



NEWS RELEASE

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Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and Entira Family Clinics Announce Collaboration to Advance New Care Model

Health Plan Assistance Supports Clinic's Vision of Sustainable Independent Primary Care

(Eagan, Minn.) March 24, 2015 - Blue Cross and Blue Shield (Blue Cross) and Entira Family Clinics (Entira) today announced a collaboration that advances the organizations' shared goals: fostering affordable, high quality health care while supporting and preserving a place for independent primary care in the health care system.

Through the terms of the agreement, Blue Cross will provide technical and financial assistance to Entira's group of 12 physician-owned clinics in St. Paul and the Twin Cities east metro area. The Blue Cross assistance will support the design and development of an enhanced patient-care model. This new model will empower Entira to further evolve from the traditional approach of individual physician care to a method that uses a physician-led team-based care coordination and collaboration with patients. In creating this new model, Entira also is focused on integrating community health resources such as social service agencies.

The collaboration also calls for Blue Cross to make funds available for Entira to enhance their information systems. These new capabilities will strengthen the clinics' ability to advance a "predictive health" approach, which aims to prevent future health needs by using a patient's current health issues to assess their risk levels. Ultimately, this approach aims to improve the way health care is practiced by reducing costs and improving the patient's overall well-being.

Additionally, Blue Cross' support will make it possible for Entira to dedicate staff time to care model development. To ensure the clinics are able to maintain adequate time for patient care, Blue Cross funding will support additional personnel resources to focus on the redesign.

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Financial and technical support from Blue Cross is being provided in addition to a new payment agreement with Entira. This agreement features outcome-based incentives, while de-emphasizing the traditional “fee-for-service” standard which ties compensation to overall volume of care.

“Entira is a highly valued primary care system within our provider network,” said Garrett Black, senior vice president of health collaboration and provider relations at Blue Cross. “I’m excited about this opportunity to advance our relationship with Entira and see that they have the resources to continue evolving their business while providing exceptional health care to our members.”

“The way that Blue Cross incents and supports doctors and hospitals has become much more sophisticated in recent years,” said Black. “More and more, providers benefit when they have the information and capabilities to deliver the right care at the right time. As the plan with the largest network of hospitals and doctors in Minnesota, Blue Cross understands how independent practices like Entira play an important role alongside the larger integrated care systems. ”

“For the past three to four years, we have worked on creating a sustainable model which delivers health care more efficiently while providing improved quality outcomes and patient satisfaction,” said Paul Berrisford, chief operating officer of Entira Family Clinics. “I wasn’t surprised when Blue Cross approached Entira, since they have always been an innovative partner and one of the more creative groups we have worked with over the years. We feel that with their support, Entira should be able to advance care redesign.”

“Entira intends to remain an independent group and our arrangement with Blue Cross should enhance that objective,” said Berrisford. “The goal of our redesign process is to implement our new model over a five-year period. The end result of this transformational model is to provide better care to all our patients. We hope that this design will be used by our other payer partners.”

Blue Cross and Entira will dedicate the remainder of 2015 to design and develop this new care design. The goal is to implement new patient-centric capabilities beginning in 2016.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (bluecrossmn.com), with headquarters in the St Paul suburb of Eagan, was chartered in 1933 as Minnesota’s first health plan and continues to carry out its charter mission today as a health company: to promote a wider, more economical and timely availability of health services for the people of Minnesota. Blue Cross is a not-for-profit, taxable organization. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, headquartered in Chicago.

Entira Family Clinics is an independent family practice found in your neighborhood that provides lifelong care for your entire family. We have 12 clinic locations in the St. Paul metro area. We offer a full range family medicine such as obstetrics, newborn, pediatrics, adults & geriatric care provided by 60 board-certified physicians and 11 mid-level medical professionals. Some clinics have been serving St. Paul metro families for more than 50 years.