Blue Cross Blue Shield Of Massachusetts Announces COVID-19 Community Support

Company is aiding not-for-profits, providing access to health news and ensuring member care

BOSTON, March 20, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (Blue Cross), Inc. today announced several steps to support Massachusetts residents and not-for-profits during the COVID-19 outbreak.

"During this unprecedented public health emergency, we're committed to helping the community stay healthy," said Andrew Dreyfus, president and CEO of Blue Cross. "In addition to ensuring that our members can get the care they need, we're also focused on making sure the public has access to accurate and timely COVID-19 information and that our not-for-profit partners have the needed support to continue their important work during this challenging time."

Effective immediately, Blue Cross has committed to the following:

For the community:

- Donating $100,000 to the Boston Resiliency Fund and committing an additional $150,000 to relief efforts across Massachusetts.
- Donating nearly $50,000 to organizations with whom Blue Cross has had to cancel employee volunteer projects. This includes the Greater Boston Food Bank, Cradles to Crayons, Weymouth Food Pantry, Father Bills, Interfaith Social Services, Pine Street Inn, St. Francis House, West End House, 2Liftre Communities, Magical Moon, Playworks, Daily Table and Message of Hope.
- Honoring all financial commitments for community events, including those that have been cancelled.
- Launching an online giving platform that enables employees to donate directly to any Massachusetts-based not-for-profit affected by COVID-19. Blue Cross will match all donations dollar-for-dollar.
- Launching virtual volunteer initiatives for employees, including remote skills-based volunteering, college mentoring with Strive, warm wish notes with Cradles to Crayons and virtual storytelling with Message of Hope.
- Ensuring the public has access to accurate, timely news by partnering with *The Boston Globe* to make its COVID-19 resource center free to the public and by producing original news reporting on what readers need to know about COVID-19 and other health issues via Blue Cross' news service, Coverage.

For our members: The full list of steps we're taking to expedite access to care for the duration of the Massachusetts public health emergency can be found here and include:

- Allowing all medically necessary covered services to be provided via phone (telephonic) or virtually (telehealth), with no member cost share for services provided beginning on March 16, 2020.
- Waiving member cost share (co-pays, co-insurance and deductibles) for medically necessary COVID-19 testing and treatment, including supportive care to alleviate COVID-19 symptoms at doctor's offices, emergency rooms and urgent care centers.
- Removing prior authorizations and referrals to speed access to medically appropriate treatment for COVID-19.
- Increasing access to prescription medications. Members have access to one additional refill of their prescription maintenance medications. We will ensure formulary flexibility if there are shortages or access issues.
- Staffing and promoting a dedicated member help line **(888-372-1970)** for all COVID-19 related inquiries.
- Launching a regularly updated resource center that includes referrals to other sources of information and information about how to stay safe, a downloadable tip sheet for employers, a video featuring a Blue Cross physician, and answers to frequently asked questions.

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.

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