

BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS EXPANDS ACCESS TO SERVICES AND CARE OPTIONS TO SUPPORT LGBTQIA+ MEMBERS

State's leading health plan among first in nation with dedicated clinical team for gender-affirming care

BOSTON, June 5, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts](#) ("Blue Cross") today announced expanded access to LGBTQIA+ support and resources for members, including a gender-affirming care program and a partnership with [FOLX Health](#).



MASSACHUSETTS

"Navigating the personal, emotional, and often confusing nature of the reproductive health and gender-affirming care landscape can be challenging," said Dr. Sandhya Rao, Blue Cross' chief medical officer. "As demand for these services continues to grow, our job is to ensure our members have access to high-quality, equitable care and the resources they need to feel supported."

Blue Cross' new support options include:

- **Gender-affirming care program:** Designed to help members find the care and services that meet their needs during reproductive health and gender-affirming care milestones. Blue Cross is one of the first health plans in the country with an integrated, clinical team dedicated to gender-affirming care, providing personalized support and an advocate program that guides members to the right care that meets their needs.
- **FOLX Health:** Most Blue Cross members also now have access to FOLX Health, a virtual provider focused on LGBTQIA+ health, which offers a variety of services including gender-affirming care, primary care, mental health care, fertility and diverse family building and more.

"Our data shows that 95% of our patients did not have an LGBTQIA+ competent provider prior to finding FOLX," says CEO of FOLX Health, Liana Douillet Guzmán. "We're honored to work with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts to expand access to expert care via FOLX and improve health and wellness outcomes for the LGBTQIA+ community."

Additional services and resources

Blue Cross has long been a [vocal ally](#) for the LGBTQIA+ community and is a leader in supporting access to health care services that support their needs. Highlights include:

- Offering [robust coverage](#), including medically necessary procedures for gender affirmation and generous fertility preservation and infertility services.
- Blue Cross was the first health plan in the state to cover facial reconstruction surgery, and the first health plan in the state, and one of the few health plans nationally to cover vocal cord surgery and related therapy for transitioning members.
- Ensuring that all eligible members, including transgender and gender diverse members, have access to supportive, affirming mental health services that meet their unique needs, including counseling and psychotherapy. Blue Cross' [Mental Health Resource Center](#) is designed to help members better understand their mental health care options and find clinicians who are right for them.
- Blue Cross [recently](#) partnered with Maven Clinic, which offers tailored programs to support members through various health journeys, including diverse family building.
- Blue Cross is a recipient of Boston Business Journal's 2024 [Business of Pride Corporate Ally](#) award.

"Research shows that gender-affirming care can improve the physical and mental health and well-being of our members," said Dr. Ashley Yeats, Blue Cross' vice president of medical operations. "Our priority is to ensure all our members have the

resources and support they need to figure out what care options are available and right for them."

Blue Cross also partners with [Fenway Health](#) - a Boston-based health care, research and advocacy organization - to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQIA+ community, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and other underserved communities to ensure equitable and convenient access to health care, supportive services and education. In celebration of Pride Month, Blue Cross is [donating](#) \$1 to Fenway Health to support LGBTQIA+ health care for every ride taken on a Pride-themed Bluebike in June.

"Fenway advocates that all individuals have the right to high-quality, patient-centered care. The work to ensure that access to this care is safe and attainable for trans and gender diverse communities in Massachusetts is now more evident than ever before," said Julie Thompson, medical director of trans health at Fenway Health. "BCBSMA has consistently stood as a leader by uplifting the voices and needs of trans and gender diverse communities and has consistently met the call to create support and service coverage that these communities deserve."

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 showing up for everyone like they're the only one and guiding our members to the exceptional health care they deserve – affordably, equitably and seamlessly. In keeping with our commitment, 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
