

TUFTS MEDICINE JOINS BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS' VALUE-BASED PAYMENT CONTRACT INCORPORATING EQUITY MEASURES

More than half of members now receive care from providers participating in health plan's equity-focused payment contracts

BOSTON, May 23, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts](#) ("Blue Cross") today announced that [Tufts Medicine](#) is now part of the health plan's pay-for-equity [financial payment model](#). Blue Cross is the first health plan in Massachusetts — and among the first in the nation — to introduce these contracts, which link financial incentives to achieving measurable improvements in health equity.



MASSACHUSETTS

With the addition of Tufts Medicine, 53% of Blue Cross/Massachusetts members now receive care from clinicians taking part in these equity-focused value-based agreements. Tufts Medicine joins four of the state's other leading health systems who signed the agreements in December 2022: [Steward Healthcare Network](#), [Beth Israel Lahey Health](#), [Mass General Brigham](#) and [Boston Accountable Care Organization, Inc.](#), which is part of [Boston Medical Center](#).

"Resolving systemic inequities requires allyship, and it's our responsibility to work collectively with physicians and hospitals to improve health equity," said Sarah Iselin, Blue Cross' president and CEO. "By engaging another of our state's large health systems in these payment contracts, we're one step closer to a more affordable, equitable health care system for our members."

The Tufts Medicine Integrated Network is comprised of 2,300 primary care and specialist physicians and advanced practice clinicians, employed by Tufts Medicine or working in private practice, delivering care in hospitals and in the community. As part of its agreement with Blue Cross, Tufts Medicine will focus on reducing inequities in colorectal cancer screenings, diabetes care, hypertension, and child and adolescent well-care visits.

"Across our system, we're doing everything we can to make health care more affordable, accessible and equitable," said Tufts Medicine CEO Michael Dandorff. "For more than a decade, we have aligned quality incentives within our contracts. Equity is one of our key quality metrics, so including this in our relationship with Blue Cross is a natural progression and will ensure continued superior outcomes for our patients."

"Like Blue Cross, Tufts Medicine is committed to improving equity and eliminating racial and ethnic inequities in care," said Dr. Mark Friedberg, senior vice president, performance measurement & improvement at Blue Cross. "We're delighted to be partnering with another prominent health care system in Massachusetts as we work toward making measurable improvements in health equity."

Blue Cross' commitment to health equity

As part of its [commitment to addressing health inequities](#), Blue Cross [gathers and publishes data each year](#) for more than 1.2 million of its commercial Massachusetts members. This data has revealed racial and ethnic inequities in many areas of patient care. In partnership with the clinicians in its network, the health plan is using this data to make meaningful change and work toward the shared goal of eliminating racial disparities in the care Blue Cross members receive.

As part of that work, [Blue Cross funded \\$25 million in Institute for Healthcare Improvement grants](#) to support physician practices and hospitals with Alternative Quality Contracts in their efforts to eliminate racial and ethnic inequities in care and share learning across institutions.

Blue Cross' equity work is also reflected in the communities it serves. In 2022, the health plan [provided](#) more than \$13M in

funding and pro-bono support to local not-for-profits focused on issues including environmental justice, access to healthy food, and addressing structural causes of health inequities.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (bluecrossma.org) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are committed to the relentless pursuit of quality, affordable and equitable 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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