



LEADING THROUGH A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

2020-21 COMMUNITY INVESTMENT REPORT

A Letter from our CEO



Since March 2020, our communities have faced a historic pandemic and the tragic loss of too many lives—more than 600,000 in the U.S. alone with a disproportionate impact on vulnerable populations and people and communities of color.

Driven by our deeply rooted connections to the communities we serve, Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) companies took immediate and wide-ranging action during the pandemic: Collectively, we invested **more than \$11.5 billion in the fight against COVID-19**, rapidly expanded telehealth, assisted in testing and distributed millions of PPE supplies to essential workers. We established and supported mass vaccination efforts, helped identify homebound members to make sure they had access to care they needed and **contributed more than \$315 million to community-based nonprofits to address social issues** exacerbated by the pandemic. In short, the Blues supported the communities we serve—as we always have and always will.

And we are not done yet. Through meaningful local partnerships and understanding our members' unique needs, we continue our work to support access to and adoption of COVID-19 vaccines. From partnering with Feeding America and its network of 200 Food Banks to provide trusted information about COVID-19 vaccinations to joining forces with AHIP to help **vaccinate more than 2 million seniors in under 100 days through the Vaccine Community Connectors program**, the Blues have focused on reaching vulnerable and underserved populations to accelerate vaccinations in an equitable way.

The COVID-19 pandemic has both underscored and exacerbated unacceptable racial health disparities that have gone on for too long, and BCBS companies are committed to changing the trajectory of these disparities for the long-term. Within this report, you will find stories demonstrating our pursuit to advance affordable and accessible healthcare throughout the pandemic. We will continue to build on these efforts to create a sustainable impact for generations to come.

For more than 90 years, BCBS companies have provided secure and stable healthcare coverage across the country. And today, as we emerge from an unprecedented public health crisis, we are reimagining a more equitable healthcare system for the future—for the one in three Americans we serve, and For The Health of America.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim A. Keck". The script is fluid and cursive.


Kim A. Keck
President and CEO
Blue Cross Blue Shield Association

"Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Feeding America has been working to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be as healthy as possible through access to nutritious food. We are thrilled to partner with the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association as part of our investment with member food banks to address the intersection of hunger, health, and equity in underserved communities. This collaboration has allowed us to encourage all 200 food banks in the Feeding America network to highlight the safety and effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccination, aimed at preventing disease for people who are at a higher risk."

— Gita Rampersad, Vice President,
Healthcare Partnerships &
Nutrition at Feeding America



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Leading through a Public Health Crisis, For The Health of America



The first case of a new, unnamed virus was confirmed in the United States on January 21, 2020. Later that same month, the W.H.O. declared a global health emergency. Then, in March, it was classified as a global pandemic, and W.H.O. gave the virus a name: COVID-19. Suddenly life throughout the world was turned upside down.¹



In America, families from coast to coast faced uncertainty and anxiety about their health, and terms like “lockdown” and “social distancing” became part of our daily conversations. Since the early days of the pandemic, Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) companies have been a steadfast partner in their communities, providing billions of dollars in response effort, community support, distributing accurate trusted health information and offering a neighborly helping hand as Americans weathered the crisis.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC TIMELINE

MAR. 11 WHO declares the novel coronavirus a worldwide pandemic.	APR. Most people in the U.S. are living under stay-at-home orders and the federal government recommends wearing masks in public.	MAY U.S. deaths related to COVID-19 surpasses 100,000. The pandemic exposes a nationwide mental health crisis.	JUN. - AUG. COVID-19 infections continue sharp increase across the U.S., especially in areas of the West and South, while a record number of people file for unemployment. COVID-19 vaccine trials begin - final phase of testing.
2020	MAR. BCBS companies announce coverage of COVID-19 testing and telehealth services for members.	APR. BCBS companies commit <u>nearly \$3B to members, hospitals and healthcare workers in fight against COVID-19</u> , including donations of PPE to those in need.	MAY BCBS companies find ways to <u>meet the mental and behavioral health needs of members</u> including 24/7 access to trained counselors and digital platforms offering meditation and mindfulness support.
			JUN. - AUG. BCBS companies prioritize meeting members' healthcare needs through <u>expanded telehealth access</u> , removing barriers to care and waiving cost-sharing for COVID-19 screening, <u>testing</u> and treatment. They also address food insecurity through partnerships with local food banks and other community organizations.



All 35 Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies are fighting against COVID-19 in communities across the country, **investing more than \$11.5 billion in the nation's recovery.**

Across the BCBS System, we are expanding access to vaccines, educating communities, and meeting ongoing healthcare and social needs in many different ways – from sewing PPE for front-line workers and rapidly expanding telehealth in the early days of the pandemic to ensuring equitable access to vaccines and providing ongoing support to local food banks to address food insecurity.

More than 250,000 BCBS employees also went above and beyond, working behind the scenes on the front line, donating their time and expertise whenever – and wherever – duty called. Hundreds of clinical



personnel fanned out and provided assistance with screening and vaccinations. Data scientists worked with local public health officials to pinpoint areas of vaccine hesitancy. Marketing professionals shared their talents to educate their communities – from filming informational videos to writing countless articles for websites and social media to disseminate accurate information. And some simply lent an understanding ear to a senior citizen lonely in lockdown.

SEPT. U.S. death toll from COVID-19 reaches 200,000. With children going back to school, epidemiologists predict a cold-weather surge in COVID-19 infections.

OCT. 2 President Trump and the First Lady announce they have contracted COVID-19 and enter treatment.

NOV. Two vaccines announced to be 90-95% effective against COVID-19.

DEC. Nationwide campaign to vaccinate the U.S. population begins.
First COVID variant detected.

JAN.- JUN. U.S. surpasses 500,000 deaths from COVID-19. Federal government rolls out vaccines to broader population, while more COVID variants surface.

2021

SEPT.- NOV. BCBS companies boost efforts to track COVID-19 infection rates by offering data-sharing tools to public and private organizations and distribute education on public health best practices.

Plus, Plans encourage the public to get their annual flu shots and other childhood vaccinations through mobile clinics, digital reminders and health literacy.

DEC.- JAN. BCBS companies have collectively committed more than \$7B to address the COVID-19 pandemic including financial support for members, assistance to medical professionals and direct support to communities.

FEB. - MAY BCBS companies provide volunteers and clinical staff to mass vaccination sites. Plus, they partner with local and national organizations to drive education on the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccines.

JUN. BCBS companies have committed more than \$11.5 billion to address the COVID-19 pandemic.



As the country emerges from this crisis and continues to battle COVID variants, Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies across the country will continue to invest in our communities, provide that extra helping hand and work to ensure equal access to high-quality, affordable healthcare coverage to improve The Health of America.

SINCE MARCH 2020, WE HAVE:



Collectively contributed more than
\$315M TO COMMUNITY-BASED NON-PROFITS
to address social issues exacerbated by the pandemic.

**Partnered
with Feeding
America**

which reaches more than 40 million Americans through their network of 200 food banks, to distribute factual, trusted information in English and Spanish about vaccines.



**Spread the
availability
of telehealth**

across the country, ensuring doctor appointments could be kept and our neighbors could access mental health professionals during this stressful time.



**Supported
underserved
communities**

that are suffering at disproportionate rates from COVID-19 by providing access to culturally appropriate care and outreach to improve equitable vaccine access.



**Planned
more than
160 additional
events**

as part of the Vaccination Month of Action and supported mobile clinics in many parts of the country to connect people with a vaccine.



Helped to **vaccinate more than 2 million senior citizens** in America's most at-risk, vulnerable and under-served communities in less than 100 days through the Vaccine Community Connectors program.

"Vaccination access is a critical piece to the complicated puzzle of beating COVID-19 and preventing new strains of the virus from emerging," said Suzanne McCormick, U.S. President, United Way Worldwide. "We are grateful for our partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield and their local support of the Ride United Program, which helps break down transportation barriers ensuring more people access their COVID-19 vaccine."





BCBS COMPANIES INVESTING IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama (BCBSAL) and the BCBSAL Caring Foundation have been standing united with their statewide community throughout the coronavirus pandemic. They continue to utilize their longstanding relationships with state and local officials, the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Alabama Hospital Association, the Medical Association of the State of Alabama, Alabama Medicaid Agency and Alabama Pharmacy Association to help stop the spread of the coronavirus.



PROVIDING RELIEF

BCBSAL has provided

OVER **\$840,000**

to date across the state to address food scarcity, provide small business loans, donate personal protective equipment and meals to healthcare workers and support other relief efforts.



"Thanks to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama's Caring Foundation support, our RIDE UNITED program has been able to provide free transportation to and from COVID-19 vaccine appointments for seniors, veterans, and especially for folks living out in our more rural areas. We couldn't do this without their partnership and creative collaboration. Here's a photo of just one individual who now can return to life, safely, because of their generosity and collaboration. He's telling everyone he knows in his neighborhood about it!"

– Cathy Miller, Community Impact Director at United Way of Madison County Louisville



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

BCBSAL partnered with Lyft and the United Way to **fund rides to and from vaccination sites** in Madison County, Central Alabama and the greater Florence area. They also launched extensive educational campaigns addressing vaccine safety and efficacy and made outreach to high-risk members encouraging vaccination.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

In addition to creating a crisis hotline available 24/7 to **address increasing mental health needs**, BCBSAL joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (BCBSA) to **promote vaccination efforts for 2 million underserved and at-risk Americans**.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Arizona



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Arizona (BCBSAZ) has worked to support and sustain its statewide community through the COVID-19 crisis. From the earliest days of the pandemic, the health insurer quickly moved to cover COVID-19-related health services, increase testing, support public health needs, address food insecurity and more—protecting the safety and well-being of BCBSAZ members and Arizonans.



PROVIDING RELIEF

In addition to making healthcare more safe and accessible for their members in the wake of the pandemic, much of BCBSAZ's work has centered on supporting first responders, homebound seniors. BCBSAZ also contributed to the governor's "Arizona Together" COVID Relief Fund.



"The team at Blue Cross and Blue Shield Arizona has been working around the clock to help run the vaccination site at the State Farm Stadium. Thank you to Pam Kehaly and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield team!"

– Doug Ducey, Governor of Arizona



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

The company has also committed critical support to the state's Native American tribes—a **population which faces 2x higher COVID-19 mortality rates than white Americans.**

Despite vaccinating 491,000 Arizonans in three months, it is still unsafe for many who aren't vaccinated. This means reaching underserved areas, which includes our tribal communities, and working to remove barriers for those who struggle with access to care and other health-related resources.



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

BCBSAZ partnered with the Arizona Department of Health Services to set up and staff two of the three state-run vaccination sites. The insurer rallied **over 300 clinical and non-clinical volunteers for this effort each day**, amassing 491,000 vaccines—about 15% of the 3.7 million vaccine doses in the state (as of April 5, 2021).



"This is a massive effort across many agencies, both government and civilian, and this is the only way we're going to beat COVID."

– David P. Glaser, Major General, US Army Deputy Commander, Joint Force Land Component Command & US Army North

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, many Americans faced increased food insecurity as jobs were lost and schools closed. In addition to relief funding and extensive vaccine efforts, **Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield** (Arkansas BCBS) and its Blue &You Foundation invested in organizations that helped families and communities keep food on the table.



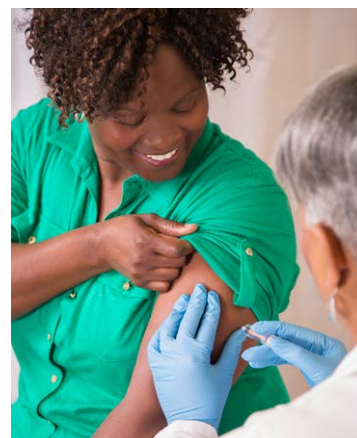
PROVIDING RELIEF

Arkansas BCBS contributed:

\$2.7M IN COVID-19-RELATED GRANTS

to 48 organizations in Arkansas and will continue to respond as needed as the crisis continues to unfold.

More than \$650,000 went toward food insecurity



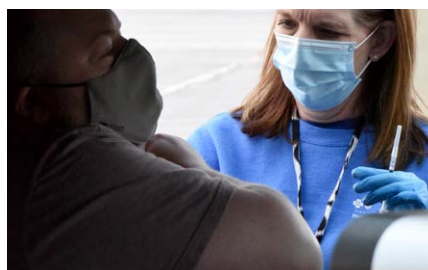
"Working with Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield on the Vaccinate Arkansas effort has been rewarding and remarkably effective. This unique partnership has provided Arkansas business leaders with the support they need to navigate the COVID-19 vaccine rollout and to protect their employees and customers. Arkansas Blue Cross goes to outstanding lengths to serve their client companies in their effort to keep their employees healthy and able to support their families. It has been our pleasure and privilege to partner with them."

– Randy Zook, President & CEO of Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce/AIA



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

The health insurer **mobilized over 100 clinical staff to work on the front lines of the COVID-19 crisis**, partnering with state and local governments, businesses and organizations to make the vaccine widely available throughout Arkansas. They also spearheaded the state-wide Vaccinate the Natural State campaign to educate Arkansans about the safety and benefits of the vaccine.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Arkansas BCBS **brought vaccines to the state's most rural, impoverished and underserved communities** through the use of mobile units, faith-based networks, grant funding and data technology.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, **Blue Shield of California** has been working closely with community partners, nonprofits and the state to help the hardest-hit and most at-risk communities. Their support has helped provide protective equipment to healthcare workers, expand mental health services, increase access to care and slow the spread of COVID-19 throughout California.



PROVIDING RELIEF

Blue Shield of California continues its philanthropic response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

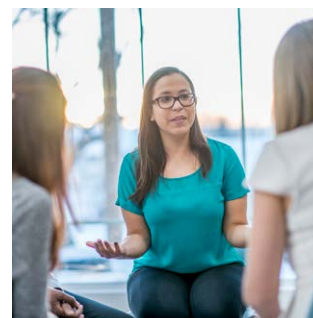
\$500,000

CONTRIBUTION TO
OAKLAND RELIEF FUND

&

\$100,000

TO OUTFIT NONPROFIT COMMUNITY
HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS WITH
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT



LEADING STATEWIDE VACCINE EFFORTS

Blue Shield of California served as the Third-Party Administrator of California's vaccine network. **More than 44 million doses of vaccine have been administered** in the state and over 60% of eligible Californians are fully vaccinated.




SUPPORTING COMMUNITY HEALTH

In addition to funding community health providers throughout the state, Blue Shield of California has also **partnered with providers to distribute vaccines directly to low-income neighborhoods and communities of color.**

They have also focused on student mental health services, supporting initiatives such as Youth Mental Health First Aid training to support California's youth through this unprecedented time.

"Twice this year I have had students open up to me. Because I attended the Blue Shield of California-sponsored training, I was able to recognize the key phrases which triggered me to think those students were in danger and mediate help for them. They got the help they needed immediately."

**– Youth Mental Health
First Aid Trainee**

The state's leading health insurer, **Florida Blue**  has remained true to its mission of helping people and communities achieve better health throughout the pandemic, protecting the health and safety of individuals, communities and the healthcare system. Among its extensive relief and recovery efforts, it has committed to fighting hunger across the state.



PROVIDING RELIEF

Initial Investment of: \$2M TO ADDRESS URGENT HEALTH & SAFETY NEEDS IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS FLORIDA
putting food on the table across the state:

200,000

meals donated to



Harry Chapin Food Bank
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

300,000

meals donated to



480,000

meals prepared on
our Jacksonville
campus & donated to



500,000

meals donated to



"Every Floridian has a vital role to play in advancing the health and safety of our communities. COVID-19 cases are once again rapidly rising, and the vast majority of those being hospitalized are unvaccinated. The overwhelming evidence for COVID-19 vaccines continues to mount, and I strongly urge every Floridian to get vaccinated. There has never been a more important time to ensure we're all coming together to build healthier communities."

– **Pat Geraghty, President and CEO,**
Florida Blue 



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

The health plan partnered with community organizations to **host dozens of vaccine events in underserved communities, correctional facilities, homeless shelters and food banks.**

They also served as a trusted voice in vaccine education, hosting 33 free webinars to build Floridians' confidence in the vaccine.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

The insurer joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and BCBSA in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**

They also joined the Rally for Recovery Commitment, a national commitment to protect employees and communities by encouraging vaccines and continued mitigation efforts.

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) and its **Foundation** supported relief efforts for Hawaii after COVID-19 hit the islands to protect the health and safety of individuals and the healthcare system. Among its extensive relief and recovery efforts, HMSA supported food security across the islands and worked with the state to increase vaccinations.



PROVIDING RELIEF

HMSA supported:

HAWAII COVID-19
**PUBLIC
HEALTH
RECOVERY
TASK FORCE**

to generate a strategic, science-based approach to phased recovery.

HMSA enabled:

**THEIR EMPLOYEES
TO VOLUNTEER**

making personal protective equipment for community partners and colleagues.

And redeployed customer relations representatives to support the Hawaii State Department of Health call center.

HMSA supported:

**4 FOOD BANKS
STATEWIDE**

with monetary donations and used the HMSA Foundation's Community Fund to support the emergency needs of community organizations serving those in need.



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

HMSA participated in leadership calls with state government 3x per week to troubleshoot and assist during the early stages of the vaccine rollout. Once vaccines were readily available, they provided call center support to the two largest health systems in the state, answering questions and helping people register for vaccination.

They also made outbound call to their Medicare Advantage members to help them schedule vaccinations and launched public health education campaigns throughout the pandemic.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

The insurer joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and BCBSA in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**

They also joined the Rally for Recovery Commitment, a national commitment to **protect employees and communities by encouraging vaccines and continued mitigation efforts.**

Blue Cross of Idaho (BC Idaho) and the **Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health** (BC Idaho Foundation) are investing thousands to support the needs of the Idaho community following the impacts of COVID-19. They have been helping with immediate needs and long-term recovery as the coronavirus pandemic unfolds. The BC Idaho Foundation has been focusing efforts and funding on meeting the needs of communities most at risk or underserved, including children, seniors, those with compromised immune systems, rural communities and minority communities.



PROVIDING RELIEF

The BC Idaho Foundation has provided over \$200,000 to relief efforts, including:

\$100,000

donated to the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund for Idaho

\$25,000

donated to Idaho Business for Education to help students in need access internet services

\$20,000

donated to Idaho Food Bank to help with food and supplies



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

BC Idaho has been working to ensure vaccines and vaccine education are readily available to all Idahoans. Their statewide efforts include **purchasing a van to expand mobile vaccine clinics in the most vulnerable and underserved communities**; helping members schedule vaccine appointments; and running extensive vaccine campaigns to educate the public.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

The insurer provided **\$25,000 to the Commission on Hispanic Affairs and South Central Hispanic Chamber** to launch a vaccine awareness campaign targeting the Hispanic and Latino communities, **as well as \$9,000 to the Idaho Office of Refugees** to help them reach Idaho's refugee community.



Regence Health Plans (Regence), together with their corporate foundation, have continued to evolve their COVID-19 relief and recovery efforts as new needs become clear in their four service areas: Idaho, Oregon, Utah and Washington. From the earliest days of the crisis, Regence's focus has been caring for people and families affected by COVID-19 and the healthcare workforce on the front lines, mindful that marginalized populations may be first to be impacted and last to recover from this unprecedented crisis.



PROVIDING RELIEF

Regence, its employees and corporate foundation leaned in to care for people and families affected by COVID-19 and those on the front lines of this public health crisis:

\$218,000

donated to local food banks to address increasing demand for food assistance

\$300,000

donated to the COVID-19 emergency relief funds

\$1.2M

invested in the equitable distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine



"A year ago, we couldn't have fathomed we would be in the vaccination business. Seeing the difficulties older adults have faced trying to get appointments while securing reliable, safe transportation that doesn't put them at further risk of exposure to the virus has not been easy. The support of Regence and other community donations, and the partnership of many northwest vaccination teams, have made drop-in vaccination sites possible."

– Brittany Blue, Chief Marketing & Philanthropy Officer for Sound Generations



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

Regence has partnered with ride share services to provide free rides to and from vaccination sites. They trained specialized staff to understand the dynamics of each state and improve vaccination rates across the entire service area. The insurer also ran claims-based data and analytics to ensure those who got the first dose and were scheduled to get the second dose got it.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Regence made outreach to nearly 2,000 provider organizations to help them present a consistent vaccine message and determine high-risk members. They also supported their employer customers through the crisis, helping them organize vaccine events, identify vaccination rates among their employee populations and ensure they had trusted and reliable information about the virus and vaccine.



Serving Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas, **Health Care Service Corporation** (HCSC) works quickly to anticipate and respond to varying crisis needs across the country.



PROVIDING RELIEF

HCSC deployed more than:

\$24M IN FUNDING ACROSS
FIVE STATES

This community investment funding went to nonprofit partners supporting vaccine access and education as well as COVID-19 response and recovery.



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

HCSC provides extensive support to vaccine efforts across its five states. Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans in Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas all **use mobile vans to bring vaccines to vulnerable populations.** They repurposed many customer service staff to help make vaccination appointments and deployed over 3,000 clinical workers to volunteer on the front lines. They were also able to provide data and analytics expertise to local and state departments of health to facilitate triage of patients for vaccine administration.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

HCSC continues to help increase access to care and other essential needs for underserved populations across each of its five states throughout the pandemic. This includes partnering with a FQHC at the Blue Door Neighborhood CentersSM in the South Lawndale and Morgan Park neighborhoods in Chicago to administer vaccines and supporting vaccination events organized by American Indian Tribes in Oklahoma and New Mexico.

"Being situated in Corpus Christi, at Amistad we are surrounded by numerous pockets of underserved areas, which became even more apparent during the COVID pandemic. We are fortunate to have a strong team and partnership with the Blue Cross Blue Shield Care Van that has allowed us over the months to be out in the community vaccinating high-risk individuals who had barriers getting their vaccines. The availability of the Care Van allowing us to extend our outreach to the community has been greatly appreciated and certainly impactful."

**– Dr. Eric Baggerman,
CEO Amistad Community
Health Center**

Since the earliest days of the pandemic, **Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield** (Anthem) and the Anthem Foundation have been standing with and supporting their members and communities across the country. Utilizing strong partnerships with organizations on the forefront of prevention, treatment and recovery efforts, Anthem has been able to provide proactive relief to many of the country's most impacted areas.



PROVIDING RELIEF

\$50+ million committed for COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, including:

\$1M

donated to



American Red Cross

\$1.5M

donated to



\$2.4M

donated to local



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

Anthem is partnering with Lyft to **provide access to free and discounted rides to/from vaccination sites for individuals in need**. Recognizing that reliable transportation is regularly a barrier to healthcare for millions of Americans, and the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated this problem, we are working in collaboration with partners like United Way Worldwide and Indiana Health to increase access.

Anthem has also provided clinical and non-clinical volunteers and **administrative support to multiple vaccine clinics in markets across the country**.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Anthem is committed to the health and wellbeing of each member and community it serves. To ensure equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, the company joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (BCBSA) in pledging to **promote vaccination efforts for 2 million underserved and at-risk Americans**.

"Wow, what a year. We thank the Anthem Foundation for helping us make our critical teen and family services available throughout the pandemic at our Teen Crisis Shelter. The increased family togetherness time with the shutdown and closed schools was rough on struggling families. YMCA Safe Place Services served 327 youth last year; and without early abuse detection in the schools, we saw more severe cases of abuse and neglect."

– **Dennis Enix, Development & Mission Advancement Director, YMCA of Greater Louisville**

Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield



Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield (Wellmark) throughout the pandemic has worked closely within Iowa and South Dakota to support the communities' needs and to respond quickly and effectively. The Wellmark Foundation provided additional funding to Feeding America organizations to help them meet the increased demand for food during the pandemic, and Wellmark continues to proactively address the issues facing our communities through strategic partnerships with local elected officials, healthcare systems, employer groups and community programs through advocacy of the vaccine.



PROVIDING RELIEF

\$250,000 IN DONATIONS TO
FOOD BANK PARTNERS

To help address food insecurity in Iowa and South Dakota as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board approved \$250,000 in donations to food bank partners to meet the increased need for food relief.



FOODBANK
OF IOWA



"We are serving two-and-a-half times as many people now as this same time last year. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Wellmark Foundation for all that they've done over many years supporting Feeding South Dakota and our fight against hunger."

**—Matt Gassen,
CEO, Feeding South Dakota**



EDUCATING THE COMMUNITY

Wellmark regularly provided updated COVID-19 and vaccine information, acting as a trusted voice for the public, its employees and its employer groups. Once vaccines were available, Wellmark **developed and distributed videos, web content, blog posts, employee content** and more to educate its audiences. Wellmark's Chief Pharmacy Officer also participated in an educational webinar regarding the vaccines.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Together with AHIP, BCBSA and other Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies, Wellmark joined the Vaccine Community Connectors program, pledging to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**

Wellmark also joined the Rally for Recovery Commitment, a national commitment to protect employees and communities by encouraging vaccines and continued mitigation efforts.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas (BCBSKS) and the BCBSKS Foundation have been investing in strategic community partnerships to support families, children, and those most at-risk throughout the pandemic. They have also rallied behind their provider partners who have been manning the front lines since March 2020, providing them with financial relief, investing in technology needed to provide remote care and supplying them with protective equipment.



PROVIDING RELIEF

BCBSKS invested over \$18 million to support members, customers and providers in the wake of the pandemic. Highlights include:

\$500,000

invested in **expanding telehealth services** so members could access care from the safety of home.

\$280,000

granted to manufacturers, non-profit makers and universities to **manufacture personal protective equipment (PPE)** and medical supplies across the state.

\$352,800

donated to Topeka Rescue Mission's Operation Food Secure to **provide fresh food boxes to households in eight counties** in northeast Kansas.

\$200,000

donated to local health departments and \$80,000 to local community foundations.



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

BCBSKS has **deployed many employees to volunteer across the state** to increase vaccine access and staff clinics.

In addition to public health campaigns, the insurer has also joined the Rally for Recovery Commitment, a national pledge to protect employees and communities by encouraging vaccines and continued mitigation effort.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

BCBSKS joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association to **promote vaccination efforts for 2 million underserved and at-risk Americans.**

"We are working tirelessly to provide much-needed relief to Kansans in every way we can – by ensuring members have access to care, supporting the medical community, and giving back to those organizations who care for Kansans."

– Matt All, President & CEO, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana (BCBSLA) and the BCBSLA Foundation work each day to improve the health and lives of Louisianians. When COVID-19 hit the state, they led ongoing efforts to support their members and communities through the crisis.



PROVIDING RELIEF

BCBSLA Foundation set up a grant relief fund of:

\$10M FOR DISASTER RELIEF, WHICH INCLUDED GIVING FOR BOTH THE PANDEMIC & NATURAL DISASTERS IN 2020

The fund was established to meet immediate needs like food, clothing, shelter, paying utility bills and more. Grants can also be used to meet more long-term needs such as ongoing patient education and care navigation, economic recovery efforts and more. Between this fund and general work, **BCBSLA gave out more than \$13M.**



"In a time when Lake Charles and the surrounding community have been impacted by so much devastation and loss, the amount of gratitude we feel for corporate partners like Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana is immeasurable. Their major financial support of organizations such as the Community Foundation of Southwest Louisiana and the United Way of Southwest Louisiana goes towards directly assisting our most vulnerable populations. Their financial investments continue to play a critical role in the long-term recovery of our area and we appreciate the leadership they display through these efforts as we continue to seek much needed support for our citizens."

– Lake Charles Mayor, Nic Hunter



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

BCBSLA launched a multimedia communication strategy to **raise awareness among all Louisianians that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe, effective, covered at no cost** and newly available for 12- to 15-year-olds. They also opened their corporate headquarters' parking lots as drive-thru sites for vaccinations.

In addition, the BCBSLA Foundation is partnering with ride share companies to offer Louisianians **free rides to and from vaccine appointments.**



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Working with community partners and healthcare providers, BCBSLA has been targeting outreach to minority communities, many of which have been hit hardest by the pandemic. These efforts include mass communication campaigns to offer trusted information about the vaccine's safety and efficacy, as well as partnerships with local health systems to **host mass vaccination events in predominantly Black areas.**

As COVID-19 continues to have an impact in the mid-Atlantic region, **CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield** (CareFirst) responded to the consequences of this public health and economic crisis with **\$6.8M in direct support** to organizations working on the frontlines of COVID relief and vaccination efforts. Through three rounds of funding, CareFirst is reaching an estimated 700K individuals across the region, including more than 4M meals/groceries provided to individuals and families in need and 2.1K individuals receiving housing or utility support.



PROVIDING RELIEF

CareFirst has contributed: \$13M TO NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

working to provide relief for needs arising as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. These contributions supported the distribution of personal protective equipment, equity in vaccine access, community engagement, food relief, re-training initiatives for unemployed workforces, and more.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

CareFirst collaborated with non-profit, faith and social service organizations to host a series of virtual town halls, providing accurate information on the importance and safety of the COVID-19 vaccines from trusted local community voices to drive increased vaccinations rates among disproportionately impacted communities.



PROMOTING VACCINE ADOPTION/ IMPROVING ACCESS

Through our BetterTogether Campaign, CareFirst has invested \$1.2M in culturally competent vaccination education, outreach, and delivery across our region. Investing in organizations that serve those hardest hit by the pandemic, these funds will minimize transportation barriers, deploy health navigators, stand up vaccination sites and build a new clinic to increase vaccine adoption.

Additionally, they have invested \$200K in 8 Federally Qualified Health Centers located in Washington, DC to support vaccine equity for communities disproportionately

impacted by COVID. This investment supports FQHCs with staffing of vaccine administration, personal protective equipment, refrigeration units for vaccine storage, and other unanticipated vaccination demands that may arise. Nearly 80,000 people who seek care at FQHCs in Washington, DC will benefit from funding.

Plus, over 125 CareFirst associates were trained to stand ready to respond to public health needs in our community through the Medical Reserve Corps, with 150 volunteer hours deployed to date.



"Our residents express their humble and respectful appreciation to receive the food, personal delivery, and the comfort of knowing they are loved and not forgotten!"

– Kate Urbank, Site Director, Food Rescue US

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA) has acted swiftly to support COVID-19 vaccination efforts, while broadening our commitment to diversity and inclusion by focusing on racial equity in health. In addition to promoting public health efforts, BCBSMA helped non-profits meet operational challenges during the crisis through the expedition of unrestricted cash for immediate relief efforts.



PROVIDING RELIEF

BCBSMA has contributed:

\$460,000 & **\$550,000**
IN SUPPORT OF REGIONAL COVID-19 FUNDS IN RAPID RESPONSE GRANTS TO NON-PROFITS

which helped provide essential aid addressing access to food, basic needs, and critical support for first responders, healthcare and retail workers.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

BCBSMA collaborated with community health centers, faith-based leaders and community-based non-profits to address vaccine hesitancy among the communities hardest hit by the pandemic. These efforts helped promote equity in testing and vaccination in Boston's Black and Brown under-resourced and immigrant communities across Massachusetts.



PROMOTING VACCINE ADOPTION/ IMPROVING ACCESS

Committed \$1,000,000 to help provide equitable access to vaccinations, including a partnership with Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers and other local organizations. As well as, providing financial support to Health Care for All's Help Line, the only statewide multilingual phone service – answering an average of 20,000 calls annually in English, Spanish and Portuguese – that helps Massachusetts residents at all income levels.

To promote vaccine confidence, BCBSMA funded over 200 hours of community canvassing provided by three bilingual community ambassadors in East Boston.



"Our friends at BCBSMA have become true partners in our work to address local food insecurity. Throughout the pandemic, they've turned their cafeterias into production lines making easy and healthy meal kits for neighbors relying on the food pantry for help. These meal kits create opportunities for conversation and connection and brighten people's day during a difficult time. As a grassroots organization we are all about neighbors helping neighbors, and BCBSMA puts that into action for us, every day."

– Pamela Denholm, Executive Director, Weymouth Food Pantry

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan



As the state's largest insurer, **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan** (BCBS Michigan) is committed to protecting the health of Michigan citizens. As a trusted advisor and advocate for population health, BCBS Michigan has been actively supporting members, customers, providers, and communities through the COVID-19 pandemic. From the beginning, BCBS Michigan has been proactive in addressing the pandemic, investing in expanding no-cost benefits for members, advancing millions of dollars to support healthcare providers, returning money to customers and members, supporting community-based organizations to address food insecurity, expanding access to telehealth services, and expanding COVID-19 mobile testing.

PROVIDING RELIEF

BCBS Michigan provided:

\$500,000

TO BRING FOOD TO
CHILDREN, SENIORS
& FAMILIES IN NEED

The insurer also delivered
meals and care packages
to its senior members.

&

BCBS Michigan partnered on:

\$3M INVESTMENT

TO IMPROVE TELEHEALTH
AVAILABILITY

for safety net organizations and
donated protective equipment
to both the state and providers.



"Thanks to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan's quick response to assist with rapidly deploying access to telehealth services during the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to utilize grant funds to support staff working remotely in rural areas, assist patients by using home monitoring devices, including blood pressure monitors, glucometers and thermometers and accomplish emergency dental services via telemedicine."

– Heidi Britton, Chief Executive Officer, Northwest Michigan Health Services, Inc.

IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

When the vaccine became available, BCBS Michigan began **making calls to more than 400,000 vulnerable members**. They launched extensive, statewide education campaigns on vaccine safety and availability, and launched eight vaccination events in high-need communities.

ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

BCBS Michigan joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans**.

They also played a key role on the Michigan Coronavirus Task Force to investigate racial disparities seen in the spread and severity of the virus.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (BCBSMN) and its Foundation has been responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by seeking to meet the unique needs of their state, from ensuring that healthcare workers on the front lines are protected to assisting Minnesotans vulnerable to food insecurity, homelessness or an inability to work.



PROVIDING RELIEF

The BCBSMN Foundation created a:

\$750,000 COVID-19 RAPID RESPONSE FUND

&

BCBSMN donated:

\$100,000

TO MINNESOTA DISASTER RECOVERY FUND

with grants between \$5,000 and \$25,000 awarded to efforts aimed at addressing child care for frontline workers, emergency support for those experiencing economic insecurity, homelessness and housing needs exacerbated by the crisis, anti-bias efforts related to COVID-19 and more.

which supports the Minnesota's short- and long-term needs.



ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY

Increasing unemployment amidst the financial consequences of COVID-19 has challenged many Minnesotans in putting food on the table. BCBSMN and its Foundation has committed **nearly \$800,000 to organizations providing emergency food donations** to families and individuals who do not have enough to eat.



"The masks from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota will be distributed to teachers, staff and parents in the YWCA Minneapolis Early Childhood Education Program. It is a huge help to be able to provide teachers and staff with extra masks because they wear them for long periods of time throughout the week, and they need to be washed frequently."

– **Stephanie Thomas, Vice President of Early Childhood Education at YWCA Minneapolis**



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

BCBSMN partnered with the state to deploy **mobile clinics to get vaccines to underserved areas.**

The health plan has also partnered with pharmacies to provide on-site vaccination clinics and has paid its employees time off to volunteer in vaccine administration efforts.



Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi



BlueCross BlueShield of Mississippi

The **Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi** (BCBS Mississippi) and its **Foundation** are committed to helping communities across the state weather and reemerge from the COVID-19 crisis. They are working at both state and local levels to ensure all Mississippians are safe and well, and that their essential needs are supported.



PROVIDING RELIEF

At a time when families are struggling because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation is providing funds to

**100s OF FOOD BANKS IN ALL
82 MISSISSIPPI COUNTIES**

The Foundation's partnership with Mississippi food banks ensures that food is procured, distributed to local pantries and made available to children and adults who need nutritious foods to thrive.



"Now more than ever, it is an honor and a privilege for Extra Table to partner with Mississippi's premier health and wellness champion, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, in order to get good food to the masses in the midst of this pandemic. It is hard for many of us to wrap our minds around hunger. Being hungry. Doing without. Most of us cannot comprehend the need of so many Mississippians on a regular day—much less a day in the COVID-19 crisis. Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation is an incredible partner and understands the immediate need to get food to the four corners of our state."

**– Martha Allen,
Executive Director, Extra Table**



PROMOTING VACCINE ADOPTION

As a trusted voice in healthcare, BCBS Mississippi has been promoting vaccinations across the state, partnering with the Mississippi State Department of Health to educate the public on the vaccine's safety and efficacy.

They have also created tools to help educate Mississippians on how to make vaccine appointments.



SUPPORTING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

The pandemic has not only been a health crisis for those with COVID-19 and their families. It has also interrupted critical and preventive care for millions of Americans.

BCBS Mississippi wellness coaches have made more than 5,000 outbound calls to such at-risk members and their families, including those with chronic disease, used tobacco or were considered to have a high risk pregnancy, to check on health and well-being.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City



When the coronavirus hit Kansas City, the community came together to keep things running and protect one another. **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City** (Blue KC) was no exception, acting quickly to provide safe and accessible care, promote stay-at-home efforts, support frontline workers, and feed those in need. Today the health plan is playing a critical role in vaccination efforts across the greater Kansas City area.



PROVIDING RELIEF

Blue KC donated:

\$200,000 &

to Kansas City Regional COVID-19 Response & Recovery Fund to help address the needs of the most vulnerable.

Partnered with the KC Royals:

\$25,000 INITIAL DONATION

to the Royals Respond Fund **ROYALS RESPOND** which helps organizations care for those most impacted by the pandemic.



"Royals Charities would not have been able to create the Royals Respond Fund, which focused on the needs of our community in 2020, without the generous support of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City. The Royals and Blue KC both understand the importance of our community, focusing on its most pressing needs. Our investors, partners and players share a deep connection to the Kansas City community, which is why the entire Royals family came together with Blue KC to do our part. We cannot thank Blue KC enough for supporting our efforts both on and off the field."

– John Sherman, Chairman and CEO | Kansas City Royals



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

In addition to extensive public education as one of Kansas City's most trusted names in healthcare, Blue KC has been supporting frontline efforts to vaccinate and protect its community. They have partnered with the United Way of Greater Kansas City to provide rides to and from vaccination sites and are supporting state and local public health efforts.

Blue KC employees have also been volunteering at mass vaccine events, and are expanding efforts into school districts as vaccines become available for younger demographics.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Blue KC joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska (BCBSNE) is responding to the COVID-19 crisis by ensuring its employees are supported and members, providers and others across Nebraska are cared for. In the wake of the pandemic that hit the nation in 2020, BCBSNE's two community relief focus areas have been covering basic needs, including food and safety for its most vulnerable citizens, and supporting frontline healthcare workers.



PROVIDING RELIEF

In Nov. 2020, BCBSNE collaborated with YMCAs across Nebraska and the Central District Health Department to offer:



10,000 FLU SHOTS TO FAMILIES & COMMUNITY MEMBERS AT NO COST TO THEM

BCBSNE has also provided masks, supplies, meals and encouragement to employees and families of area schools, hospitals and health departments, as well as to the National Guard.



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

BCBSNE has been acting as a trusted voice on vaccine safety and efficacy to the public, as well as reaching out to **more than 1,000 high-risk members to connect them to vaccine resources.**

Additionally, BCBSNE's affiliated Think Whole Person Healthcare clinic has administered thousands of vaccinations to the Omaha community.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

BCBSNE joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**

"We are fortunate to be able to open our doors to the community right now and want to help eliminate any barriers families may have to protecting themselves. It's incredible that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska is providing vaccinations, regardless of insurance coverage and, on behalf of YMCAs across the state, I'm proud that we're able to help them do it."

– Chris Tointon, President and CEO of YMCA of Greater Omaha

Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey



In response to COVID-19, **Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey** (Horizon) donated \$2 million to The New Jersey Pandemic Relief Fund to support critical social issues including food insecurity. Its charitable arm, **The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey**, awarded \$816,000 in grants to support food insecurity, basic needs and mental health programs. Employee volunteers donated nearly 500 hours of service at The Community Food Bank of New Jersey sorting and packing food boxes.



"Horizon has been one of the only companies that has been in our warehouse consistently since we first allowed corporate volunteers back in the building late last spring, as well as making regular visits to our Egg Harbor Township location. Their help makes such a difference, and we look forward to their next visit."

— Carlos Rodriguez, President and CEO, Community FoodBank of New Jersey



PROVIDING RELIEF

To address food insecurity during the pandemic, Horizon BCBSNJ donated:

\$100,000 & **\$60,000**
TO THE COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF NEW JERSEY
TO THE JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF ATLANTIC AND CAPE MAY COUNTIES



KEEPING HEALTHCARE WORKERS SAFE

To help address the serious shortage of critical personal protection equipment needed by frontline health professionals in the early response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Horizon BCBSNJ **spent \$2.35 million to donate 500,000 N95 respirator masks and 81,000 face shields** to Governor Murphy's coordinated response effort. This has been the largest single donation made by Horizon BCBSNJ in its nearly 90 year history.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Horizon BCBSNJ joined American's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans**.

In partnership with Rite Aid and faith-based organizations, Horizon BCBSNJ is working in communities with high COVID-19 mortality rates to schedule appointments for their members while the churches schedule appointments for their parishioners.



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

Horizon BCBSNJ supported the New Jersey Department of Health's efforts to test and schedule vaccine appointments in areas with high rates of positive COVID-19 cases. They are also paying clinical and non-clinical employees for time off to volunteer for frontline efforts—both in delivering medical care and in assisting New Jersey residents in registering for the vaccine.

Excellus BlueCross BlueShield (Excellus) has been tirelessly committed to supporting its members and community through the COVID-19 public health crisis. In addition to extensive funding for non-profit partners, Excellus has supported public health efforts and launched widespread campaigns to provide the Upstate New York region with a trusted source of education and reassurance through the pandemic.



PROVIDING RELIEF

Excellus funded more than

\$120,000 IN COMMUNITY HEALTH
AWARDS TO 35 NON-PROFITS

positively influencing community health. They also provided executive support to New York's Monroe County Crisis Response Team, helping direct support and resources for those in need.



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

Excellus offered pop-up vaccine clinics for health plan employees, who were then encouraged to volunteer with the United Way of Greater Rochester on public vaccination efforts.

The team also made outbound calls to more than 46,000 members for second-dose reminders and launched extensive public awareness campaigns about the vaccine's availability and safety—particularly to underserved and under-vaccinated populations.

In addition, Excellus referred members in need of transportation for vaccination to NY Connects or local 211 options.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Excellus joined the Health Equity task forces in all of our main markets – Utica, Binghamton, Syracuse and Rochester as well as the Vaccine Community Connectors pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**

That work included identifying vulnerable areas and members, making direct outreach to encourage vaccination, and launching three pop-up clinics in underserved areas.

They also partnered with the New York State Office of the Aging to ensure seniors in rural areas had access to the vaccine.

"Excellus BlueCross BlueShield's Sponsorship of the Black Health Town Hall virtual event in Central New York, facilitated a much-needed conversation to dispel myths and misconceptions about the COVID-19 vaccine. This partnership enabled us to broadcast this event and stream special programming about the virus and the pandemic on our local PBS station. Educating and providing information to Black communities is our priority, and together – with our friends at Excellus BCBS – we continued our mission of being Black Health champions by reducing disparities and working toward equity within the Black community."

**– Denise Welch, Program Manager
at the National Black Leadership
Commission on Health**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC) is committed to improving the health and well-being of all North Carolinians by providing support for organizations improving access to food and other critical community needs during COVID-19. They continue to push long-term solutions and investments to remove barriers to basic needs.



PROVIDING RELIEF

Blue Cross NC provided a:

\$5.6M INVESTMENT ACROSS
THE STATE

working with non-profit organizations that serve African-American and Hispanic communities – who are more vulnerable during this uncertain time.

They also provided technical assistance to community organizations that needed help making the transition to virtual operations, helped the state acquire protective equipment, and greatly expanded their employee volunteer programs.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Blue Cross NC is utilizing owned communications channels to educate and build trust in the vaccine, with a focus on communities of color with historically founded mistrust in the medical system. They also joined the Vaccine Community Connectors pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

Blue Cross NC made a \$500,000 investment with Ride United NC, **covering the cost of 10,000 round-trip rides to vaccination appointments across the state for communities of color, seniors and uninsured individuals.**



They also spearheaded a coalition of diverse public and private philanthropic, government and business partners to complement, support and amplify the state's ongoing efforts to address COVID-19 and vaccine distribution. Efforts include paid promotion, trainings, donations and educational materials.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF THE COASTAL PLAIN

"There was no pandemic playbook for youth development, but the needs were real and critical. Our shift to both remote engagement and smaller club-based experiences, required that we consider safety and development in a whole new light. The investment from Blue Cross NC supported the efforts to keep young people safe, active and learning."

– **Kimberly Boyd, President and CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of the Coastal Plain**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Dakota



ND

Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota (BCBSND) and the **BCBSND Caring Foundation** have been expanding support to sustain and recover the health of their members and communities since the start of the coronavirus pandemic. In addition to generous grants to meet the most critical needs of North Dakotans, they have served as a trusted voice through uncertain times and led critical vaccination efforts throughout the state.



PROVIDING RELIEF

The BCBSND Caring Foundation has been supporting its partners in the fight against COVID-19 with:

\$150,000 IN COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS

This includes an emphasis on food insecurity and the Great Plains Food Bank's efforts to increase emergency food assistance across the state.



GREAT PLAINS FOOD BANK



"People who never needed help before came to us. They were so appreciative. They were in tears. They wanted to hug us. It's things like that that stuck with me and kept me going. Together with support from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Dakota, we were able to do the right thing and get through even the worst days."

– **Melissa Sobolik, President, Great Plains Food Bank of North Dakota**



SUPPORTING VACCINE ACCESS

BCBSND joined an unprecedented partnership between the state and all its health insurers to manage mass vaccination efforts in a unified way.

They are also supporting physician efforts to encourage vaccination, launching vaccine adoptions campaigns across the state.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

BCBSND joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans** – including the many rural communities it serves.

In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, **Capital Blue Cross** doubled down on their commitment to the health and wellbeing of the members and communities they serve. From supplying healthcare workers with protective equipment to bringing vaccine sites to underserved and often overlooked communities, they have been supporting the recovery of Central Pennsylvania and the Lehigh Valley.



PROVIDING RELIEF

At the height of the pandemic, Capital Blue Cross:

Created a **Rapid Response Fund** to assist non-profits in addressing the immediate needs of their communities

Immediately shipped **3,750 hand sanitizers** from existing stock to 25 non-profits that serve the public on a regular basis

Supplied local healthcare providers with **personal protective equipment (PPE)**

Provided support and guidance to the underinsured and to those who lost their insurance due to the pandemic.



SUPPORTING VACCINE ACCESS

Capital Blue Cross deployed its employees as volunteers at vaccination sites throughout its service area, partnering with RiteAid to **provide more than 10,000 vaccinations** at a Capital Blue Cross or community organization location. The insurer also made outreach to connect members to vaccine providers at a time when vaccines were not yet easy to schedule.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Capital Blue Cross identified underserved areas with low vaccination rates and organized vaccines clinics in partnership with other community organizations.

They also supported local non-profits in bringing virtual care to those uninsured or underinsured and provided bus passes for homeless populations at shelter vaccination sites.



"Providing access to high-risk and underserved Latinos is our mission and key to our success. This collaboration allowed us to do just that: keep a local, community-focused COVID vaccine clinic in the heart of Lancaster, PA, during the pandemic. We couldn't have done it without Capital Blue Cross."

– **Sandra Valdez, Chief Operating Officer, Spanish American Civic Association**

Independence Blue Cross (Independence BC)'s mission to enhance the health and well-being of the people and communities it serves was tested as the COVID-19 public health crisis hit Greater Philadelphia. As a prominent and trusted leader in the region, they served not only as a health insurer, but also as a reassuring voice to the public, partner to state and local governments, and advocate for those most impacted by the pandemic. In addition, the Independence Blue Cross Foundation (IBC Foundation) continued to serve as a supporter of non-profits who care for our neighbors in need.



PROVIDING RELIEF

IBC Foundation:

Was a lead donor to the PHL COVID-19 Fund, which **supports vulnerable populations** and helps shore up community safety nets, such as food pantries and health services.

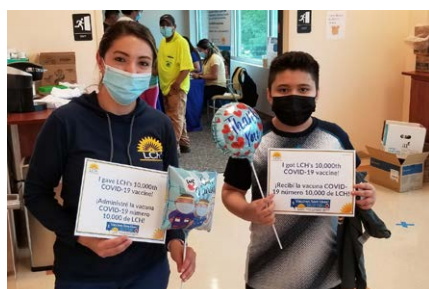
Independence BC:

Partnered with the city to **raise awareness of public mental health resources** and raise awareness around growing cases of anxiety and depression.

IBC Foundation:

Served as a leader in promoting equitable access to COVID-19 vaccinations by working with non-profits in southeastern PA to reach under-resourced communities and awarded nearly

\$1M IN CHARITABLE GRANTS TOWARD THE EFFORT



"[Funding from the IBC Foundation] to sustain our clinical operations during the project year, an undertaking that has been considerably more costly during the pandemic. PPE for all staff, storage for PPE and other safety equipment, enhanced cleaning services, cleaning supplies, and other expenses are now part of our normal operations. Your grant is helping us to meet these necessary costs during a year when insurance reimbursement revenue has been down."

– **LeeAnn Riloff, B.S., Director of Development LCH Health and Community Services**



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

Independence BC was instrumental in launching vaccination sites across their service area to help vaccination thousands of residents. These efforts include starting a mass vaccine initiative in collaboration with Rite Aid, outreach to eligible members and providing one-on-one assistance setting up appointments. They also transformed their customer experience center into a vaccination site, vaccinating up to 500 people per day. Additional vaccination clinics were created in partnership with Centennial Pharmacy Services and Keystone First.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Independence BC joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans**. As part of this work, they supported the city's FEMA vaccination sites to vaccinate its most underserved, under-vaccinated regions.

The insurer also provided space and support for many community initiatives, including the All Faiths Vaccine Campaign promoting equitable access to vaccines in Black and Brown communities. Independence BC also stepped forward as one of the region's first and strongest supporters of the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium, which has vaccinated tens of thousands of people in the region.

In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, **Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield** (Highmark BCBS) and the Highmark Foundation were critical partners to both community organizations and state and local governments in Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. They have quickly managed change to help their members, communities and provider partners weather the crisis and move toward recovery.



PROVIDING RELIEF

Highmark BCBS committed \$2 million in grant funding throughout their service areas:

\$575,000

donated to food banks to help alleviate food insecurity

\$525,000

donated to human service agencies to expand access to care

\$700,000

to strengthen safety net providers through support from its Foundation

\$200,000

to Delaware COVID-19 relief efforts.

Working with Allegheny Health Network, their owned delivery system, Highmark BCBS took immediate action to support health systems and provider practices in efforts to ramp up capacity, secure supplies, manage their financials, and take care of patients and caregivers.



SUPPORTING VACCINE EFFORTS

In partnership with the Pittsburgh Pirates, Highmark BCBS helped turn PNC Park into a mass vaccination site for thousands in the Pittsburgh area.

They also turned their major Highmark clinics into points of distribution for further vaccinations across their service area and deployed their clinically qualified employees to distribute the vaccine.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

In addition to joining the Vaccine Community Connectors pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**

Highmark has also partnered with Latino Connections to vaccinate 600 farm workers across Pennsylvania. They are also partnering with historically black churches, senior living, and mobile vans to administer the vaccine in urban and underserved areas.



"The Highmark Foundation was one of the first organizations to provide Metro Community Health Center with support in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Their support and generosity was vital in allowing Metro to ensure the continuity of care for all of our patients, increasing access for our patients, as well as in implementing COVID-19 testing in our health center and within the communities we serve."

– Metro Community Health Center

From the onset of the pandemic, **Triple-S Salud** (Triple-S) and the Triple-S Foundation have been supporting members and the Puerto Rican community as they recover from the COVID-19 crisis. Critically, they are engaged in ongoing efforts to formulate and support public policy that effectively addresses the crisis while also promoting education among key stakeholders and the public to counter the spread of the virus.



PROVIDING RELIEF

Triple-S is taking a comprehensive approach to expand relief efforts—particularly to address the distribution of food and protective equipment to vulnerable populations. The Triple-S Foundation has been supporting the community with various grants up to \$40,000:



Feeding the elderly & First Responders



INICIATIVA
COMUNITARIA
Somos un gran abrazo.

Helping the homeless, especially those in need of rehab



Feeding the homeless and the elderly—both were vulnerable during COVID



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Triple-S joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans**. As part of these efforts, they continue to hold weekly meetings to address the ongoing and evolving needs of the island's most vulnerable populations. When more vaccines became available, their clinical staff administered them at the company's Salud clinic and at bedridden members' houses.



SUPPORTING VACCINE ACCESS

Initially, very limited quantities of the vaccine reached Puerto Rico. As seniors found it difficult to find appointments online, Triple-S took it upon themselves to coordinate vaccines for their Medicare members.

"Triple-S is a great ally for VOCES. Their support and solidarity has been vital to bring education and vaccination to remote and vulnerable communities, particularly during this pandemic. Thanks to their donation of resources and services, we have been able to print educational materials, provide water, chairs, tables and tents for our vaccination events around the entire island. The commitment with health and willingness to serve our people was transformed into action, which distinguishes their commendable mission and social responsibility."

– **Lilliam Rodríguez Capó, CEO & Founder of VOCES Immunization and Health Promotion Coalition of Puerto Rico**

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island



Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island (BCBSRI) has been supporting and sustaining its statewide community through the COVID-19 crisis from the earliest days of the pandemic. The health insurer quickly moved to cover COVID-19-related health services, communicate timely and reliable information to all, and play a lead role in helping businesses, members, healthcare providers, and not-for-profit organizations navigate unprecedented times.



PROVIDING RELIEF

BCBSRI was an early supporter of the United Way of Rhode Island and Rhode Island Foundation COVID-19 Response Fund, which collectively provided:



United Way of Rhode Island

MORE THAN **\$7M** TO **181** COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Other areas of focus for BCBSRI include: behavioral health, PPE donations to front-line workers, first responders and homeless residents. BCBSRI associates also volunteered with Meals on Wheels and made donating need blood a priority. BCBSRI also provided additional ways for their employees to engage and assist with community relief efforts.



"Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island was an instrumental partner in launching a COVID-19 Response fund ensuring that our nonprofits could access the resources needed to care for their communities. As the pandemic raged on, BCBSRI continued to be a beacon of support providing their talents and resources in support of those most in need. United Way of Rhode Island is incredibly grateful for their leadership and generosity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic."

— **Cortney Nicolato,**
President & CEO,
United Way of Rhode Island



SUPPORTING VACCINE ACCESS

In addition to extensive public education efforts, BCBSRI has been using its Our Blue Bus and Your Blue Stores to run vaccine clinics and help members connect to vaccine sites and resources.

They are also supporting the state's largest health system in hosting vaccine clinics.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

BCBSRI has partnered with the Rhode Island Department of Health to better understand the needs of underserved communities and uncover ways to support them. They have also joined the Vaccine Community Connectors program, a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**

The COVID-19 pandemic reached South Carolina in March 2020. Immediately, **BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina** (BCBS SC) stepped up to support their members, providers and communities with much needed funds, hours of volunteerism, expanded care, and more.



PROVIDING RELIEF

BCBS SC provided much-needed funds to local organizations to put toward their pandemic efforts:

\$100,000

to



United Way of the
Midlands

for their COVID-19
Relief Fund

\$100,000

to



and encouraged employees to donate blood, offering two hours off during work days for donation through the end of 2020.



"At every level of the organization, BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina's response to the pandemic has been nothing short of exceptional. In terms of donations, they were one of the first companies to step forward with a significant contribution to the United Way of the Midlands COVID-19 Response Fund, and their employees once again showed their generosity by contributing to the largest campaign in the state. In terms of volunteerism, BCBS SC leadership is represented on our board of directors and many nonprofits throughout our community, and their employees were some of the first to volunteer in person as soon as it was safe to do so. We owe them our heartfelt gratitude for setting an example for how we care for our neighbors in the Midlands."

– United Way of the Midlands



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

BCBS SC joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, pledging to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**

BCBS SC invested in South Carolina's historically Black colleges and universities with contributions which provided tuition scholarships and hardship grants to students and provided technology upgrades and training for faculty.



SUPPORTING VACCINE EFFORTS

In addition to extensive education efforts, BCBS SC offered 16 urgent care centers as vaccination sites, each with 5-15 clinical staff per site.

They also allowed all staff members, both clinical and non-clinical, up to 40 hours of paid time off to volunteer in vaccination efforts.

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee (BCBSTN) and the BCBSTN Foundation have been passionately leading the work to help their statewide community weather and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, addressing food insecurity, supporting the front lines, investing in relief efforts and taking steps toward reduced healthcare inequality.

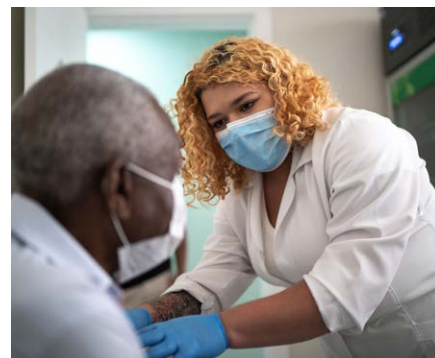


PROVIDING RELIEF

Our Foundation has provided two rounds of critical funding to food banks across Tennessee:

\$5M DONATED TO MULTIPLE FOODBANKS
ACROSS THE STATE

Food banks can often purchase supplies at a much lower cost than individuals can, stretching to provide as many as four meals for each dollar they receive in cash donations.



"Getting nearly 700,000 Shelby County residents vaccinated to reach herd immunity by June is a monumental task. This generous gift from the BCBSTN Foundation to the City of Memphis will go a long way towards getting the word out about why and how to get vaccinated to the hardest to reach in our community."

– **Memphis Mayor, Jim Strickland**



SUPPORTING VACCINE EFFORTS

The BCBSTN Foundation **awarded \$1.7M in grants to help Tennessee communities promote and support vaccinations.** BCBSTN has partnered with over 130 organizations to date to advance vaccination efforts, including churches, community service organizations and state government entities.

Other efforts include sending clinical volunteers to vaccine sites to help distribute vaccines and funding medical-grade freezers to help store vaccines for distributors.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

BCBSTN has made extensive efforts to address inequities across Tennessee. They have **donated \$125,000 to the City of Memphis and Hamilton County for increased testing for uninsured residents;** partnered with Meharry Medical College to uncover data-driven approaches to address vaccine hesitancy in Black communities; and are using claims data overlaid with social data to better serve vulnerable communities.



As Vermont's only local, non-profit health plan, **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont** (Blue Cross) has a passion and purpose to make reliable, high quality healthcare available to improve the well being of all Vermonters. That is why they have been standing beside their members, communities and provider partners since the pandemic's start and in 2021 helped push Vermont to its spot as the state with the highest vaccination rate to date.



PROVIDING RELIEF

Blue Cross supported the Vermont Department of Health's efforts to secure COVID-19 tests and make them widely available across the state.

Additionally, at the health insurer's encouragement, Blue Cross employees have been volunteering as members of the state's medical reserve corps and in community call centers as needed throughout the pandemic.



SUPPORTING VACCINE EFFORTS

Blue Cross has continuously served as an advisor to the Vermont Department of Health, supporting their evolving response to the pandemic.

In addition to extensive public education efforts to communicate vaccine availability and safety, they sent employees to staff vaccine clinics, handling both administrative and clinical duties.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

The insurer joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans.**

They are also working with the Vermont Department of Health to reach its members with disabilities that make it difficult to travel and those who are homebound, arranging for them to be vaccinated at home.

"Vermont has been a leader in vaccinations and is now close to 80% vaccinated with at least one dose. This would not have happened without the assistance of businesses such as Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont. The saying goes 'it takes a village,' this is so true."

– **Charon Goldwyn,**
Director of Operations,
Vermont Department of Health

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming** (BCBSWY) has been a keystone of support for the members and communities it serves. The health insurer has been addressing food insecurity as well as urgent health and safety needs in response to the crisis.



PROVIDING RELIEF

The COVID-19 pandemic has been responsible for some of the country's highest levels of food insecurity in decades, and in some of Wyoming's most remote areas, the closest grocery store might be a 20-mile drive from home.

To help support these families facing unprecedented food security issues, BCBSWY has been an active support system in the state by addressing childhood hunger with increased funding to support at-risk families.



"Wyoming is incredibly lucky to have business leaders like Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming who have, over the course of the pandemic, led the pack in terms of identifying need and taking care of our Wyoming neighbors in need. Thanks to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming, anti-hunger organizations in every Wyoming county were able to keep enough resources in stock to provide for anyone in need. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming is a true hunger hero in our state!"



SUPPORTING VACCINE EFFORTS

BCBSWY has partnered with hospitals, medical societies and health plans to launch media campaigns educating the public about the COVID-19 vaccine.

They also reached out to thousands of high-risk members, encouraging them to get the vaccine.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

In addition to joining the Vaccine Community Connectors pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans**, BCBSWY funded grants to the Wind River Development Fund to help both Shoshone and Arapahoe Tribal members find transportation to and from medical appointments, including COVID testing and vaccinations.

Premera Blue Cross (Premera BC) was one of the first health plans in the country to be faced with COVID-19 in February 2020. They were quick to shift their coverage, policies, corporate giving, and volunteer efforts to support their members, employers, providers and communities throughout the crisis and have continued this work as vaccines have become available.



PROVIDING RELIEF

Premera BC's Social Impact program delivered:

\$6.5M IN GRANTS TO THEIR NON-PROFIT PARTNERS

working to provide critical health and human services throughout the pandemic.

Premera BC was among VEI's first corporate sponsors contributing:



\$150,000



"Thank you for all that you do. For everything, you have done to help us during this time. We have been able to distribute everything that the Yakima Valley Needs program has helped with. We have been able to bring food and provide basic necessities. We were given gas cards on Friday and our staff is able to fill their tanks and continue to see patients. We have been able to get baby wipes when we weren't able to purchase them anywhere. You all have made this possible. We are so grateful. I mean that. Thank you so much for this generous grant. It will go right into use and help every one of our patients and their families. Thank you."

– **Heartlinks Hospice and Palliative Care**



IMPROVING VACCINE ACCESS

In addition to extensive public education campaigns, Premera BC partnered with Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, QFC and Business HealthTrust to host vaccine clinics at their corporate campus.

Organizers worked with more than 20 community partners serving populations who have faced historic and ongoing exclusion, as well as seniors, to support equitable access for appointments. They also sent employees to volunteer at local vaccine clinics across their service areas.



ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Premera BC joined America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in a pledge to **promote vaccinations for 2 million underserved, at-risk Americans**. They also joined community and philanthropy leaders across Washington state to launch a new initiative to ensure equitable COVID-19 vaccine access for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

As part of a shared commitment to ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, Premera BC and Walgreens are hosting community vaccine clinics in Washington state. The clinics offer the Pfizer vaccine free of charge, and appointments are not required.



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