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Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation

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MID-OHIO FOOD COLLECTIVE RECEIVES \$150,000 FROM ANTHEM BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD FOUNDATION TO CONTINUE ‘FOOD AS MEDICINE’ PROGRAM

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Mid-Ohio Food Collective (MOFC) announced today a \$150,000 grant from the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, a philanthropic arm of [Elevance Health Foundation](#), to continue its Mid-Ohio Pharmacy “Food as Medicine” program. This initiative will support MOFC as it collaborates with OhioHealth to screen patients for food insecurity during health care visits. OhioHealth will then connect patients who screen positive for food insecurity to food assistance resources onsite at health care facilities and at community-based food pantries and meal programs.

The “Food as Medicine” program, a Feeding America® initiative funded by the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, will help connect people and families facing hunger in central and eastern Ohio to food distribution programs that provide regular access to healthy food options. The program aims to screen hundreds of patients over the next three years with the goal of improving food security and related outcomes. This phase of the program will help MOFC and OhioHealth implement enhanced data collection, sharing and analysis to better understand the needs of people facing hunger and deliver effective solutions.

“When people eat healthy food, they can be healthy,” said Dr. Amy Headings, MOFC’s director of research and nutrition who leads the Food Collective’s [Mid-Ohio Pharmacy](#) program. “This grant will allow Ohio’s largest foodbank to collaborate directly with one of the area’s largest care providers in ways that are measurable and effective at improving outcomes for our customers experiencing food insecurity.”

The grant will allow MOFC to expand its previous partnership with the OhioHealth system of hospitals and care sites. The organizations had worked together on a “Food as Medicine” pilot that provided nutritious food on-site at select OhioHealth hospital locations. This new opportunity will deepen the scope of work from the previous collaboration by leveraging food insecurity screenings through electronic health record system referrals to Mid-Ohio Food Collective’s Pharmacy program. Patients

referred into the Mid-Ohio Farmacy program have weekly access to fresh, healthy produce at any one of its participating Mid-Ohio Farmacy agency locations at no out-of-pocket cost.

“We are encouraged by the outcomes of the pilot program and grateful for the opportunity to expand access to healthy food for patients,” said Karen Morrison, president of the OhioHealth Foundation and senior vice president of OhioHealth. “Advancing health equity is a strategic priority for OhioHealth and this dynamic partnership with MOFC is an example of how we can significantly impact the wellbeing of the communities we serve.”

“We continue to invest and support programs that address food insecurity by helping individuals reach optimal health through good nutrition,” said Greg LaManna, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield’s Medicaid president in Ohio. “Research demonstrates that hunger, health, and well-being are deeply connected. This unique partnership will allow clinical staff to conduct universal food insecurity screenings and interventions. Food is medicine and consistent access to nutritious food is an essential part of maintaining health and we remain committed to removing barriers and creating sustainable change with partners across the health ecosystem.”

Food security and health are inextricably linked. The lack of access to nutritious foods can have serious, long-term effects on health and well-being, and it can make managing existing chronic conditions more difficult for people facing hunger. The “Food as Medicine” program will provide MOFC and OhioHealth with data collection capabilities that will help identify learnings and best practices to enable positive health outcomes in participants. Mid-Ohio Food Collective, a member of the Feeding America network, is one of 21 food banks to receive this funding from the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation.

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About Mid-Ohio Food Collective

Mid-Ohio Food Collective (MOFC) is the largest hunger relief organization in central and eastern Ohio. Through our five assets (the Mid-Ohio Foodbank, Mid-Ohio Farm, Mid-Ohio Farmacy, Mid-Ohio Kitchen, and Mid-Ohio Markets), MOFC addresses the root causes of hunger while working with more than 680 partner agencies in 20 counties to feed hundreds of thousands of hungry Ohioans every year. Learn how we’re co-creating hunger-free, healthier communities at www.mofc.org.

About OhioHealth

Based in Columbus, Ohio, OhioHealth is a nationally recognized, not-for-profit, charitable, healthcare outreach of the United Methodist Church.

Serving its communities since 1891, OhioHealth is a family of 35,000 associates, physicians and volunteers, and a network of 14 hospitals, three joint-venture hospitals, one managed-affiliate hospital, 200+ ambulatory sites and other health services spanning a 50-county area. It has been recognized by FORTUNE as one of the “100 Best Companies to Work For” 15 times since 2007. For more information, visit ohiohealth.com.

About Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation

The Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, is a philanthropic arm of the Elevance Health Foundation. The Foundation works to address health equity by focusing on improving the health of the socially vulnerable through strategic partnerships and programs in our communities with an emphasis on maternal child health; mental

health; and food as medicine. Additionally, the Foundation also responds to disasters when our communities need us the most. The Foundation coordinates the company's year-round Dollars for Dollars program which provides a 100 percent match of associates' donations, as well as its Volunteer Time Off and Dollars for Doers community service programs. ®ANTHEM is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield names and symbol are registered marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. To learn more about the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation and the Elevance Health Foundation, please visit www.elevancehealth.foundation and its blog at www.medium.com/elevancehealthfoundation.

About Feeding America

Feeding America® is the largest hunger-relief organization in the United States. Through a network of more than 200 food banks, 21 statewide food bank associations, and over 60,000 partner agencies, food pantries and meal programs, we helped provide 6.6 billion meals to tens of millions of people in need last year. Feeding America also supports programs that prevent food waste and improve food security among the people we serve; brings attention to the social and systemic barriers that contribute to food insecurity in our nation; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry. Visit www.feedingamerica.org, find us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).