Foodbank Receives $112,000 from Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation to Expand ‘Food as Medicine’ Work

NORFOLK, VA | June 24, 2024 – The Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore announced a $112,362.42 grant from the Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation, a philanthropic arm of Elevance Health Foundation, to expand the ‘Food as Medicine’ program in Chesapeake. This initiative will support the Foodbank’s existing partnership with Healthy Chesapeake’s program, known as The HUB. This announcement comes during National Health Risk Management Week, underscoring the importance of addressing food insecurity as a critical component of health risk management.

The HUB provides ongoing education, care management, social support, and nursing assessments for referred participants with diabetes and hypertension. Healthy Chesapeake partners with Chesapeake Regional Healthcare (CRH), Chesapeake Health Department (and their Medical Reserve Corps), and Kin and Kids Consulting, LLC, to support clients and The HUB is hosted by Southside Baptist Church in South Norfolk. Referrals for HUB enrollment come from participants, Chesapeake Emergency Services Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH), CRH, insurance providers, and primary care physicians. CRH provides a Diabetes Certified Nurse Specialist and Nurse Practitioner who regularly converse with participants' physicians to assist in making beneficial therapy changes. The Chesapeake Health Department supports the HUB by sharing a Registered Nurse who performs biometric data collection, including A1C, blood pressure, and weight. The Foodbank supplies participants with over 70 pounds of food, including fresh fruits, vegetables, proteins, eggs, cheese, and milk.

The ‘Food as Medicine’ program, a Feeding America® initiative funded by the Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation, will help connect people facing hunger in our community to food distribution programs that provide access to healthy food options. This grant is part of Feeding America and Elevance Health Foundation's largest investment in Food as Medicine and reflects their joint commitment to transforming the charitable food experience for neighbors and the health care system while promoting the well-being of people facing hunger.

Not having access to nutritious food can make it more difficult to stay healthy and manage health conditions like heart disease and diabetes. It can also add stress, greatly impacting physical and mental health. The ‘Food as Medicine’ program will build and strengthen connections between the Foodbank and Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation to help identify learnings and best practices to enable positive health outcomes in participants. The Foodbank, a member of the Feeding America network, is one of 14 food banks to receive this grant from the Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation and one of 35 food banks supported by Feeding America and Elevance Health Foundation’s broader Food as Medicine partnership.

To learn more about the Foodbank, visit www.foodbankonline.org and to learn more about Elevance Health Foundation’s Food As Medicine work, visit https://elevancehealth.foundation/encouraging-food-as-medicine.
About the Foodbank
Since 1981, the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore has proudly provided more than 380 million meals to our neighbors in need. We play a vital role in the fight against hunger by collecting, storing, and distributing food to our neighbors, while also working to address the root causes of hunger and food insecurity. This past year, we – alongside our neighbors – endured the impact of rising inflation, expiration of critical pandemic-era programs, and increased fuel and shipping costs. These hardships intensified the demand for our services and for the first time, we distributed more than 21 million pounds of food. With the support of our dedicated volunteers, generous donors, and compassionate community members, we strive to exceed this ever-growing baseline goal each year, ensuring that no one in our community goes to bed hungry. For up-to-date information, visit foodbankonline.org or follow us on social media (@foodbankseva).

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.