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New Online Tool Maps the Changing Massachusetts Health Care Delivery System

BOSTON — May 17, 2013 — The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation has launched [an online tool](#) that enables users to track the complex and rapidly changing makeup of the Massachusetts health care delivery system.

Financial and competitive pressures, in combination with new legislative and regulatory requirements, have spurred multiple mergers, acquisitions, and consolidations among the state's hospitals and physician practices in recent years. The Foundation's new website provides easy access to information about ownership relationships and major contracting relationships for the state's acute care hospitals, hospital systems, medical groups, physician networks, and community health centers.

“We developed this mapping tool in order to bring greater transparency to the evolution of the delivery system as providers work to implement state and national health care reform and accept new, alternative forms of payment,” said Celeste Lee, the Foundation's Interim President and Senior Director of Grantmaking. “In addition to being of interest to policymakers, health care leaders, and journalists, delivery system changes have wide-ranging implications for patients and health insurance consumers who need to make well-informed choices about their care and coverage.”

The Foundation's delivery system website provides multiple layers of information and analysis that users can look up by provider type, location, or name. For example, it shows that:

- Massachusetts has 64 acute care hospitals, 15 major hospital systems, 169 major medical groups, nine physician networks, and 55 community health centers.
- Three hospital systems account for 35% of the hospital beds in Massachusetts.
- The state's 13 largest physician networks and medical groups include 84% of the state's primary care physicians.
- Half of the state's community health centers are located in Boston.

Among the site's many features is a “Recent Changes” section where users can find information on new mergers, acquisitions, and network or contracting changes as they take place. For example, the site shows that in 2012, 18 significant changes took place, including the merger of Northeast Health System and Lahey Health System, and the movement of physicians from Compass Medical, Hawthorn Medical Associates, and Whittier IPA, among other groups, to the Steward Health Care physician network.

The website summarizes the makeup of the state's major hospital systems, and also provides detailed information on each component of the relationships. The mapping tool currently excludes ambulatory surgery centers, rehabilitation and other non-acute care hospitals, as well as ambulatory care or satellite facilities owned by community health centers, hospitals, and hospital systems.

In developing the site, the Foundation drew upon data from Massachusetts Health Quality Partners (MHQP) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and consulted with many other organizations including the Center for Health Information and Analysis and the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers, as well as physician leaders and others.

Explore the tool here: <http://bluecrossmafoundation.org/delivery-system-map/>

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 established 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.