



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS FOUNDATION AWARDS \$1,205,000 IN GRANTS TO PROMOTE THE HEALTH INTERESTS OF MASSACHUSETTS CONSUMERS IN COVERAGE AND AFFORDABILITY

BOSTON – September 13, 2011 – The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation has awarded \$1,205,000 in grants to 24 community organizations in Massachusetts whose missions are dedicated to promoting the health care needs of uninsured and low-income residents. The grants range from \$40,000 to \$75,000 per year, and represent the first of two years of funding.

The grants were made in two grant program areas, *Connecting Consumers with Care* and *Strengthening the Voice for Access*, both of which were created in 2001 when the Foundation first began its grantmaking efforts. The guidelines and expectations for each of these grant program areas were enhanced following a strategic planning process, to reflect the Foundation's priority areas of coverage and affordability.

“Our grantees’ efforts have ensured health care access and improved the system for thousands of Massachusetts residents,” said Sarah Iselin, President of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. “We are pleased to have added new organizations such as the Massachusetts Public Health Association, the Disability Policy Consortium, and the Boston Center for Independent Living to these programs this year. They will bring important new perspectives to our state’s work on access and affordability.”

Connecting Consumers with Care provides programmatic support to organizations that will provide comprehensive outreach and enrollment services, an enhanced approach to educating consumers on effective navigation of the health care system, and strategic collaboration with the advocacy community to identify and address barriers that prevent consumers from easily accessing coverage and care.

Strengthening the Voice for Access provides core operating support to organizations that will strengthen community-based policy activities, increase citizen participation in public policy development, and promote collaboration among statewide policy and advocacy organizations on coverage and affordability.

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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. It focuses on collaborating with public and private stakeholders to develop measurable and sustainable solutions that benefit uninsured, vulnerable, and low-income individuals and families in the Commonwealth. The Foundation was formed in 2001 with an endowment from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. It operates separately from the company and is governed by its own Board of Directors.