



# The Wholecare COMMUNICATOR



APRIL  
2022

Welcome to the first edition of **The Wholecare Communicator**, a quarterly newsletter published by Highmark Wholecare to inform you of important health care happenings at the community level. Each quarter, we will highlight key issues and dynamics affecting our most vulnerable citizens within their communities throughout the Commonwealth, and the efforts being made to improve lives.

Highmark Wholecare, formerly Gateway Health, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Highmark Inc. with 30 years' experience serving vulnerable members of the Commonwealth. Today, we manage the delivery of health care services for more than 365,000 Pennsylvanians who are eligible for either Medicaid or Medicare Advantage as a dual-eligible (eligible for Medicare and Medicaid simultaneously). Our Medicaid service area covers 40 counties across the state, while our Medicare Advantage service area encompasses 58 of 67 counties.

Our mission is to care for the whole person in all communities where the need is greatest. We see a future in which everyone has equal opportunity to achieve their best health.

We're proud to offer this brief account of our public affairs efforts over the last quarter in this region.



## Our Recent Rebrand

**After having a 50% ownership stake in Gateway Health for many years, Highmark acquired full ownership of the organization last summer.** This acquisition has empowered us to leverage the Highmark Blue Shield brand as Highmark Wholecare. We operate within a structure conducive to sharing innovative service delivery approaches, experience and system resources to build upon our history of success and deliver best-in-class value for Pennsylvanians in need.

Our organization is driven to reinvent the health experience of our plan members, their clinicians and associated community-based organizations. Intently focusing on health equity will close care gaps and mitigate disparities for the Commonwealth's most diverse populations.



## Did You Know?

Eighty percent of an individual's overall health status is determined by non-clinical factors. Thus, supporting community efforts that bring to bear relevant and timely non-clinical services, including work supports, healthy meals, housing resources, educational opportunities and more is a vital core competency to stabilizing comorbidities, improving overall health status and remaining an outstanding fiscal steward.



## Addressing Home and Food Insecurity

The Highmark Wholecare Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) team in the Lehigh-Capital region was busy the first quarter of the year. Corporate Social Responsibility works throughout the larger Highmark enterprise and Lehigh-Capital geographic footprint to expand the efforts of local community-based organizations (CBOs).

**The mission of the CSR team is to provide additional capacity to CBOs that are serving the most vulnerable members of the Commonwealth. Recent areas of focus include food insecurity, housing stability, ongoing efforts to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, domestic violence and cultural care.**

In the area of housing stability, Highmark Wholecare has provided financial resources in support of local chapters of Habitat for Humanity. These funds have helped retro fit homes for the disabled, assisted the elderly, built new homes for those in need and rehabbed existing homes to fortify neighborhoods.

When COVID-19 infiltrated our lives, the request for food assistance drastically increased due to job loss, health care costs and other factors. Highmark Wholecare supported food banks in the Lehigh-Capital region to ensure that families had food on the table and children did not go without meals. Highmark Wholecare also provided funds to local domestic violence programs and shelters, with a goal of keeping women and children safe during a volatile time in their lives.

As the weather broke last year and people were ready to gather, we shared in the jubilee and sponsored events that reinforced the cultural diasporas of the people who make up our community. We will continue this sponsorship support in 2022.

Stay tuned to see how Highmark Wholecare continues to serve the whole person in the communities we serve.



## Valentine's Day at the Hispanic Center



Highmark Wholecare Senior Community Engagement Specialist Adria Laboy participated in the Hispanic Center of Lehigh Valley Senior Center Valentine's Day Celebration, where she discussed the benefits of fruit in supporting a healthy lifestyle and the importance of healthy eating related to high blood pressure.

She also provided a sweet treat alternative by showing participants how to dip strawberries in dark chocolate. Highmark Wholecare donated crowns that were used for the crowning of the Valentine's Day King and Queen and Adria helped serve the seniors a warm meal for lunch.



## Team Member Spotlight



### JHAISA CASTILLO

**Title:** Senior Community Engagement Specialist

**Service Area:** Southeast

**What you love about your job:** The thing that I love the most about my job is the opportunity to interact with my community in a positive way.



### MARVETTA E. COLEMAN

**Title:** Senior Community Engagement Specialist

**Service Area:** Southeast

**What you love about your job:** I love that the work of our team is varied and engages multiple stakeholder audiences. My role allows me to be expressive, to educate, engage and plant seeds that strengthen self-empowerment and encourage healthier living for healthier lives.



## Upcoming Events

5/14

Berks Street Festival

Berks County

6/11

Disability Pride Philadelphia

Philadelphia



## We Are Here for You

**Communications is a two-way street so we want to hear from you!** If you have suggestions on how we may improve this newsletter, constituency matters warranting attention or questions regarding our legislative priorities, please contact:

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