



BLUE MEDICARE  
**ADVANTAGE**

Kansas City

# ENGAGE

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE 2022 ISSUE 2

## Inside this issue

MEMBER BENEFITS  
SHOWCASE A BIG HIT

YOUR GUIDE TO FINDING  
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THE FACTS ABOUT  
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IT'S HEALTHY TO BE SOCIAL

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ROSE AND RAYMOND  
TERRANELLA HAVE BEEN  
PART OF THE BLUE KC  
FAMILY FOR SIX YEARS

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SIGN UP FOR  
**TEXT  
MESSAGING**  
AND YOU MAY WIN A  
**GEORGE BRETT**  
SIGNED BASEBALL  
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I'm heading into summer on a high note. That's because our recent, and first ever, Member Benefits Showcase was a huge hit. We had a great turnout, and guess what? We're planning to host more member events down the road! Thanks to all the members who joined us – it was wonderful to see you. We are grateful you've chosen Blue Medicare Advantage.

There's a lot of healthy ground to cover in this year's second issue of *ENGAGE*. You'll read why it's healthy to be social and why stretching is good for your heart. We'll share some helpful tips on prescription refills and walk you through all your care options, so you know

where to get the right care, at the right place, at the right time.

And in our member feature, we'll introduce you to a couple who came all the way from Sicily to fall in love in Kansas City – and who may even inspire you to start a vegetable garden. Is there anything better than a homegrown tomato? Yes, it's called homegrown tomato sauce!

Have a safe and healthy summer.

Lori Rund  
Vice President of Government Programs,  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City

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## EARN MEMBER REWARDS

When you take steps to protect your health, we'll reward you for it. You can earn up to \$50 per year (\$25 for each activity) by completing any two of the following activities:

- Annual Wellness Exam
- Breast Cancer Screening
- Flu Shot
- Diabetic Eye Exam

Once you've completed an eligible activity, please allow 8-10 weeks for the \$25 to be loaded to your Blue Benefits Bucks (BBB) pre-paid Mastercard. You can use your rewards for healthy foods, dental services, vision, transportation, hearing aids, and over-the-counter health products.



## UPDATE! COVID-19 HOME TESTS NOW COVERED BY ORIGINAL MEDICARE

Previously, your Blue Medicare Advantage plan covered the cost of at-home COVID-19 tests. Effective April 4, 2022, Original Medicare now covers eight free COVID-19 tests per month through participating pharmacies at more than a dozen national and regional chains. When you check out at the pharmacy counter, please show your red, white, and blue Medicare Card.

Participating pharmacies include, but are not limited to: Costco Pharmacy, CVS, Hy-Vee Pharmacy, Walgreens, and Walmart. A partial list of participating pharmacies can be found at [medicare.gov/medicare-coronavirus](https://www.medicare.gov/medicare-coronavirus).

## OUR MEMBER BENEFITS SHOWCASE WAS A BIG HIT

A big thanks to everyone who attended our first-ever Member Benefits Showcase. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces and to reconnect. We're proud to be part of the Kansas City community and to support our members' health with events that benefit their lives.



MEMBERS VISIT WITH VENDOR PARTNERS, INCLUDING NATIONSBENEFITS®, PAPA™, AND BEST BUY LIVELY™



LORI RUND, VP OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS, SPEAKS WITH A BLUE MEDICARE ADVANTAGE MEMBER

We're sorry if you were unable to join us. But know this. We are always happy to walk you through your benefits and answer your questions. Our Customer Service team is ready to help at **866-508-7140** (TTY: 711). You can also text **#BKC4HELP** to **543210** to hold your place in line and we'll call you back.

We're planning to host more events for our member community later in the year. We'll keep you informed as more details are available. We hope to see you there!

## TEXT MESSAGING IS A HIT, TOO

Our text platform helps you manage your health on the go. We can text you everything from health and wellness tips to important policy updates. This is a fantastic way to connect to your care, and now, it's a chance to snag a great prize!



### HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A GEORGE BRETT SIGNED BASEBALL

Members who are currently signed up for text messaging and those who sign up by August 5 are eligible to win one of five George Brett signed baseballs.

**Scan this QR code with your smartphone camera and follow the prompts to sign up.**



**PLEASE NOTE:** if you're a Spira Care (HMO) member, text **JOINBLUEKC** to **73529** to sign up.

*George Brett is a paid celebrity spokesperson and offers no endorsement of any product or service.*

## PRESCRIPTION REFILL TIPS

**Here are some tips to help you manage your prescription refills so they're there when you need them.**

1. Before a doctor appointment, check to see if you need any refills. If you do, inform your doctor at the time of your visit.
2. Hopefully you'll have enough medication to make it to your doctor's appointment. If so, hold off on ordering any refills. Your doctor may decide to change your medications.
3. Never miss a dose of your long-term medications. You can refill them when you have 25% remaining. However, opioids and controlled substance prescriptions can only be refilled one to two days in advance.
4. Mind your medication expiration dates. Some medications have a limited shelf life.
5. Only refill the medications you take. Unused medications go to waste and contribute to increased healthcare costs.
6. When you need a regular prescription refill, call your pharmacy two to three days before you run out. There's no need to call your doctor or clinic.



# OF THE EARTH



ROSE AND RAYMOND TERRANELLA, BLUE MEDICARE ADVANTAGE MEMBERS

**R**ose and Raymond were born in Sicilian towns near Palermo, Italy.

Rose, age 75, is from San Giuseppe Jato, a village that sits in the hilly region of Palermo's hinterland. Raymond, 79, is from Campofelice di Fitalia, a village about 20 miles southeast of Palermo.

While the towns are just an hour drive from each other, Rose and Raymond's paths never crossed until immigrating to the United States. The couple was introduced in Kansas City by Rose's uncle. And the rest is "storia" – that is, history.

In October, the Terranellas will be married 45 years. Raymond explains the key to a happy marriage. "Don't fight," Raymond laughs. "But if we do get mad at each other, we speak Italian."

There's a constant twinkle in Rose and Raymond's eyes. This good-natured, down-to-earth couple have a fitting last name — terra means "earth" in Italian.

## Familia first

The Terranellas put down roots, worked hard, and made a life together. Raymond built the brick home in Carriage Hills Estates – an Italian-centric neighborhood in the KC Northland – where the couple lives to this day.

Raymond spent two years working in a metal factory and then 40 years in the produce industry. Rose worked for 12 years in a dress factory. And later, once the children were grown, she worked at Walmart for 17 years. The couple raised a son and daughter and put them through college.

The Terranellas are retired, and their life still revolves around family. The couple's daughter lives nearby. So does their son,

his wife, and their two boys. Rose and Raymond see their grandsons every Sunday for dinner and often during the week.

"They're playing baseball and we go see their teams, one game every other day," says Raymond, beaming with pride.

From the ballpark to Sunday pasta dinners, family comes first.



## Raymond's secret garden

There's a garden in the Terranella's backyard that's just beginning to sprout to life. This is Raymond's happy place. His earth.

Raymond spends hours every day doing the tasks that all vegetable gardeners do. This includes weeding, pruning, watering, planting, and then harvesting the fruits – and vegetables – of his labor. "When I grow it, it tastes better," he shares.

Everything has its place. The garden is meticulously planted with rows of heirloom tomatoes, green beans, and cucurbit squash — a favorite squash of Sicilians. This incredibly long squash can grow from 3 to 6 feet long with sprawling vines.

The garden is also home to a bountiful fruit orchard. Raymond grows cherry, persimmon, fig, plum, peach, and apple trees. He even uses the centuries-old technique of grafting to propagate stronger, more resilient trees and to create new varieties.

## Enjoying nature's bounty

As in year's past, Raymond's garden will yield many gifts this growing season.

Bushels of vine-ripened tomatoes will be chopped and canned for future soups and stews. Others will be boiled down into Raymond's signature red sauce which he'll preserve in empty San Pellegrino bottles.

Fresh cucuzza will make its way into summer minestrone soup and pasta dishes.

And oh how the figs will sparkle come holiday time! Once they're ripened and dried, Rose will use them to bake her famous cookies – a Christmas tradition in Sicily and the Terranella's home.

"Our beautiful fig trees make *cucidati*," Rose says. "It's a lot of work," Rose adds. First, she'll make the dough, then the fig-nut filling, then she'll glaze and decorate. It's a labor of love.

There's a word to describe Rose's *cucidati*: Spettacolare! (Spectacular!)



## RAYMOND'S RED SAUCE

The secret to Raymond's red sauce? "Boil it with the tomatoes skin on ... Cook it down in half," he says. Raymond also insists on using dried oregano from Italy, explaining, "In Italy, just the flower is used, and it has more flavor." Raymond never mixes meat in the sauce.

## Eating healthy comes naturally

The Terranellas choose to eat healthy. Their diet consists of a lot of vegetables and lean meats like chicken. Rose especially loves seafood. When they can, they prepare fish on Fridays.

The couple rarely dines out, instead preferring to eat at home. "I open the refrigerator and whatever we got, we cook it," shares Raymond.

In the past, Rose has dealt with heart issues, so eating healthy is important. Over three decades ago, she underwent heart valve surgery. Now she has a pacemaker. "She's bionic," her husband chuckles.

From all indications, the couple's Mediterranean diet has served them well. Rose and Raymond are animated, energetic, and full of life. They're surrounded by loving family and friends. A flourishing vegetable garden and fruit orchard. And, of course, each other.

Forty years ago, a seed of love was planted. And ever since, the Terranellas have watched it grow and grow and grow. ■

# NOW THAT'S A PUZZLE

		6		7		8	4	3
	8			5		6	2	
2					3	5		
3				2	7			8
		8		9			3	
	9						5	4
		2		8	6	3	9	
								2
9				3	5			

Sudoku is a logic-based puzzle in which missing numbers are to be filled into a 9 by 9 grid of squares which are subdivided into 3 by 3 boxes so that every row, every column, and every box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

7	8	4	5	3	2	1	9	6
2	9	1	9	4	7	5	3	8
5	9	3	9	8	1	2	7	4
4	5	2	8	1	3	7	9	9
9	3	7	4	9	5	8	2	1
8	1	9	7	2	9	4	5	3
1	7	5	3	9	8	9	4	2
9	2	9	1	5	4	3	8	7
3	4	8	2	7	9	6	1	5



## KNOWING WHERE TO GO FOR CARE STARTS HERE

**Y**ou have many choices of where to go for medical care. We're here to help you sort through your options, so that you do what's right for your health – and your wallet. By getting the right care, at the right place and the right time, you can save time, money, and improve your overall health.

### PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER (PCP) COST \$

The go-to place for managing your healthcare. Your primary care provider (PCP) monitors your overall health and should help coordinate all the care you receive. Your PCP knows your medical history best, so it's always a good idea to consult with them before seeking alternate care.

### URGENT CARE/RETAIL CLINIC COST \$\$

Immediate care for pressing, but not life-threatening conditions. In some communities, urgent care facilities are open 24/7. Retail health clinics, located within retail stores, are also designed to handle minor, non-emergent health issues at your convenience. Retail health clinics are typically staffed by licensed nurse practitioners, physicians assistants, and sometimes physicians. The wait time is shorter than an emergency room.

### EMERGENCY ROOM/COMMUNITY HOSPITAL COST \$\$\$

Immediate care for life-threatening emergencies. Always go to the emergency room (ER) if your health is in danger or call 911. However, for less severe injuries or illnesses, the ER can be expensive and wait times can average over four hours.



### DID YOU KNOW

#### **You can call our free, 24/7 Nurse Line for non-life-threatening situations.**

Nurses can answer questions, help identify symptoms, and advise where to seek immediate care or wait to see your PCP. Call **(833) 546-9354** (TTY:711).



## GUIDE TO FINDING THE BEST CARE OPTIONS

	Primary Care Provider \$	Urgent Care/ Retail Clinic \$\$	Emergency Room/ Community Hospital \$\$\$
Mild Asthma	✓	✓	
Minor Headaches	✓	✓	
Sprains, Strains	✓	✓	
Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea	✓	✓	
Bumps, Cuts, Scrapes	✓	✓	
Burning with Urination	✓	✓	
Coughs, Sore Throat	✓	✓	
Ear and Sinus Pain	✓	✓	
Eye Swelling, Irritation, Redness or Pain	✓	✓	
Minor Allergic Reactions	✓	✓	
Minor Fevers, Colds	✓	✓	
Rashes, Minor Burns	✓	✓	
Vaccinations	✓		
Back Pain	✓	✓	
X-rays		✓	
Animal bites		✓	
Stitches		✓	
Cut or wound that won't stop bleeding			✓
Any life-threatening or disabling condition including difficulty breathing			✓
Sudden or unexplained loss of consciousness			✓
Chest pain, numbness in face, arm or leg; difficulty speaking			✓
Severe shortness of breath			✓
High fever with stiff neck, mental confusion or difficulty breathing			✓
Coughing up or vomiting blood			✓
Major injuries			✓
Possible broken bones			✓

## BLUE KC VIRTUAL CARE IS ALWAYS ON



### \$0 ACCESS TO 24/7 HEALTHCARE

Blue KC Virtual Care provides 24/7 access to a board-certified physician without leaving your home – and it's perfect for minor illnesses such as sinus pain, sore throats, coughs, rashes, or mild fever. Blue KC Virtual Care is always on and available around the clock. Use your smartphone, tablet, or computer to connect to [BlueKCVirtualCare.com](https://www.BlueKCVirtualCare.com), virtually anytime. And, it's at no additional cost to you!

## MINDING YOUR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

At Blue KC, we believe what's good for the mind is good for the body. That's why we've made sure your health coverage includes a behavioral health resource.

Mindful by Blue KC is here to help you address stress, depression, anxiety, substance use, and everyday challenges. This service provides 24/7 access to Mindful Advocates. Just call **833-302-MIND (6463)**. Want more information? Visit [MindfulBlueKC.com](https://www.MindfulBlueKC.com).





## THE FACTS ABOUT HEART DISEASE

**D**id you know that heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States? Heart disease refers to several types of heart conditions. The most common type of heart disease among Americans is coronary artery disease (CAD) which affects blood flow to the heart. When blood flow is decreased, it can cause a heart attack.

Heart disease is famous for being **silent**. You may be totally unaware that you have a heart condition until you experience the symptoms of a heart event.

### How to recognize the symptoms of heart disease

- Heart attack: Chest pain or discomfort, upper back or neck pain, indigestion, heartburn, nausea or vomiting, extreme fatigue, upper body discomfort, dizziness, and shortness of breath.
- Arrhythmia: Fluttering feelings in the chest or palpitations.
- Heart failure: Shortness of breath, fatigue, or swelling of the feet, ankles, legs, abdomen or neck veins.

### What's your risk for heart disease?

Nearly half of all Americans have at least one of the three key risk factors for heart disease: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking. But even if heart disease runs in your family, it isn't inevitable. While you may not be able to control your age or genetics, you can reduce your risk of heart disease by committing to a healthy lifestyle.

### TAKE STEPS TO REDUCE YOUR RISK OF HEART DISEASE

1. Monitor blood pressure. The only way to know if you have elevated or high blood pressure is to measure it regularly. It can be lowered with lifestyle changes or medications.
2. Manage blood cholesterol. High cholesterol usually has no signs or symptoms. A simple blood test called a lipid profile can measure your cholesterol levels.
3. Control diabetes. Adults with diabetes are more likely to die of heart disease than those who don't. Work with your physician to prevent or manage your diabetes.
4. Maintain a healthy weight. Obesity is linked to high cholesterol and can lead to high blood pressure and heart disease. Make a plan with your doctor to drop dangerous extra pounds.
5. Stop smoking. The toxic chemicals in cigarettes negatively impact the functionality of your heart and blood vessels, which leads to a build-up of plaque in your heart arteries.
6. Stay active. Take a fitness class, go for a walk, do yoga, ride a bike – as little as 10 minutes a day of physical activity can deliver positive health benefits.
7. Choose healthy foods. Good nutrition helps your cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes, and weight. Plus, when you eat better, you'll feel better.
8. Limit alcohol. Having more than two drinks per day for men and one per day for women can increase your risk of high blood pressure and obesity – which can increase the risk of heart disease.
9. Relax. Managing stress in a healthy way is important to your mental health and your heart health. ■

Sources: American Heart Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention





## ADD STRETCHING TO YOUR HEALTHY HEART ROUTINE

**W**e all know how important a healthy heart is to overall well-being. Now is also a good time to start or ramp up exercise habits. Doing moderate exercise for about 30 minutes a day, most days of the week, is important in helping to reduce your risk of heart disease.<sup>1</sup>

Did you know that adding stretching to your routine can help with your other exercises? It can make you more flexible<sup>2</sup> and help make other daily activities more comfortable.<sup>3</sup>

Recent research shows participants who actively participated in a 12-week stretching regimen had improved blood flow, lowered blood pressure and decreased stiffness in arteries.<sup>4</sup> Each of these is good for your overall heart health.

With SilverSneakers®, your fitness benefit from Blue Medicare Advantage, you can do stretching as well as aerobic exercises. For example, the SilverSneakers blog article *7 Stretching Exercises for Seniors* explains each stretch and even includes quick videos to show you exactly how to do them. You can find other articles on stretching in the blog.

As well, SilverSneakers instructors at the gym<sup>5</sup> and through virtual classes you can take at home will help you with stretching exercises. Classes<sup>6</sup> like SilverSneakers Yoga and SilverSneakers BOOM™ Mind help build endurance while making you more flexible.

**Be sure to use SilverSneakers to improve your heart health.** If you haven't signed up already, get started at [SilverSneakers.com/StartHere](https://www.silversneakers.com/StartHere). As a reminder, SilverSneakers includes all this for you at no extra cost.

- SilverSneakers LIVE™ virtual classes and workshops
- SilverSneakers Community classes, both in-person and virtual, offered locally

- SilverSneakers On-Demand™ videos available 24/7
- The SilverSneakers GO™ mobile app
- Access to thousands of participating locations with equipment, pools and other amenities<sup>5</sup>
- Group exercise classes<sup>6</sup> for all levels at select participating locations ■

**Always talk with your doctor before starting an exercise program.**

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/heart/phy\\_active\\_brief.pdf](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/heart/phy_active_brief.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/four-types-exercise-can-improve-your-health-and-physical-ability>

<sup>3</sup> <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2020/03/maintain-your-muscle>

<sup>4</sup> <https://physoc.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1113/JP279866>

<sup>5</sup> Participating locations ("PL") are not owned or operated by Tivity Health, Inc. or its affiliates. Use of PL facilities and amenities is limited to terms and conditions of PL basic membership. Facilities and amenities vary by PL.

<sup>6</sup> Membership includes SilverSneakers instructor-led group fitness classes. Some locations offer members additional classes. Classes vary by location.

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# IT'S HEALTHY TO BE SOCIAL



**D**o you ever feel lonely? Do you wish you had more social connections? Do you ever long to get out more and be with family or friends? You're not alone.

A report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) reveals that more than one-third of adults aged 45 and older feel lonely. Moreover, nearly one-fourth of adults aged 65 and up are socially isolated. In other words, growing older often means growing lonelier.

Loneliness is linked to some hazardous health conditions. The NASEM study points out that social isolation significantly increases one's risk of premature death from all causes. It's also associated with a 50% increased risk of dementia, a 29% increased risk of heart disease, and a 32% increased risk of stroke. What's more, loneliness also puts you at risk for depression and anxiety.

## People are social animals

Having high-quality social relationships can help us live healthier lives. A strong social life has been linked with many health benefits, including less risk of depression and a longer life span.

A 2019 study in the *Journals of Gerontology* found that older adults who interacted with people beyond their usual social circle of family and close friends were more likely to have higher levels of physical activity, more positive moods, and fewer negative feelings.

## Tips for living a socially active life

People are living longer than ever before, and seniors are the fastest-growing demographic in America. Retirement isn't the end of the road, it's the beginning of a new chapter. Here are some ideas on how you can stay socially engaged.

### 1. GET A HOBBY.

Now that you have more time on your hands, why not take up a new interest, or rediscover an old one? There's painting, photography, gardening, travelling...so many options.

### 2. BECOME A VOLUNTEER.

Volunteering offers an opportunity to help out in your community, meet new people, and make positive change. Imagine how good that will make you feel.

*Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Harvard Health, National Institute on Aging*

### 3. GET YOUR GAME ON.

Playing games is one of the best ways to socialize and keep your mind sharp. Tennis, pickleball, golf, bowling, daily crossword, Sudoku, anyone?

### 4. KEEP LEARNING.

An active mind is less susceptible to age-related cognitive decline. When you take a class at a university, community college, or local organization, you can gain new knowledge and new social contacts.

### 5. JOIN A SENIOR CENTER.

Your local community senior center is the perfect place to participate in new activities and make new connections. In this social club setting, you'll find classes, activities, day trips, and more. ■

## You've Got a Pal in Papa

Meet your new family-on-demand: Papa. Papa pairs older adults and their families with Papa Pals for companionship and help with daily tasks. Most plans include this benefit with up to 40 hours of support each year.\*



## What can a Papa Pal help you with?

### COMPANIONSHIP

Missing company? Chat by phone or play a game of chess with a Papa Pal.

### TECHNOLOGY HELP OR HOUSEHOLD TASKS

A Papa Pal can teach you how to use a smartphone, tablet or computer. They can also provide help with light house cleaning or laundry.

### RUNNING ERRANDS

From the grocery store to the bank, Papa is ready to do what you can't.

## Ready to get started with Papa?

Sign up at no additional cost by calling 1-888-905-8301 (TTY: 711). Or download the Papa Pal app on the App Store or Google Play.

\* See your Evidence of Coverage for plan details.



# 5 HEALTHY SMOOTHIES

Ready to shake up your summer drink menu? These five smoothies are packed with fresh fruits and veggies – and are a refreshing way to power your body with extra vitamins, protein, and fiber. Preparation is a breeze. Simply put the ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth.



## BERRY BRAIN HEALTH SMOOTHIE

- ¾ cup frozen mixed berries
- ¼ ripe avocado
- 1 cup plain yogurt — non-fat
- ½ banana
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 1 Tbsp. wheat germ or ground flax
- ice cubes

## AVOCADO BERRY SMOOTHIE

- 1 cup coconut milk
- ½ ripe avocado
- ½ apple
- 2 cups baby spinach
- ½ cup berries – fresh or frozen
- 1 tsp. almond butter
- ice cubes

## GARDEN SMOOTHIE

- 1 mango, peeled and pitted
- 10 strawberries
- 1 small carrot
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 1 cup spring greens
- 8 oz milk or milk alternative
- 2 Tbsp. chia seeds
- 1 scoop vanilla protein powder
- ice cubes

## GREEN KING

- 1 cup kale
- 1 cup spinach
- 2 stalks celery
- ½ cup green grapes
- ½ cup pineapple chunks
- ½ lemon (juiced)
- ½-inch chunk fresh ginger root
- ice cubes

## PEACHY MANGO SMOOTHIE

- 1 cup peaches
- 1 cup mangoes
- 1 banana (best if frozen)
- 1 cup orange juice
- ¼ tsp. turmeric
- ¼ tsp. fresh ginger (grated)
- ice cubes

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## CHEF NOTES

Use frozen fruit for an icier, thicker texture -- by doing so, you may be able to omit the ice.

*Bon Appétit!*



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HEALTH AND WELLNESS OR PREVENTION INFORMATION.

Y0126\_22-718\_C

## ROOT FOR THE ROYALS AND HELP SHUT OUT THE STIGMA

**T**eamwork makes the dream work. And for the second year in a row, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City (Blue KC) has partnered with the Royals in a program that supports the powerful role that behavioral health plays in our lives.

Blue KC will donate \$30 for every shutout inning recorded by a Royals pitcher. Then based on the total number of shutout innings recorded each month, we'll make a monthly donation to a Kansas City area behavioral health organization. Our goal is to donate around \$30,000 for the 2022 season.

**Get out to the ballpark to root for another shutout and support our KC Royals.**

