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Health Coverage Fellowship Chooses Class for 2013

BOSTON – December 18, 2012 – The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation today announced that eleven medical journalists from across the nation have been selected for the 2013 class of the Health Coverage Fellowship.

The 2013 participants include Greg Bordonaro of the *Hartford Business Journal*, Ibby Caputo of WGBH-Radio in Boston, Elizabeth Comeau of the *Boston Globe*, Dan Gorenstein of American Public Media's *Marketplace*, Daniela Hernandez of Wired.com in San Francisco, Dr. Suzanne Koven of the *Boston Globe* and Massachusetts General Hospital, Priyanka Dayal McCluskey of the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*, Kathleen McNerney of WBUR-Radio in Boston, Sarah Palermo of the *Concord Monitor*, Shannon Pettypiece of *Bloomberg News*, and Patty Wight of Maine Public Radio.

The fellowship is designed to help the media improve its coverage of critical health care issues. It does that by bringing in as speakers more than 50 top health officials, practitioners, researchers, and patients. It also brings the fellows out to watch first-hand how the system works, from walking the streets at night with mental health case workers to riding in a Medflight helicopter or spending a morning in a crowded emergency room.

The program, which is entering its twelfth year, is sponsored by the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, with support from the Blue Shield of California Foundation, Connecticut Health Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Maine Health Access Foundation, New Hampshire's Endowment for Health, and the Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut.

The fellowship will run for nine days, beginning April 26. It is housed at Babson College's Center for Executive Education in Wellesley, and is operated in collaboration with leading journalism organizations. Larry Tye, who covered health and environmental issues at the *Boston Globe* for 15 years, directs the program. A former Nieman Fellow and author of six books, Tye has taught journalism at Boston University, Northeastern, Tufts, and Harvard.

The fellowship will focus on a series of pressing medical issues – from implementing health care reform to curbing costs, addressing mental illness, and redressing public health threats. Attention also will be given to breakthroughs in medical treatments and innovations in the delivery of care.

The teaching will not end when fellows head back to their stations or papers. Tye, the program director, will be on call for the journalists for the full year following their nine days in Wellesley. He will help when they are stuck for ideas or whom to call on a story. He will assist in thinking out projects and carving out clearer definitions of beats. He also maintains a web site where fellows will post their stories and keep in touch.