



Aetna® helps treat childhood vision disorders with \$75,000 donation to Plano Child Development Center

DOWNERS GROVE, Ill., Jan. 10, 2024 – Aetna Better Health of Illinois®, a CVS Health® company (NYSE: [CVS](#)), announced that Aetna® has provided a community investment of \$75,000 to Plano Childhood Development Center to help children receive the eyecare and intervention they need.

[Studies](#) show that children exposed to screens before age three are more likely to have developed myopia, an eye condition, which can cause blurred far vision, short-sightedness or near-sightedness, by pre-school age. Once myopia develops in children it typically deteriorates over time, is a significant concern to quality of life and poses a risk to long-term eye health.

“The pandemic shifted the way children learned – they were constantly in front of screens,” said Dr. Stephanie Johnson-Brown, executive director, Plano Child Development Center. “As a result, we’ve seen an increase in near-sightedness amongst children. With Aetna’s support, we’ve been able to nearly double the number of students enrolled in vision therapy. These students have received glasses, eye-care follow up and are on track to continue to receive the care they need. Our partnership with Aetna has been instrumental in helping us expand care to children that need it most.”

“Aetna is committed to making sure children receive the care they need,” said Lakshmi Emory, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer, Aetna Better Health of Illinois. “Investing in Plano Child Development Center helps us ensure an organization that has been at the forefront of pediatric eyecare intervention for over 50 years can continue to provide children with essential care.”

Aetna has awarded over \$700,000 in community investments in 2023 to support various Illinois organizations who assist Medicaid members with access to healthy food, job development, housing support, maternal and child health and access to care.

Plano Child Development center aims to effectively identify and evaluate educationally disadvantaged youth with underdeveloped and/or inefficient visual processing systems. Additionally, through vision therapy programs, the organization works to remediate those visual problems.

[Vision therapy](#) is a treatment program used to improve visual conditions and help individuals learn, relearn, or reinforce specific vision skills like eye movement control, focusing control, eye teaming, eye-hand coordination and visual perception.

Aetna Better Health of Illinois offers access to quality, affordable health care to individuals through the state's HealthChoice Illinois Medicaid program. The health plan serves over 420,000 members in 102 counties. For more information about Aetna Better Health® of Illinois, visit our website, www.aetnabetterhealth.com/illinois-medicaid.



###

About Aetna Medicaid

Aetna Medicaid Administrators LLC (Aetna Medicaid), a CVS Health company, has over 30 years of experience managing the care of under-resourced populations, using innovative approaches and a local presence in each market to achieve both successful health care results and effective cost outcomes. Aetna Medicaid has 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 members 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.

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 dedicated colleagues – 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. Follow @CVSHealth on social media.

Media contact

Robert Joyce

Robert.Joyce@CVSHealth.com