center - Westborough, MA
- Washburn House – Worcester, MA



Blue Distinction Centers are nationally recognized by the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association as facilities that show a commitment to delivering improved patient safety and better health outcomes, based on objective measures developed with input from the community and leading accreditation and quality organizations.

"Opioid use disorders have cost Massachusetts thousands of lives in the last few years alone," said Bruce Nash, MD, chief physician executive, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. "Substance use disorders have a terrible impact on individuals, their families, and society. Improving access to high-quality treatment and recovery facilities is a priority for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and one way we are leading the effort to combat substance use. By meeting quality, safety and outcomes measures, organizations that earn designation as Blue Distinction Centers, in general, provide better care, better results and a better patient experience for our members."

According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 6,180 people in the state died from opioid overdoses between 2016 and 2018. In 2019, DPH has confirmed 1,543 opioid-related overdose deaths and estimates that there will be an additional 437 to 523 deaths.

In 2017, opioid use disorder cost Massachusetts businesses $4.7 billion, cost the state budget more than $1.8 billion, and cost the state's health care system nearly $1 billion, according to a study by RIZE Massachusetts, an independent nonprofit foundation working to end the opioid epidemic in the Commonwealth and reduce its devastating impact on people, communities, and our economy.

The Blue Distinction Centers for Substance Use Treatment and Recovery designation requires facilities to deliver coordinated multidisciplinary care to patients and provide timely access to quality medical and psychosocial care in all phases of treatment. Designated facilities must also offer medication-assisted treatment, which includes both a medication component and behavioral therapy.

"The Blue Distinction Specialty Care program seeks to help patients find quality care and encourage health professionals to improve the overall delivery of care nationwide," said Jennifer Atkins, vice president, network solutions at the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. "By designating proven, patient-centered treatment facilities as Blue Distinction, we're improving patients' paths to recovery."

Since 2012, with the introduction of its Prescription Pain Medication Safety Program, Blue Cross has been a leader in Massachusetts and nationwide in helping to stem the opioid epidemic through a variety of innovative efforts focusing on education, prevention, treatment, and recovery. Blue Cross is a founding member of RIZE Massachusetts, which seeks to build a $50 million fund focused on bringing real and lasting change to those struggling with substance use disorders in the Commonwealth. In 2018, Blue Cross made a quarter-million-dollar investment in an innovative, peer-to-peer opioids education program called Drug Story Theater. That year it also became the first health plan in the state to provide opioid toolkits for employer customers. The kits, designed to be kept in the workplace, contain two doses of Narcan nasal spray, a surgical mask and gloves, and instructions on administering Narcan. Additionally, Blue Cross has removed co-pays for Narcan for most fully insured plan designs and has provided $1 million in grants to fund the growth and development of the recovery coach workforce in Massachusetts.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (bluecrossma.com) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are committed to the relentless pursuit of quality, affordable health care *with* an unparalleled consumer experience. Consistent with our promise to always put our members first, we are rated among the nation's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality. Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

About 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 Blue Cross Blue Shield, The Health of America Report® series and the national BCBS Health IndexSM. For more information on BCBSA and its member companies, please visit BCBS.com. We also encourage you to connect with us on Facebook, check out our videos on YouTube and follow us on Twitter.

About Blue Distinction Centers
Blue Distinction Centers (BDC) met overall quality measures, developed with input from the medical community. A Local Blue Plan may require additional criteria for providers located in its own service area; for details, contact your Local Blue Plan. Blue Distinction Centers+ (BDC+) also met cost measures that address consumers' need for affordable healthcare. Each provider's cost of care is evaluated using data from its Local Blue Plan. Providers in CA, ID, NY, PA, and WA may lie in two Local Blue Plans' areas, resulting in two evaluations for cost of care; and their own Local Blue Plans decide whether one or both cost of care evaluation(s) must meet BDC+ national criteria. National criteria for BDC and BDC+ are displayed on www.bcbs.com. Individual outcomes may vary. For details on a provider's in-network status or your own policy's coverage, contact your Local Blue Plan and ask your provider before making an appointment. Neither Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association nor any Blue Plans are responsible for non-covered charges or other losses or damages resulting from Blue Distinction or other provider finder information or care received from Blue Distinction or other providers.

SOURCE Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

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