

# State Of Illinois Announces First Wellness Partner Award Recipient

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CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS) announced the recipient of the first State of Illinois’ Wellness Partner Award to Aetna, one of the State’s ten insurance carriers. The new Wellness Partner Award was created to recognize the commitment to and innovative programming that is the hallmark of the nationally recognized “Be Well Illinois” program. Be Well Illinois was launched in January 2021 by CMS to improve the overall health and wellness of the State of Illinois’ workforce.

“Making wellness simple, accessible, and engaging is our priority,” said CMS Director Janel L. Forde, “Aetna has worked tirelessly with the Be Well Illinois team to drive the mission of wellness forward and provide robust resources to all State of Illinois employees, retirees, and covered dependents.”

Aetna has been instrumental in partnering with CMS to scale programming at an unprecedented statewide level. This included advancing Be Well's focus, which is education and prevention of health conditions, using key data to encourage wellness activities before a major health event occurs. This partnership has included a focus on preventative vaccinations and exams, such as colorectal cancer screening that resulted in \$154.9M cost avoidance as well as the direct impact on the lives of State employees and retirees.

Aetna has also provided the use of their medical experts on a monthly basis to deliver education-based webinars to thousands of health plan members on specific health topics, such as breast cancer, heart health and other key topics affecting participants. In addition, Aetna has been instrumental in developing innovative initiatives, creating multi-level, wellness-based programming that inspires members to take control of their health. This has included the "Coast to Coast" and "Feel like a Million" wellness challenges that have been designed to be interactive and accessible, integrating with members' existing technology. Another key initiative was the collaboration with Higi, a health engagement tool that helps consumers measure, track and act on their health data through the use of an FDA-cleared, self-screening Smart Health Station, which are placed throughout state facilities and agencies. To date in FY 2022 there has been more than 150,000 station sessions recorded.

"This partnership award was given to Aetna to recognize their exemplary efforts in joining with State of Illinois to move the needle towards our unrelenting pursuit of wellness," said CMS Deputy Director of Benefits Kari Dennison, "Since Be Well's inception, their collaboration and hard work has been instrumental in making this program flourish."

"We are honored to be acknowledged for our partnership with the State and its Be Well Illinois initiatives to improve the health and wellness of thousands of members in the State of Illinois," said Aetna Senior Vice President, Public and Labor, Erich Twachtman, "Together, we're providing comprehensive health care services and educational and health programming that support access to quality care and positively impacts our members' well-being, setting them up for a lifetime of optimal health. And we are just getting started – we look forward to expanding our partnership through new mental well-being and physical activity programs."

Be Well Illinois was launched in January 2021 by CMS to improve the overall health and wellness of the State of Illinois' workforce. Be Well Illinois uses a comprehensive approach to wellness and incorporates educational resources and activities designed to improve physical, financial and mental health and raise awareness about the benefits of healthy eating, exercise and cultural topics.

Each month, the program sponsors targeted events and provides new articles, wellness webinars and resources on the [Be Well Illinois website](#), [Facebook page](#) and via direct email communications to participants to support their overall health and wellness goals.

#### *About CMS:*

*Central Management Services (CMS) is the operational engine working behind the scenes to enable the State's more than 80 agencies, boards, and commissions to deliver efficient, reliable services to all Illinois citizens. The Agency's mission is to support the State by delivering innovative, responsive, and effective services that provide the best value for Illinois State government and the people it serves.*

*The CMS Bureau of Benefits oversees the provision and administration of group health benefits for approximately 295,000 members and almost 450,000 covered lives, in four different insurance programs.*

*The Bureau also oversees the administration of basic and optional life insurance, dental and vision insurance, the Medical Care Assistance Program (MCAP), Dependent Care Assistant Program (DCAP), Commuter Savings Program (CSP) and the newly implemented Health Savings Account (HSA), as well as several other programs for employees and retirees.*

#### *About Aetna:*

*Aetna, a CVS Health business, serves an estimated 34 million people with information and resources to help them make better informed decisions about their health care. Aetna offers a broad range of traditional, voluntary and consumer-directed health insurance products and related services, including medical, pharmacy, dental, vision and behavioral health plans, and medical management capabilities, Medicaid health care management services, workers' compensation administrative services and health information technology products and services. Aetna's customers include employer groups, individuals, college students, part-time and hourly workers, health plans, health care providers, governmental units, government-sponsored plans, labor groups and expatriates. For more information, visit [www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com).*

*IlliniCare Health is now Aetna Better Health of Illinois. Aetna® is one of the nation's leading health care providers and a part of the CVS Health® family. They have over 30 years of experience serving Medicaid populations including children, adults and people*

*with disabilities or other serious health conditions. They bring national experience to our communities. They understand how important it is to get care close to home. Aetna is proud to be members of our communities, living and working here in Illinois.*