

Expanding Health Philanthropy in Florida



FLORIDA

Foundation

The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida celebrates 10 years
and is now Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation is an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

A low-income, visually impaired man gets the cataract surgery he needs – free of cost. A retired schoolteacher receives low-cost dental care. A free clinic in Panama City provides timely, attentive care to patients who need it most.

They're small victories, but each has a big impact. And throughout the past 10 years, outcomes like these have been made possible by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation, the only statewide health care philanthropy that's based in Florida. Since its 2001 inception, the BCBSF Foundation has sought to assist a growing number of Floridians who are uninsured or have limited access to appropriate, quality health care – due to barriers like cultural and language issues, availability of providers or economic circumstances.

In fact, more than one million people throughout Florida's 67 counties have benefited from the BCBSF Foundation's efforts. From diabetes and mental health treatments to HIV/AIDS medicines, the BCBSF Foundation awards grants to help ensure that uninsured people have access to health care.

Here's how it works: the BCBSF Foundation partners with community-based nonprofit organizations that provide primary health care, preventive care and other services that promote healthy lifestyles. By awarding grants to these groups, the BCBSF Foundation helps them start new programs – or enhance existing, successful ones. Organizations must meet eligibility requirements, undergo site visits, and demonstrate past successes to receive grants.

It's a system that's worked consistently well, both for organizations and the Floridians they serve. In a study conducted by the University of Florida, the BCBSF Foundation's impact over the first five years earned it the distinction of an "important national practical model for addressing health care disparities."

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A New Name. A New Mission.

As the BCBSF Foundation celebrates a decade of philanthropy, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida is expanding its philanthropic affiliate's reach, revising its mission, and changing the BCBSF Foundation's name to reflect its new goals.

What was previously known as The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida is now Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation. The new mission is to improve the health and well-being of Floridians and their communities. The change reflects the company's expanding commitment to its philanthropy, as well as five focus areas for the BCBSF Foundation:



Improving access to health care.

The original mission of the BCBSF Foundation, improving access to health care will always be a cornerstone of the organization. Through IMPACT (Improving Access to Health Care) grants, the BCBSF Foundation will award funds to nonprofit health care organizations throughout the state that provide access to quality health-related services and address health care disparities.

Improving consumer health.

By partnering with communities across Florida, the BCBSF Foundation is taking significant strides toward reducing and preventing childhood obesity, a problem that threatens children's health today and into the future. Moving forward, the BCBSF Foundation will work with local organizations to identify pressing health concerns and develop ways to help alleviate them.

Improving the quality and safety of patient care.

The BCBSF Foundation knows that a well-trained and readily available nursing workforce is crucial

to improving health outcomes for patients. That's why the BCBSF Foundation has partnered with The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Florida Center for Nursing. Together, the three organizations study ways to enhance nurse education through the use of simulation.

Improving quality of life.

Healthy communities make healthy people – and vice versa. The BCBSF Foundation will partner in communities to improve human and social services; community development and diversity; education and literacy; arts and culture and disaster preparedness and relief.

Improving the health care system.

The BCBSF Foundation honors the best of nonprofit health care organizations with the annual Sapphire Award. By recognizing and rewarding these exemplary programs, the BCBSF Foundation will encourage other organizations to replicate successful models – and advance the improvement of the health care system.

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Clinic Offers More Free Medical Care

Between 2007 and 2009, Panama City's unemployment rate rose from 4.6 to 9.8 percent, forcing many families to stretch every dollar. Because of this, some postponed health care services, and others sought free or reduced-cost health care. Others neglected to seek care altogether.

Panama City's St. Andrew Community Medical Center faced a difficult situation: more new patients were seeking its services, but limited resources meant the Center had to turn away many who needed care. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation and Bay Medical Center helped the walk-in clinic provide free, timely care to an additional 60 patients each week.

The BCBSF Foundation extended a \$96,000 grant to help St. Andrew Community Medical Center provide medical supplies like diabetes testing equipment, antibiotics, insulin and non-narcotic pain medications to needy Floridians.

Something to Smile About

When an injury forced Pamela Abbey to stop working as a schoolteacher, she lost her regular health care benefits. After years of neglecting her dental health, Abbey turned to Community Smiles for help. There, she received the extensive dental work she desperately needed, free of cost.

Set up by the Dade County Dental Research Clinic, Community Smiles is staffed by volunteer dental professionals – and provides preventive, restorative and highly specialized dental and oral health care to low-income, uninsured residents of Miami-Dade County.

Floridians like Abbey can count on Community Smiles thanks in part to support from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation. In 2007, a \$100,000 grant from the BCBSF Foundation allowed the clinic to add two additional staff members. In 2009, the BCBSF Foundation continued its support of Community Smiles with another \$100,000 grant – enabling the clinic to purchase educational materials and lab supplies.

Nonprofit Adds Specialty Care to Its Services

Addressing the unmet need for specialty care is the next step for Shepherd's Hope, a faith-based organization of volunteers that has been working to meet the primary health care needs of Central Florida's uninsured for more than 10 years. Areas of extreme poverty are especially prevalent in Seminole County, where uninsured individuals under the age of 65 make up 14 percent of the population, or nearly 50,000 residents.

A grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation allowed Shepherd's Hope to open the Longwood Shepherd's Hope Health Center in Seminole County in 2007. Since opening, the clinic has provided more than 7,500 medical visits for Seminole County residents who might otherwise go without health care.



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