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Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation Awards \$1.5 Million in Grants to Support Access to Health Care

BOSTON (Nov. 28, 2017) – The [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation](#) has awarded more than \$1.5 million in grants to 31 community organizations in support of their efforts to promote accessible health care and coverage for vulnerable and low-income residents across the Commonwealth.

The new round of grants targeted two key program areas, *Connecting Consumers with Care* and *Strengthening the Voice for Access*. The Foundation also supported several organizations through its *Special Initiatives* grant-making program that provides one-time grants to innovative pilot and demonstration projects that expand access to health care for low-income consumers.

“With the future of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) uncertain and federal funding for Massachusetts health care programs at risk, support for organizations that are intensely focused on accessibility to coverage and care is more important now than at any time since the passage of the Commonwealth’s landmark health care law in 2006,” said Audrey Shelto, president of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. “These grants will make an enormous difference in the health and lives of low-income people, from Boston and the Cape Cod region, to central Massachusetts and the Berkshires.”

Connecting Consumers with Care grants provide support for up to two years to Massachusetts community-based organizations and health centers to assist eligible consumers with enrolling in publicly subsidized health insurance, keeping them insured, and addressing post-enrollment issues to maximize access to care.

“The Foundation grant we received is essential to Caring Health Center as we continue our services to improve the health and well-being of underserved residents of Greater Springfield,” said Tania Barber, president and CEO of Caring Health Center. “As the only refugee health assessment provider in western Massachusetts, our patients include large numbers of people fleeing violence, religious persecution and extreme poverty. Many of these people have lacked



access to health care of any kind for many years. For these and others in the region, the support of the Foundation provides a critical lifeline to health care and other services.”

Strengthening the Voice for Access grants provide up to two years of core operating support to Massachusetts organizations to strengthen community-based policy activities, increase citizen participation in public policy development, and promote collaboration among statewide policy and advocacy organizations on two key priorities for vulnerable populations: ensuring health care coverage and addressing health care affordability.

“We are honored to be a Foundation grantee and to be among a cohort of Massachusetts organizations that are dedicated to preserving coverage and care for vulnerable consumers,” said Danna Mauch, Ph.D., president and CEO of the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health. “The health care advocacy community applauds the Foundation for investing in our work and enhancing our capacity to serve individuals who experience daily disparities in access to care – disparities that can be mitigated by targeted coverage and service delivery reforms.”

The following is a complete list of Foundation grantees (an asterisk indicates a new recipient; the remainder are renewals for organizations that received funding in 2016):

Connecting Consumers with Care grantees

| Organization | Location | Amount |
|---|--------------|-----------|
| Boston Public Health Commission | Boston | \$40,000 |
| Brockton Neighborhood Health Center | Brockton | \$40,000 |
| Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee | Cambridge | \$40,000 |
| Caring Health Center * | Springfield | \$40,000 |
| Community Action Committee of Cape Cod and Islands | Hyannis | \$40,000 |
| County of Dukes County | West Tisbury | \$40,000 |
| The Dimock Center * | Roxbury | \$40,000 |
| East Boston Neighborhood Health Center | East Boston | \$40,000 |
| Ecu-Health Care | North Adams | \$40,000 |
| Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center * | Worcester | \$40,000 |
| Family Health Center of Worcester | Worcester | \$40,000 |
| Greater New Bedford Community Health Center * | New Bedford | \$40,000 |
| Hilltown Community Health Centers | Worthington | \$40,000 |
| Joint Committee for Children’s Health Care in Everett * | Everett | \$40,000 |
| Lowell Community Health Center * | Lowell | \$40,000 |
| Funding total | | \$600,000 |



Strengthening the Voice for Advocacy grantees

| Organization | Location | Amount |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Boston Center for Independent Living | Boston | \$60,000 |
| Massachusetts Association for Community Health Workers | Worcester | \$60,000 |
| Disability Policy Consortium | Malden | \$60,000 |
| Health Care For All | Boston | \$75,000 |
| Health Law Advocates | Boston | \$65,000 |
| Massachusetts Association for Mental Health * | Boston | \$75,000 |
| Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition | Boston | \$65,000 |
| Massachusetts Law Reform Institute | Boston | \$75,000 |
| Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers | Boston | \$60,000 |
| Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery * | Boston | \$60,000 |
| Massachusetts Public Health Association | Boston | \$30,000 |
| National Alliance on Mental Health Illness–Massachusetts | Boston | \$60,000 |
| Funding total | | \$745,000 |

Special Initiatives grantees

| Organization | Location | Amount |
|---|---------------|-----------|
| Advocates, Inc. * | Framingham | \$50,000 |
| Community Care Cooperative * | Boston | \$40,000 |
| Community Servings * | Jamaica Plain | \$50,000 |
| Social Impact Center of Roxbury Presbyterian Church * | Roxbury | \$40,000 |
| Funding total | | \$180,000 |

About the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation

The mission of the [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation](#) is to expand access to health care for low-income and vulnerable individuals and families in the Commonwealth. The Foundation was founded in 2001 with an initial endowment from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. It operates separately from the company and is governed by its own Board of Directors.

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