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**UCare Foundation COVID-19 funds
support communities in need**
*Funding strengthens Minnesota cornerstone organizations'
service to people in hardship*

MINNEAPOLIS, Apr. 24, 2020 — The [UCare Foundation](#) is providing \$500,000 in short- and long-term assistance to benefit Minnesotans impacted by COVID-19. The funds support needs related to social isolation, telehealth, food insecurity and personal protective equipment. The UCare Foundation is a community-directed initiative focused on supporting innovative services, education, community outreach, and research that improve health.

As soon as COVID-19 arrived in Minnesota, UCare' dispatched teams to distribute over 11,000 individual hand sanitizers across the state to members, group homes, small businesses and senior organizations. They also provided local food banks and food shelves with bags for packing food. Both initiatives continue.

The new UCare Foundation COVID-19 funds build on those efforts in two phases: 1) short-term immediate aid to the community; and 2) longer term infrastructure grants up to \$25,000 to small provider groups and community clinics for enhancements to provide care in a COVID-19 environment. "In deciding how to allocate these funds, we listened to our provider partners and looked for ways where we could be helpful in supporting their capabilities to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak," said Ghita Worcester, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and Chief Marketing Officer. "We believe that targeting grants to meet less apparent needs is how UCare can make a difference in the coming weeks."

In addition, UCare's President & CEO Mark Traynor is donating 20% of his salary through the remainder of the year for additional Foundation funding of future supports to help during this unprecedented time. "It was the right thing to do, with so much of our community struggling right now," he said. "I wanted to support the community and our members' mental and physical health, and their ability to receive care in safe ways."

Examples of UCare Foundation COVID-19 funding

Social isolation

Purchasing [technology tools](#) such as iPads to enable video interactions with [Hennepin Healthcare](#) ob/gyn practitioners and to help clients of [Leading Age Minnesota](#) (nursing home and assisted living locations).

Providing [engagement tools](#) such as board games, word-search and puzzles to senior centers, nursing homes and assisted living facilities

Telehealth

Supplying [remote home monitoring equipment](#) for managing chronic medical conditions – kit contents include thermometers, blood pressure monitors and weight scales – for use by patients of the [University of Minnesota Department of Family Medicine](#), [NorthPoint Health & Wellness](#), [Federal Urban Health Network](#) of 10 Minnesota Federally Qualified Health Center ACOs

Providing [program supports for individuals with chronic medical conditions, mental health and substance use disorders](#) to [Wellness in the Woods](#), a rural mental health services organization with counseling and telephone support accessible statewide

Food insecurity

Supporting [processes that identify individuals experiencing food insecurity](#) during the pandemic and connect these individuals to appropriate resources

Collaborating with [local food banks and food shelves](#) through tote bag donations and food sponsorships

Distributing [MATTERbox snack packs](#) in partnership with [Health Fair 11](#) to the [Twin Cities Mobile Market](#), [People Serving People](#), [Higher Ground Shelter](#), [Mary's Place](#), [Hennepin Healthcare](#) and [Carris Health](#) (Wilmar, MN)

Supplying [Minnesota Recovery](#) and the [Minneapolis Public Housing Authority](#) with toothbrushes and toothpaste

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Providing [disposable medical masks](#) to group homes, transportation providers and non-physician small allied providers

About UCare

[UCare](#) is an independent, nonprofit health plan providing health care and administrative services to more than 460,000 members throughout Minnesota and parts of western Wisconsin. UCare partners with health care providers, counties, and community organizations to create and deliver Medicare, Medicaid and Individual & Family health plans.

The health plan addresses health care disparities and care access issues through a broad array of community initiatives. UCare has received Top Workplaces honors from the Star Tribune for ten consecutive years since the rankings began in 2010.

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