



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 7, 2008

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**BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS FOUNDATION
COMMITTS OVER \$2.3 MILLION IN GRANTS**

BOSTON — January 7, 2008—The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation (BCBSMAF) announced grants totaling more than \$2.3 million to improve access to health care for uninsured and low-income residents. Fifty-eight organizations across the Commonwealth – including 30 organizations based in or serving Boston – received funding to improve organization and continuity of care for the uninsured; help low-income consumers enroll in publicly-funded health insurance programs; and strengthen community-based advocacy activities.

“These grants are among the Foundation’s most significant means of helping to promote access to care for low-income and uninsured Massachusetts residents,” said Phillip Gonzalez, the Foundation’s Director of Grantmaking. “We are pleased to support key organizations across the state that work hard to address barriers to care. Despite the significant positive impact of Massachusetts’ health care reform efforts, there are still large numbers of individuals and families who need better access to health care.”

The Foundation’s total grantmaking in Massachusetts during this period will support:

- 19 health care delivery organizations, with up to three-year commitments totaling \$1.2 million to support models for developing, expanding, or sustaining coordinated care for the uninsured;
- 23 community-based and health care delivery organizations, with one-year grants, totaling \$490,000, to support efforts to enroll low-income persons for public and private health insurance programs, navigate the health care system, and connect them with health care providers; and
- 16 advocacy organizations, with one-year grants totaling \$635,000, to support statewide advocacy initiatives that promote the health care interests of the uninsured and low-income residents.

Examples of organizations that were awarded grants from the Foundation include:

- **Disability Policy Consortium** was awarded \$35,000 in renewed funding to support their health advocacy efforts. Their efforts include educating people with disabilities about the public policy system and training them participate in the policy making process. The organization will also monitor health care reform’s effect on people with disabilities. Collaborators include, Massachusetts State Association of the Deaf, M-Power, Massachusetts Office on Disability, Greater Boston Interfaith Organization, Work, Inc., Statewide Independent Living Council, and DEAF, Inc.

- **Hilltown Community Health Center** was awarded \$195,000 in funding to support the planning and implementation of a medical home program for clients who reside in rural Western Massachusetts and remain uninsured following health reform. The program will expand community health worker and medical specialist availability and will address gaps in the availability of medically necessary services, including preventative services.
- **Manet Community Health Center** was awarded \$20,000 in funding to expand outreach efforts to the growing Brazilian, Chinese and Vietnamese communities of the South Shore. Staff will conduct outreach to unemployed, self-employed and uninsured consumers and will assist consumers with enrollment into MassHealth and Commonwealth Care programs.
- **Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers** received \$40,000 in renewed funding to support Community Health Workers as they promote access to health care by applying their personal understanding of the community to help consumers get coverage and care. MACHW engages community health workers and communities in health care policy development and strengthens the community health worker field through collaboration with local, statewide and national organizations.

Since its inception in 2001, the BCBSMAF (www.bcbsmafoundation.org) has committed over \$23 million in grants to 240 organizations, and developed numerous policy initiatives to expand access to health care for the uninsured and low-income individuals and families in Massachusetts. The Foundation is governed by its own 19-member Board of Directors and operates separately from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA) Corporation. BCBSMA contributed an initial endowment of \$55 million in 2001. The endowment is now \$110 million, making the BCBSMA Foundation one of the largest health philanthropies in the state.

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