

# Strengthening the Safety Net 2019

Expanding access to integrated care  
in Michigan

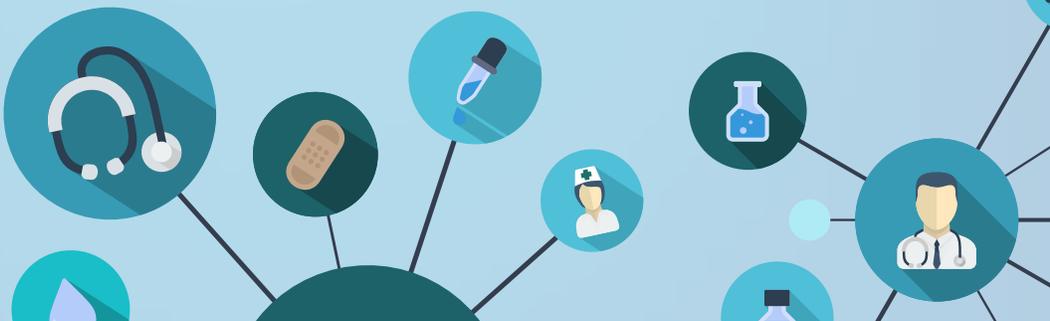


Blue Cross  
Blue Shield  
Blue Care Network  
of Michigan

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## 2019 Request for applications

Application deadline: June 7, 2019



[bcbsm.com/safetynet](http://bcbsm.com/safetynet)

## Strengthening the Safety Net 2019

**Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan has a unique social mission and a commitment to improving the health of everyone in the state.** Over the past 14 years, we've invested more than \$14 million in Strengthening the Safety Net grants to increase access to affordable health care and improve health equity. These grants have helped more than 50 clinics across Michigan provide free or low-cost medical, dental and mental health care for uninsured and underinsured residents.

We know that improving access to integrated medical, dental and mental health care is critically important. People with a usual source of health care have better health outcomes with fewer health disparities and lower costs. Supporting safety net clinics is one way that Blue Cross fulfills our social mission to expand access to health care services, enhance the quality of care and address major health issues to create a healthier Michigan.

Although Michigan has made tremendous gains in coverage, access to a full range of services remains a challenge. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, only 5 percent of Michigan residents are uninsured, or 498,700 people.<sup>1</sup> However, the Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Survey determined that more than one million Michigan residents declined to seek medical care in the past 12 months due to costs and more than three million reported no dental treatment in the previous year.<sup>2</sup> Even though 20 percent of those surveyed had been told by a doctor they had a depressive disorder,<sup>3</sup> nearly one in five adults with mental illness in Michigan were unable to access treatment.<sup>4</sup>

Michigan's opioid epidemic makes the need for accessible integrated health care even more urgent. Although prescribing rates are stabilizing or declining, overdose deaths continue to rise. More than 2,000 Michigan residents died from an opioid overdose in 2017 due to widespread availability and the increased use of Fentanyl. Notably, the American Journal of Public Health reported in the fall of 2018 that opioid-related mortality isn't expected to decrease for five to 10 years.

In addition, recent changes to the Healthy Michigan Plan may pose additional obstacles to coverage for low-income Michigan residents. Healthy Michigan Plan work requirements are scheduled to take effect January 1, 2020. It's estimated that up to 180,000 people could lose coverage once work requirements take effect.

In this safety net health care environment, Michiganders have high rates of smoking, cardiovascular death and obesity. And, there are measurable racial and ethnic disparities in access to care, various health behaviors, and other chronic disease and health status indicators.

Thus, the 2019 Strengthening the Safety Net grant program is designed to help Michigan free clinics fill gaps in care, respond effectively to the opioid crisis and help patients maintain coverage while addressing common health concerns and promoting health equity.

For the 15<sup>th</sup> year, we're pleased to announce the Strengthening the Safety Net grant program. Strengthening the Safety Net grants are one way that Blue Cross works with communities throughout Michigan to improve health. The Strengthening the Safety Net grants promote healthier workers, stronger families, engaged communities and overall cost savings for the health care system. Safety net medical, dental, mental health, vision, pharmacy and specialty care providers are encouraged to apply.

1 [www.kff.org](http://www.kff.org), State Health Facts, Health Insurance Coverage

2 [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/2014-2016\\_MiBRFSS\\_Reg\\_LHD\\_Tables\\_608878\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/2014-2016_MiBRFSS_Reg_LHD_Tables_608878_7.pdf)

3 [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/2014-2016\\_MiBRFSS\\_Reg\\_LHD\\_Tables\\_608878\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/2014-2016_MiBRFSS_Reg_LHD_Tables_608878_7.pdf)

4 <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/issues/mental-health-america-access-care-data>

Applications are now being accepted.

# Grant and reporting requirements

Grant deadlines	
April 23, 2019	Request for applications released
June 7, 2019	Application, budget form and attachments due
June 12, 2019	Blue Cross acknowledgement of receipt emailed to applicants
July 31, 2019	Awards made
August 30, 2019	Matching grant commitment letter due
By September 30, 2019	Grant funds disbursed
Report deadlines	
April 30, 2020	Mid year status report due
November 20, 2020	Year-end status report due

## Request for Applications

Strengthening the Safety Net grantees are expected to provide direct care to provide direct care and help patients obtain coverage and access additional services outside of the clinic, including medical, dental and behavioral health care and social services.

**Applicants may apply for a grant to support clinic operations OR services as a medical home.**

### 1. Clinic Operations

Safety net clinics that provide episodic care and are open for limited hours and treat more than 100 uninsured and underinsured patients annually, are eligible to apply for up to \$15,000 to support their operations.

### 2. Medical and Dental Homes<sup>v1</sup>

Clinics that serve as medical or dental homes and are open for at least 30 hours per week, or bill Medicaid, are eligible to apply for up to \$25,000 to support team-based care. Awards at this level require a \$10,000 match.

Final award amounts will be based on the number of applications received, the scope of applications submitted and the -amount of funding available.

<sup>1</sup>Definitions: A medical home delivers team-based care led by a medical provider and intended to be comprehensive and continuous to maximize patient health. Free clinics that provide this model of care and help patients gain coverage can be considered medical homes even if they help newly-insured patients transition to a permanent health care home. Similarly, a dental home offers an ongoing relationship between a dentist and patient, inclusive of all aspects of oral health care delivered in a comprehensive, continuous and coordinated and family-centered way.

## As in the past:

Grantees are expected to provide clinical and health insurance enrollment services, quality assurance and referrals to services outside of the clinic that influence health. Applicants interested in applying as a medical home are required to raise an additional \$10,000 to match the Blue Cross award.

All grantees are expected to help reduce unnecessary emergency room use, raise awareness of the opioid epidemic among patients and staff, and direct patients or their family members to services for substance use disorder as needed. In addition, Blue Cross expects that grantees follow appropriate opioid treatment and prescribing guidelines and utilize the Michigan Automated Prescription System.

More specifically:

- Enrollment services may be offered on site or by referral to a reliable partner who can support patients with enrollment or re-enrollment and report to the clinic on enrollment encounters.
- Medical directors must routinely report to the board of directors on clinical quality.
- Grantees must link patients to services that support the social, environmental and tangible dimensions of the patients' lives, such as housing, transportation, nutrition and job placement.
- Applicants applying for funding as a medical home should indicate their interest on the application and submit a letter of commitment from the matching donor by Aug. 31, 2019. These matching funds are expected to be new to your clinic.
- Grantees are expected to develop or maintain a referral relationship with nearby emergency rooms to extend care to uninsured patients. This includes establishing a contact with the emergency room leader, sharing information about clinic hours and services and inviting referrals from the emergency room.
- They must provide patient education and provider training to increase awareness of the opioid epidemic and develop an effective referral relationship for substance use disorder services, including medication assisted treatment.
- All are expected to use appropriate opioid treatment and prescribing guidelines and MAPS when appropriate.

## New this year:

This year, grantees are expected to develop a more extensive set of services and more integrated care. Grantees may provide additional services on site or strengthen relationships to develop a more comprehensive referral network. Applicants are required to develop measurable goals for expanding access and integration and report their progress midyear and year-end.

For example:

- A medical clinic may begin routinely screening patients for depression and refer them to a community behavioral health home or other mental health provider.
- A dental clinic may measure and refer patients with high blood pressure to a medical provider.
- A medical clinic may establish a food bank or a relationship with a food bank so that patients with chronic diseases can manage their diseases more effectively by eating well.

In addition, Strengthening the Safety Net grantees must help patients understand Healthy Michigan Plan Work requirements to obtain or retain their coverage.

## Helpful resources

- Blue Cross' Help with Health Care booklets include contact information for medical, dental, mental health and vision services, prescription assistance programs and health coverage. They're available in English, Spanish and Arabic at <https://www.bcbsm.com/index/health-insurance-help/documents-forms/topics/getting-care/help-with-healthcare-brochures.html>.
- Blue Cross' opioid resources site includes patient and provider education materials, medication safety information and notice of prescription drug take-back events. Go to <https://www.mibluesperspectives.com/opioids101/>.
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' links to web pages with information and phone numbers for places with low-cost or free health care, including medical, dental and mental health care and help with health insurance. Go to [https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-71547\\_2943\\_52115---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-71547_2943_52115---,00.html) and click on *Help Finding Health Care*.
- MDHHS' Opioid Addiction Resources site includes treatment, harm reduction and opioid disposal resources, information about the epidemic, prescriber resources, information for pharmacists and community resources. Go to <https://www.michigan.gov/opioids/>.

## Eligibility

Safety net clinics must meet all the following eligibility requirements:

1. Based in Michigan with a mission to serve low-income, uninsured and underinsured patients
2. Recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) organization or be a community-based nonprofit organization paired with a 501(c)(3) organization
3. Provide medical, dental, vision, mental health, pharmacy or specialty care services to at least 100 patients and all interested adults
4. Provide services at little or no cost to patients
5. Work with volunteer administrators and clinicians
6. Have a physician serving as medical director
7. Have operated for at least two years on October 1, 2019
8. Be in good standing on all previous Blue Cross grants, if applicable

Grantees from prior years who meet all eligibility requirements can apply in 2019.



## Use of Blue Cross grant funds

Blue Cross anticipates distributing funds by September 30, 2019, through electronic funds transfer. These funds may be used for clinic operations and direct patient care as described in your application for the following types of expenses:

- Equipment and medical supplies
- Patient medication
- Patient education related to health and health care
- Information technology hardware or software
- Facilities, including rent, utilities and repairs
- Communications such as printing, postage and office supplies
- Salaries, wages and benefits
- Volunteer recruitment and retention
- Discounted contractual services such as lab, X-ray, specialty care, information technology support and grant writing

## Grant and reporting expectations

Strengthening the Safety Net grants are awarded to increase access to affordable health care for the uninsured and underinsured and address opioid and prescription drug abuse in Michigan. Grant funding may be used to support ongoing operations as well as expand hours and services, team-based approaches to care, patient navigation and enrollment, or enabling services. Grantees will be required to submit a midyear and a year-end report on the services provided with grant funds, including:

- A brief narrative of activities completed with grant funds, including accomplishments and challenges
- Data on patient demographics, volunteer engagement, clinical services, enrollment support and referrals provided
- A description of other resources that your clinic provides or helps patients obtain, including pharmaceutical assistance and specialty care access
- A financial report comparing budgeted to actual expenses

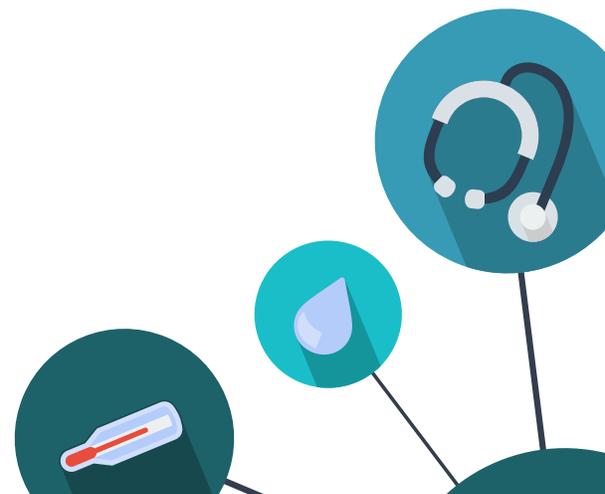
The midyear status report will be due by April 30, 2020; the year-end status report will be due by November 20, 2020.

## Application process

**Submit your completed application no later than June 7, 2019. Late or incomplete applications may not be considered for funding.**

All instructions and application forms are available at [bcbsm.com/safetynet](http://bcbsm.com/safetynet). Completed applications must be received no later than June 7, 2019. Your application isn't complete until we receive both your completed application and the following materials.

- IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter for the free clinic or fiduciary organization
- Applicants for free clinics with fiduciaries must submit a letter certifying an agreement to serve as fiduciary and comply with all terms and conditions in this request and Blue Cross's conditions of the grant. The letter must be signed by an individual with full authority to bind the fiduciary organization; scanned signatures are acceptable
- Roster of the free clinic's board of directors, including names, organizational affiliations, phone numbers and email addresses
- The clinic's most recent annual report. If you don't produce an annual report, submit a one- to two-page summary of 2018 accomplishments or include copies of board meetings minutes from 2018
- The clinic's revenue and expense budget for the most recent one-year period available
- Local media form
- Automated Clearing House electronic payment form. **Please check this carefully**
- IRS Form W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification.



All materials must be submitted in a single email, addressed to the Social Mission department at [safetynet@bcbsm.com](mailto:safetynet@bcbsm.com) or faxed to 1-866-239-1735.

Hard copies of documents that can't be emailed may be mailed to the following address. Materials postmarked by June 7, 2019, will be considered.

Strengthening the Safety Net Grant Program — MC L10C  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan  
232 S. Capitol Ave.  
Lansing, MI 48933-1504

Applicants are responsible for verifying receipt of their applications. If the primary contact on your application doesn't receive a confirmation email by June 12, 2019, email the Social Mission department at [safetynet@bcbsm.com](mailto:safetynet@bcbsm.com) to follow up. Include your name, the name of your clinic and your phone number.

## Accountability

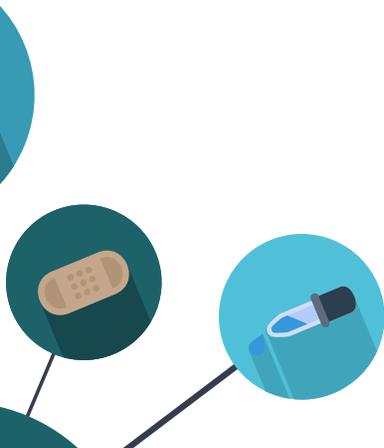
By applying for Strengthening the Safety Net funding, your clinic agrees to:

- Use awarded funds to cover eligible expenses consistent with your completed application and approved by Blue Cross
- Secure Blue Cross approval in writing before deviating from your approved budget
- Spend all funds by September 30, 2020
- Contact Blue Cross in July 2020 if any unspent funds aren't yet committed, so our staff can work with you to use remaining funds according to the grant program
- Participate in up to two conference calls with Blue Cross staff upon request
- Submit a midyear status report and a final status report including a brief narrative of activities completed, core clinic and patient demographic data and a financial report comparing budgeted to actual expenses. Report requirements and occasional requests for additional information, if any, will be designed to minimize grantee effort while providing Blue Cross with the data necessary to assess program effectiveness and promote program efforts
- Adhere to Blue Cross' guidelines for media releases and other communications about this grant. These guidelines focus on the use of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan logo, availability of assistance from Blue Cross in writing media releases and how and when to contact Blue Cross about grant announcements
- Comply with the Blue Cross conditions of grant, available at [bcbsm.com/safetynet](http://bcbsm.com/safetynet)

## Additional Information

Visit [bcbsm.com/safetynet](http://bcbsm.com/safetynet) for application and reporting forms, answers to frequently asked questions and other materials related to this grant opportunity.

Send an email with your questions to [safetynet@bcbsm.com](mailto:safetynet@bcbsm.com). Include your name, clinic and phone number so we can respond accordingly.





## Strengthening the Safety Net 2019



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