



Blue Cross
Blue Shield
Blue Care Network
of Michigan

News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public, private partners award \$535,000 to integrate health care for low income and uninsured patients coping with mental illness and substance abuse

DETROIT, September 26, 2016— Six Michigan-based safety net providers received a combined total of \$535,000 to help develop, enhance or expand programs to support uninsured and low-income patients coping with mental illness and substance abuse. The funding is provided through a unique partnership between Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation, the Ethel and James Flinn Foundation and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

“Michigan residents who are underinsured or lack health insurance often depend on safety net providers to receive primary care,” said Lynda Rossi, executive vice president of Strategy and Public Affairs at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. “This funding will help providers expand that care to identify and address mental health and substance abuse concerns, so patients get the full range of care they need in one setting. Grants like this support Blue Cross’ ongoing commitment to strengthening the safety net, which ultimately leads to improved long-term health and lower costs for all.”

The safety net providers receiving the integrated care grants are:

- **Baldwin Family Health Care in White Cloud** was awarded \$96,250 to address the shortage of mental health providers in the community. The program will give Baldwin Family Health Care patients the ability to work with a pharmacist to ensure appropriate use of mental health medications, and limit adverse effects.
- **Catherine’s Health Center and Health Intervention Services in Grand Rapids** were awarded \$96,250 to develop a system of resource and staff sharing between two separate clinic locations to expand access to evidence-based treatment for depression, anxiety and substance use disorders.
- **Covenant Community Care, Inc. in Detroit** was awarded \$96,250 to support a new integrated care program called Health Home. The program will serve patients with chronic diseases and behavioral health issues by providing home visits and individualized care plans.
- **InterCare Community Health Network in Bangor** was awarded \$75,000 to hire a nurse to oversee a Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program to combat opioid addiction in Berrien County.
- **Mackinac Straits Health System in St. Ignace** was awarded \$75,000 to support a new program that will provide a holistic approach when treating individuals with addiction of mental illness by integrating medical and mental health care, crisis intervention, treatment services and transition back into the community.
- **Munson Healthcare Boyne Area Health Center**, a clinic operated by Munson Healthcare Charlevoix in Boyne City, was awarded \$96,250 to hire a full-time behavioral health therapist to address behavioral health issues during patient’s primary care visits and ensure continuity in care between the therapist, patient’s psychiatrist and primary care physician.

“Each of these providers is using the grant funding to invest in projects that will have a positive, long-lasting impact on individuals suffering from addiction and mental illness in communities across Michigan,” said Audrey Harvey, vice president at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and executive director and CEO of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation. “These grants are designed to carefully measure and, eventually, model their success in other areas of need across the state.”

Matt Lori, innovations grant coordinator for Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, said, “This public-private partnership is another great example of how foundations, Michigan-based companies and the state can team up to have a long-term, positive impact on the health of Michiganders. Low-income Michigan residents who have limited health insurance or no coverage at all depend on these providers, and these grants support a new avenue for treatment.”

“Increasing access to integrated care is a top priority for our foundation because of the difference it can make for the patient’s future success and well-being,” said Andrea Cole, executive director and CEO of the Flinn Foundation. “Integrating behavioral health care improves the likelihood of treatment and early intervention.”

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, a nonprofit mutual insurance company, is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. BCBSM provides and administers health benefits to more than 4.4 million members residing in Michigan in addition to employees of Michigan-headquartered companies who reside outside the state. For more company information, visit bcbsm.com and MiBluesPerspectives.com.

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