

## Press Release: Aetna Teams with Community Partners to Help Kansans Lead Healthier Lives

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Aetna Better Health donates \$125,000 to support Kansas communities

TOPEKA, Kan., June 1, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- Aetna Better Health of Kansas, a CVS Health company, announced that it provided donations totaling \$125,000 to five community health partners throughout the state. The donations will support health care providers and help the community meet health and social care needs, such as those related to mental health, developmental disabilities and housing.



Image provided by CVS Health

"Community resources are essential for helping individuals and families achieve better health," said Lisa Baird, Chief Operating Officer, Aetna Better Health of Kansas. "The investments we're making in Kansas will help people be more self-sufficient, have greater access to care and improve their wellbeing, and also enable providers to deliver quality care. By working together, we can make a difference in the lives of those in underserved communities in Kansas."

Aetna's \$125,000 donation went to the following organizations:

**University of Kansas Medical Center KUMC Project ECHO.** About 15% of the US population lives in rural areas. Project ECHO provides training for rural health clinicians in Kansas through best practice "tele-mentoring" sessions with a

professional network of interdisciplinary specialists. The donation will help fund continuing education for Medicaid-focused rural and community health care providers with the goal of increasing a provider's ability to treat and manage complex health care challenges in their own communities and improving outcomes for Kansans.

"Aetna's generous donation will help KUMC Project ECHO deliver continuing education programs to rural health care specialists, including primary care, mental health and public health providers," said Ryan Spaulding, PhD, Vice Chancellor, Institute for Community Engagement, University of Kansas Medical Center. "Our ECHO programs provide a forum for experts and participating providers to share knowledge and experiences and learn new skills for treating and managing complex health care challenges in their home communities."

**The Kansas Association of Centers for Independent Living** (KACIL) received support to help the State of Kansas better understand the reasons behind the shortage of caregivers for individuals with disabilities. In 2019, prior to the pandemic, the national turnover rate was estimated to be about 43%, with nearly 33% of caregivers quitting with less than six-months of service. The donation helped fund KACIL's research initiative to assess issues related to recruitment, retention, working conditions and other factors that impact the availability of Direct Support Workers (DSW) employed in Kansas as caregivers within the home and community-based services industry. According to the KACIL research results, DSWs who responded most commonly selected higher hourly wages and benefits as factors that would increase their desire to remain in this line of work.

"Home and community-based services are vital to supporting Kansans with disabilities who prefer to remain living in their own homes rather than in facilities," said Deone M. Wilson, chairperson, Kansas Association of Centers for Independent Living, Inc. "The shortage of DSWs is having an incredibly negative impact on people's quality of life. However, with the support of Aetna, KACIL can use meaningful data to help inform actions to recruit and retain homecare workers."

**Kansas Statewide Homeless Coalition** (KSHC). An estimated 2,450 Kansans experience homelessness on any given day, and 13% are experiencing a severe housing problem, which is defined as overcrowding, high housing costs, lack of a kitchen or plumbing facilities. KSHC received funding to help improve member access to housing for KanCare members residing in 101 non-metropolitan Kansas counties. The donation also will connect members with

landlord engagement, housing stabilization services, and supportive services to ensure members obtain and maintain permanent housing solutions.

**Kansas Consumer Advisory Council** (KSCAC) for Adult Mental Health received funding to help deliver a Trauma-Informed Care curriculum to Medicaid members, providers, schools, first responders, mental health organizations, community governments and other partners across the state.

**Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities** (KCDD), through **University of Missouri Kansas City**, received a donation to help host trainings on Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC) throughout the state. CtLC training supports people of all ages with developmental disabilities so they have the opportunity to make choices regarding both their participation in society and their quality of life.

Kelly Munson, President, Aetna Medicaid, said, "Medicaid and community resources are an essential safety net that helps many individuals in Kansas live a healthy life. We're committed to strengthening our network of local resources that help Medicaid members and their communities thrive."

Aetna Better Health has been providing quality care to Medicaid enrollees in Kansas since 2019. The health plan serves over 130,000 enrollees across the state through the KanCare Medicaid managed care program.

Since the beginning of 2021, Aetna Better Health of Kansas donated more than \$330,000 to various community-based organizations across the state to positively impact population health and provide those in need with more options to access quality health care.

### **About Aetna Medicaid**

Aetna Medicaid Administrators LLC (Aetna Medicaid), a CVS Health company, has over 30 years of experience managing the care of the most medically vulnerable, using innovative approaches and a local presence in each market to achieve both successful health care results and effective cost outcomes. Aetna Medicaid has particular expertise serving high-need Medicaid members, including those who are dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare. Currently, Aetna Medicaid owns and/or administers Medicaid managed health care plans under the names of Aetna Better Health and other affiliate names. Together, these plans serve approximately 2.8

million people in 16 states, including Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. For more information, see [www.aetnabetterhealth.com](http://www.aetnabetterhealth.com).

### **About CVS Health**

CVS Health is the leading health solutions company, delivering care like no one else can. We reach more people and improve the health of communities across America through our local presence, digital channels and over 300,000 employees including more than 40,000 physicians, pharmacists, nurses, and nurse practitioners. Wherever and whenever people need us, we help them with their health whether that's managing chronic diseases, staying compliant with their medications, or accessing affordable health and wellness services in the most convenient ways. We help people navigate the health care system and their personal health care by improving access, lowering costs and being a trusted partner for every meaningful moment of health. And we do it all with heart, each and every day. Learn more at [www.cvshealth.com](http://www.cvshealth.com).

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