

Government & Community Relations

2020-2022 REPORT



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At Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas (BCBSKS), we've worked for over 80 years to keep our members healthy and safe. As healthcare has evolved over the decades, BCBSKS has worked diligently to adapt without ever forgetting who we are or who we serve: our fellow Kansans. The government and community relations division at our company plays a critical role in this effort.

As the primary contact with public policymakers, government officials, regulators and community partners, the government and community relations division's core initiatives and services include overseeing the company's position as good corporate citizens through corporate giving, community partnerships and initiatives that improve the health of Kansans.

The pandemic underscored the need to quickly address the emerging needs across Kansas. Recognizing the growing need to support our communities, BCBSKS launched initiatives to help build mental health awareness and improve access to care and resources for all Kansas. We quickly expanded telemedicine coverage and launched a grant program through Blue Health Initiatives to help mental health and medical providers purchase equipment and secure telemedicine platforms to better serve Kansans.

While 2020-2022 were not without hardship, this period brought forth continued opportunities for BCBSKS to serve Kansans in innovative ways. As we look to the future of better health, I am optimistic for what lies ahead and look forward to our continued work together in improving the health of Kansas communities.



Sincerely,

Sunee Mickle

Vice President, Government and Community Relations

Government Relations

Value & Community Impact

2021 health claims for members:



17,813,671
Processed



\$3,070,063,943
Paid to Providers

Taxes paid in 2021:¹



\$53,639,772

The taxes paid by BCBSKS support local, state and federal social services and programs, including education, healthcare, transportation, social security, corrections, veterans and other vital public services.

¹ Includes payroll, federal and state income, personal property, real estate and premium taxes for BCBSKS and its subsidiaries.

Q: What happens to the health insurance premiums our members pay?²

A: The vast majority (88¢ of every dollar) pays for member care.



• **88¢ All Claims³**

• **11¢ Operating Expenses**

• **1¢ Taxes⁴**

² For every \$1.00 paid in premiums, BCBSKS spent \$1.003 in claims, operating expenses and taxes.

³ Claims include: 40.6 cents institutional claims; 25.6 cents professional claims; 19.2 cents drug claims; 2.8 cents dental claims. All Claims value is 88.2 cents. Claims expense allocation is based off of 2021 paid claims.

⁴ Taxes include premium tax and exchange user fees.



Government Relations

Government Relations

The government and community relations division serves as the company's primary contact with public policymakers, government officials, regulators, and community partners. As the most trusted health insurance provider in Kansas, our team serves members at the Statehouse through:

Dependability – As trusted experts in health insurance information for all Kansans, we are relied upon by the Kansas Legislature and their staff to provide education, resources and information.

Leadership – BCBSKS was appointed by the Kansas Legislature and Kansas Insurance Commissioner to lead and participate in efforts to analyze the behavioral health system in Kansas. Most recently in 2020-2021, our vice president of government and community relations, Sunee Mickle, was appointed by the Commissioner of Insurance to the Special Committee on Kansas Mental Health Modernization and Reform, and served as co-chair of the committee's telehealth working group.

Preparing for tomorrow – As a part of the Special Committee on Kansas Mental Health Modernization, we have helped shape a 10 year strategic plan to modernize the state's behavioral health system.

As the most trusted health insurance provider in Kansas, our team serves members at the Kansas Statehouse.



Leadership and Innovation

Guided by our mission of being the insurer that Kansans trust with their health, and core purpose statement to provide peace of mind and access to a better quality of life, the following are areas of focus and innovation for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas.



Integrity: Affordability

Cost is a consistent problem in healthcare. To pursue affordability relentlessly, we are committed to finding new, creative ways to structure and pay for high-quality care at a lower cost.

Innovation

“Integrated Rx” was launched in 2021 and is available to any member that is seeing a provider with an internal pharmacy. It is designed to improve members' care and lower costs by integrating care and improving treatment solutions.

The first quarter of the program showed:

- **Improved discounts from providers led to lower costs.**
- **Adherence (persistence) of the patient to their regimen.**
- **Reduced waste.**
- **High level of member satisfaction.**

“MedsYourWay” is a new service that automatically compares prescription drug prices from multiple discount cards and your health plan benefit (copay).

Health Education - In 2022, a new tool called SMILE (Self-Management in Lifestyle Education), was updated to include more features. The tool tracks disease management and wellness interactions with members. If a member is enrolled, they can access nurse documented disease-specific assessments, such as labs, medication lists, care goals and any teaching and educational materials provided during each visit.

What providers are saying:

“I have been able to reach people in need of mental health services all over the state, not just within driving distance. It has saved my clients travel costs, day care costs, and time away from their jobs.”



Growth and Progress: Mental Health

To better connect Kansans with in-network mental health care, we partnered with MiResource, an online mental health provider referral tool, in October of 2021.

MiResource won the 2021 Brand Innovation Award from the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.

Innovation

In its first year, there were

20,330

unique searches and over

3,164

appointments made by individuals.



Dependability: Telehealth

- BCBSKS began covering telemedicine services in 1993, recognizing early the potential of technology to increase healthcare access and affordability for all Kansans.
- We carefully designed our telehealth benefit to ensure it would not displace healthcare providers in rural Kansas communities and would encourage members to continue coordinating care through their local primary care physicians.
- **Innovation**
We launched a one-year grant opportunity through Blue Health Initiatives for healthcare providers across the state in response to the surge of new telemedicine visits during the pandemic.

Awarded **135** grants totaling over

\$500,000

to mental health and medical providers.

These funds were utilized to purchase equipment and secure telemedicine platforms to better serve Kansans.

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation



Courage: Health Equity

We are focused on improving health outcomes for all Kansans, which requires courage to try new ideas and take risks.

In 2021, Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (BCBSA) announced a national health equity strategy to confront the nation's crisis in racial health disparities. This multi-year strategy focuses on four conditions that disproportionately affect communities of color, including maternal health, behavioral health, diabetes and cardiovascular conditions.

We are working in all areas of this strategic framework to:

- Collect data that measures disparities.
- Scale effective programs.
- Work with providers to improve outcomes and address unconscious bias.
- Lean into partnerships at the community level.
- Influence policy decisions at the state and federal levels.



Service: Response Efforts



Wichita disaster relief



Sunee Mickle

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The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation



The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation has been promoting the good health of Kansans since 2005 by providing financial support for initiatives that focus on the key health issues impacting the lives of Kansans. It is the Foundation's goal to improve the health and well-being across the communities we serve.

It is the Foundation's goal to improve the health and well-being across the communities we serve.

The Foundation has five funding pillars:

- Health improvement
- Community health access and health education
- Healthy behaviors
- Prevention initiatives
- Direct health services to the uninsured



Scope of Giving

Since 2005, over \$9.5 million has been provided to initiatives that create a healthier future for all Kansans. In response to the impacts of the pandemic, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation focused on health and wellness, mental and behavioral health and health equity initiatives throughout 2020-2022.

Over \$9.5 million has been provided to initiatives that create a healthier future for all Kansans.

2020-2022,
more than
\$2 million
was awarded to
more than
600
organizations.

In 2020, **212** organizations were awarded a total of **\$683,000.00.**

In 2021, **211** organizations were awarded a total of **\$705,000.00.**

In 2022, **178** organizations were awarded more than **\$659,000.00.**

*Based on annual reports

2020-2022 Foundation Grant Spotlights

2020
ChildCare Aware of Kansas (Statewide)
\$50,000

Foundation funding supported the purchase and distribution of hygiene/sanitation kits for 500 childcare providers who were in urgent need during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding also supplied social/emotional resource kits and curriculum to support childcare staff. ChildCare Aware of Kansas is the membership organization for licensed childcare facilities, family child care and child care centers and preschools.



2021
Exploration Place (Wichita)
\$50,000

Foundation funding supported a permanent exhibit at Exploration Place called Health Inside Out. The exhibit includes a hub of discovery, fascination, and respect for the human body. Exploration Place welcomed visitors from all 103 counties in our service area.



2022
Flint Hills Discovery Center (Manhattan)
\$55,000

Foundation funding supported the Big League Fun summer exhibit at the center, which focused on healthy lifestyle choices through the celebration of the game of baseball. Flint Hills Discovery Center is in Manhattan, Kansas and hosted guests from all 103 Kansas counties in our service area.





Healthy Habits for Life

Healthy Habits for Life is a major grant-giving program of the Foundation for schools. It is offered to help schools fund physical and mental health initiatives for students in kindergarten through grade 12.

2020-2022, a total of **310**
grants were given, totaling

\$394,691

funding of healthy initiatives
for students.



BlueCross BlueShield Kansas

Foundation



Marlou Wegener
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Scan to learn more.

Community Relations



Community Relations



Kansans Serving Kansans

From 2020-2022, our employees made significant investments across Kansas through their volunteer efforts, employee giving campaigns, local partnerships and continued investment in the Shield Against Violent Environments (SAVE) program. Additionally, they are heavily involved in their respective communities outside of corporate volunteerism.

Volunteerism

To celebrate our 80th Anniversary, our community relations staff planned 80 volunteer opportunities across the state.

Major volunteer projects included:

Junior Achievement
450
hours

Meals on Wheels
1,678
hours

Girls Who Code
50
hours

3,642 hours invested into community projects.



Health-focused Support

Corporate contributions primarily support nonprofit organizations in our service area that have a health-related focus. Most of the funding goes to support event sponsorships that benefit area nonprofit organizations. The budget prioritizes funding corporate community relations projects and organizations where staff serve as board members. Funding decisions are made by a cross-divisional committee.



Shield Against Violent Environments (SAVE)

We are committed to providing employees with a safe and healthy workplace where domestic violence will not be tolerated. The Shield Against Violent Environments (SAVE) program, which is in its 21st year, was implemented to provide employees who have experienced or are currently experiencing a domestic violence situation with resources and assistance. We are also involved with the Attorney General's Batterer Intervention Program (BIP) Advisory Board, which works to support and strengthen batterer intervention programming in the state.

Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV)
 In 2020, \$44,000 was donated to 22 domestic violence advocacy member organizations. All organizations were part of the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV). An additional \$10,000 was donated directly to KCSDV to support its training, prevention and awareness efforts.

Employee Giving Campaigns

United Way

In 2020, **757** employees donated a total of **\$288,418.56**.
 In 2021, **727** employees donated a total of **\$282,090.64**.
 In 2022, **648** employees donated a total of **\$264,479.13**.



Grand total over the past three years **\$834,988.33**

Project Topeka

From 2020-2022, a grand total of **\$52,837.97** and **2,289** pounds of food have been donated to Project Topeka Community Food Drive. This amount is the equivalent of **81,546 meals**.

2020	\$27,515.86 and 40 lbs of food donated. Equivalent of 41,314 meals.
2021	\$12,480.04 and 1,1512 lbs of food donated. Equivalent of 20,232 meals.
2022	\$12,842.07 and 737 lbs of food donated. Equivalent of 20,000 meals.

Spring Giving Campaign

This is a rotating employee giving campaign that is voted on every two years by employees.

2020-2021- *American Cancer Society*
 Employees gave **\$40,885.00**.

2022 -2023 - *Harvesters and Kansas Food Bank*
 Employees have given **\$22,200.00** to date.



Blue Health Initiatives



American Red Cross Disaster Response Team Partnership

Through a unique partnership with the American Red Cross, we founded a Disaster Response Team (DRT) in 2013. The objective of the DRT is to assist fellow Kansans in need following major disasters, such as tornados, flooding, storms, etc.

The team deploys to large scale disasters to provide comfort and care to those impacted. The deployment efforts include: providing shelter, damage assessment, food, emotional support, health services, relief supplies and other forms of support.

On personal time, members of the team may also assist on smaller crises such as house fires and supporting first responders as members of Disaster Action Teams (DAT) in their immediate area.

Saline County Deployment

On Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021, storms across the state brought widespread power outages as well as devastating wildfires throughout Kansas. On Thursday, Dec. 16, the American Red Cross requested deployment of our Disaster Response Team volunteers to help set up and staff a shelter in Saline County due to the high volume of power outages in the county.



“This corporate partnership is one of its kind in our state and is the envy of other chapters throughout our entire enterprise. Simply put, this team makes our humanitarian mission possible.”

-Jane Blocher, executive director for the American Red Cross Greater Kansas Area Chapter.



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Scan to learn more.



Blue Health Initiatives

Transforming Kansas Communities

We are Kansans serving Kansans. By building and strengthening Kansas communities, Blue Health Initiatives works to make Kansas a healthier place to live, work and play. Our core values help guide our work:



Dependability – By providing community coalitions with tools and resources needed, we are helping communities remove barriers to healthy living.



Growth and Progress – Helping to pilot innovative solutions will help address the unique needs of our state.



Service – Through encouraging healthy lifestyles, our goal is to inspire healthy behaviors for life.

Our investment in communities and partnerships through Blue Health Initiatives is improving health and quality of life in Kansas.

Since its inception, Blue Health Initiatives has invested over \$33 Million across Kansas.





Dependability: – Pathways to a Healthy Kansas

The *Pathways to a Healthy Kansas* initiative, known as *Pathways*, is the largest community grant initiative ever funded by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas. It combines community-wide, evidence-based solutions and practices to help Kansas communities improve active living, healthy eating and commercial tobacco prevention. The initiative provides community coalitions with the tools and resources needed to engage their communities and remove barriers to healthy living.

Pathways started in 2016 with eight communities and expanded to 16 in 2017. In 2020, the *Pathways* initiative started a second phase of work with a total of 24 communities – 12 new and 12 returning communities from across the BCBSKS service area.

Pathways addresses the social determinants of health (SDOH), which are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. SDOH can be grouped into 5 domains: economic stability, education access and quality, health care access and quality, neighborhood and built environment and social and community context.



“The *Pathways* Initiative is literally changing lives in Wilson County, and although it might look like one step at a time, to the person who is taking that step, it is not small at all.”

-Stacie Ray, Coordinator, Live Long Stay Strong Wilson County



Growth and Progress: Trailblazers

The NXTSTAGE Community Health and Vibrancy Competition

Twelve leading startups were matched with Kansas communities for 21 pilot projects aimed at improving access to mental health and addiction treatment, enhancing services for seniors aging in place and providing systems to help local micro businesses thrive. In 2022, 94 percent of the startups were led by minority or female founders.



Kansas Community Network

The Kansas Community Network is a system of healthcare and social service organizations who provide whole-person care and improve health outcomes for the most vulnerable members of the community. The network is supported by WellSky and is dedicated to removing social barriers and closing health equity gaps through social service delivery.

30+ community-based organizations
1,147 referrals made
836 clients with referrals
2,593 services referred

Top five services referred are financial support, social support, health, food and housing.

NetWorked

NetWorked is a network of networks working together to boldly solve community challenges. We support this through our anchor sponsorship of the Kansas Community Investment Fund.

“NetWorked unites the 'Do-Gooders' - people who are working diligently in multiple, but different, organizations to generate long lasting change.”

-Christina Long, NetWorked Director



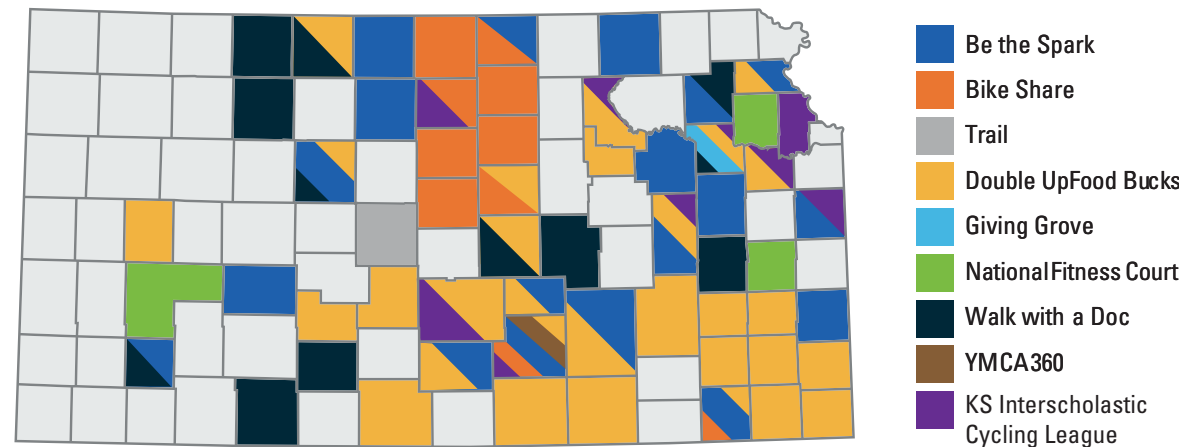


Service: - Healthy Lifestyles

Healthy Lifestyle grants are a collection of statewide initiatives that engage people of all ages. The grants promote healthy habits and active living and are designed to meet the unique needs of each community. An example of meeting these community needs occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021. We partnered with Topeka Rescue Mission on Operation Food Secure to ensure that healthy food made it into the hands of our neighbors. During this time, 44,422 people were served in Northeast Kansas.



Healthy Lifestyles Grants



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Scan to learn more.



We are honored to have been Kansans serving Kansans for over 80 years, and we look forward to continuing our work toward the future of better health in Kansas.



BlueCross BlueShield
Kansas

[bcbsks.com](https://www.bcbsks.com)



Scan to learn more.