BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS EXPANDS ACCESS TO SPECIALTY CARE FOR MEMBERS

State's leading health plan adds virtual specialty physician groups to increase access to convenient, affordable care

BOSTON, Oct. 11, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (Blue Cross) today announced that it is growing its network of virtual care providers to treat two chronic conditions: gastrointestinal (GI) conditions and diabetes. Oshi Health and Virta Health are now part of Blue Cross' network and, as part of their agreements with Blue Cross, offer convenient access to virtual care for members.

"We understand the challenges members face accessing high-quality, affordable specialty care," saidLisa Glenn, Blue Cross' vice president of network partnerships and innovation. "Bringing in these physician groups helps ensure we provide a top-notch experience to our members."

New virtual specialty care options
Oshi Health and Virta Health both offer virtual care for specific conditions:

- **Oshi Health:** Empowers people living with GI conditions to achieve lasting symptom control through a high-touch, multidisciplinary virtual care model.
- **Virta Health:** Combines provider-led virtual care and personalized nutrition to help people lower their blood sugar and lose weight without medications, reversing their type 2 diabetes on the path to remission.

One in every four Americans suffers from a gastrointestinal condition, according to Oshi, but most lack access to the specialists who can effectively treat their symptoms, or an insurance plan to help pay for it.

"Oshi Health's evidence-based, collaborative care model includes GI-specialized physicians, dietitians, psychologists, social workers, and health coaches - all working together to help individuals achieve lasting symptom control," said Sameer K. Berry, MD, MBA, co-founder & chief medical officer at Oshi Health. We're excited to work with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts to bring life-changing relief to its members who struggle with digestive health."

Diabetes is among the most expensive diseases in the world, and half of adults inthe United States live with type 2 diabetes, prediabetes, or obesity.

"Blue Cross' commitment to putting members first with best-in-class, leading-edge care continues through its partnership with Virta," said Kevin Kumler, president at Virta. "Now, members with type 2 diabetes have the opportunity to reverse their condition and get their lives back—while lowering costs —a big step in ensuring affordability for Blue Cross members and its employer customers in Massachusetts."

Addressing primary care access
To help combat the primary care physician shortage, Blue Cross recently added several primary care groups includingEden Health, On Belay Health Solutions and VillageMD. Earlier this year, Blue Cross also rolled out a "Virtual Care Team Feature", which gives members access to a team of primary care providers through Carbon Health and Firefly Health, both of which offer enhanced diabetes support and innovative approaches to the management of chronic conditions.

"Primary and specialty care play critical roles in members' overall care journeys, and it's our job to ensure our members have seamless access to both," said Dr. Ashley Yeats, Blue Cross' vice president of medical operations. "Adding these physician

groups to our network is part of our ongoing commitment to developing innovative solutions to meet our members' specific needs."

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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For further information: Kelsey Pearse, kelsey.pearse@bcbsma.com