

2025

MANITOBA
BLUE CROSS[®]
THE COLOUR OF CARING[®]

Community engagement yearbook



Land acknowledgement

We acknowledge that our home office is located on ancestral lands in Treaty 1 territory and that the land on which we conduct business is Treaty 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 territory, and the traditional territory of Anishinaabeg, Anish-Ininiwak, Dakota, Dene, Ininiwak and Nehethowuk and the homeland of the Métis Nation.



Journey of reconciliation

As an organization, we are committed to the Journey of Reconciliation and doing our part to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. Our goal is to focus on growth and building knowledge as an organization.

We are partners with the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord, an initiative by the City of Winnipeg that aims to make the city a better place to live based on mutual respect, equal opportunity and hope. By signing the accord, we agree to report the results of our commitment and future goals each year to ensure continued success and development. We are also identifying opportunities to act on the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' calls for justice.

OUR ACTIONS INCLUDE:

- partnership and consultation with Indigenous communities in Manitoba.
- development and implementation of strategies to support workforce and board representation and inclusion of Indigenous talent.
- creation of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy that conveys our support to represent the diversity of our community and leverage the full potential of every employee.
- maintaining a diversity committee to identify opportunities to promote a respectful and inclusive workplace culture.
- offering the opportunity for employees to voluntarily declare their personal diversity identification to ensure we can better understand the composition of our workforce and its representation of the community.
- honouring the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation by providing employees with information and learning opportunities to further understand the history and important issues pertaining to residential schools and reconciliation.
- creation of the Manitoba Blue Cross Indigenous Northern Scholarships to support Indigenous students pursuing careers in social work or counselling and promote diversity and inclusion of Indigenous talent in these fields.
- offering resources to help our members access support that draws on Indigenous healing approaches and traditions through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP), including a dedicated Healing Space within our EAP Centre, Elders, Indigenous resource consultation, interpreter language services and more.

About us

Our legacy

While our name officially became Manitoba Blue Cross just over 50 years ago, our roots trace back to 1938 during the Great Depression. Originally founded as the Manitoba Hospital Services Association, a non-profit, hospital-sponsored association, we were born out of the need to help Manitobans facing overwhelming hospital bills and to support a hospital system under financial strain. From these humble beginnings, our commitment to the health and wellness of all Manitobans has only grown stronger.

Today, we proudly provide health benefits with industry-leading coverage, supported by the strength of a national network. Whether in Manitoba or beyond, our members can count on us to deliver exceptional care and support.



**Proudly
made in
Manitoba**



**Over 50 years
of caring for
our community**



**Deep roots
in local
health care**

Who we support

Manitoba Blue Cross impacts over 300 communities by contributing to a range of valuable causes through sponsorships, donations, volunteerism and active participation in local events. We strive to support charitable organizations across the province and empower them to do what they do best.



**DRIVEN BY A
SHARED VISION**

**To be the
*trusted and
essential* health
and wellness
partner for *all*
Manitobans.**

GUIDED BY OUR VALUES

We are a caring corporation committed to the following:

Integrity—We engage with all our stakeholders fairly, equitably and honestly.

Respect—We honour and trust our stakeholders, supporting and encouraging each other in our endeavours.

Inclusivity—We provide an equitable workplace and offer products and services that value, include and represent the communities we serve.

Community—We engage in activities on a corporate and individual basis that support and strengthen our communities.

Transparency—We commit to being accountable to our internal and external stakeholders, earning their trust and goodwill by encouraging the open sharing of information with them.

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A message from our president and CEO



This past year has once again shown the extraordinary strength of Manitobans. Across the province, we've witnessed communities come together with compassion, resilience and a shared commitment to supporting one another through significant challenges, including the devastating wildfires that affected many regions. It is this unwavering spirit that guides our work and fuels our dedication to community engagement.

Throughout 2025, we continued to deepen our efforts across five key areas:

- wellness and mental health
- community development
- diversity, equity and inclusion
- scholarships and bursaries
- health education and research

Each community initiative we've engaged in has shown us what's possible when we listen, collaborate and invest in the well-being of Manitobans. From expanding access to mental health and virtual care supports during the wildfires to strengthening support networks across the province through strategic partnerships, including our naming rights partnership with STARS, our work in the community reflects our shared vision to be the trusted and essential health and wellness partner for all Manitobans.

I am deeply grateful to our community partners and employees whose passion and dedication make this work possible. Your contributions create meaningful, lasting change and ensure we continue to align our efforts with the needs of communities across the province.

As you explore this year's community engagement yearbook, you'll see how our commitment continues to evolve as we pursue new approaches to better support Manitobans. We are incredibly proud of the role Manitoba Blue Cross plays in building healthier futures, and we remain dedicated to our mission in championing the well-being of every Manitoban through community engagement.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Graham', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Benjamin Graham

President and Chief Executive Officer

Wellness and mental health

Manitoba Blue Cross recognizes that wellness extends beyond physical health, as mental health significantly impacts overall well-being and the ability to live a full life. We invest in initiatives that foster a holistic view of wellness and support the diverse needs of Manitobans. By promoting awareness, education and access to wellness and mental health initiatives, we empower individuals, families and communities to thrive.





Sleep in Heavenly Peace partnership

In June 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross employee volunteers once again gathered at Blue Cross Park to construct 50 beds for local children in need, continuing the momentum from last year's impactful partnership with local nonprofit, Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP). With guidance and training from SHP volunteers, employees worked together to build and assemble the beds during a fun-filled afternoon. Following the event, all Manitoba Blue Cross employees were invited to enjoy a complimentary Winnipeg Goldeyes game to celebrate this meaningful accomplishment.

SHP is a volunteer-driven organization dedicated to building, assembling and delivering high-quality beds to children and families in need. Many children in our community lack a safe and comfortable place to sleep, often resorting to couches, blankets or even the floor, which can negatively affect their physical and mental well-being.



“It was incredible to see the passion and commitment that our employees brought to the park, and for such an important cause. The value of a good night's sleep cannot be overstated, and it's an honour for all of us at Manitoba Blue Cross to help ensure local children can get the rest they need and deserve.

Diane Sparrow DeGrave
Vice President of People and Corporate Services,
Manitoba Blue Cross

To encourage the community to support this valuable cause alongside us, we hosted our second-annual bedding drive, collecting donations of new, twin-sized bedding items such as comforters, blankets, pillows and sheet sets. Online donations to support bedding purchases were also welcomed. The drive kicked off with an energetic live morning broadcast from the Ace Burpee Show on Virgin Radio at our home office, featuring interviews with Jim Thiessen, president of SHP and Benjamin Graham, president and CEO of Manitoba Blue Cross.


Beyond participating in the bed-building event and coordinating a bedding drive, Manitoba Blue Cross committed to funding a five-year building lease for the Winnipeg chapter of SHP—the first donation of its kind for an SHP location in Canada. This dedicated facility, aptly named the Dream Builders Warehouse, now serves as the heart of SHP Winnipeg's local operations.

The new warehouse provides the essential space needed for year-round bed construction, assembly and storage, giving volunteers a safe and efficient environment to work in. With this facility, SHP can more than double its bed production capacity and respond even more quickly to urgent community needs.

Most importantly, the Dream Builders Warehouse strengthens SHP's ability to ensure that even more local children have a safe and comfortable place to sleep—one of the most fundamental building blocks for well-being, learning and healthy development.



 **802** beds built by SHP in 2025

 **Nearly doubled** the total beds built in 2025 vs. 2024

In November 2025, SHP celebrated the grand opening of their new facility with a much-anticipated open house event. They welcomed supporters, volunteers, donors and friends to tour the space and enjoy meaningful conversation. The evening honoured many individuals who have shaped the chapter's success, including the family who received the very first beds built back in February 2020.

Manitoba Blue Cross's continued partnership with SHP reflects our deep commitment to supporting the well-being of all children and families across Manitoba. We look forward to continuing this meaningful partnership in the years ahead, enabling SHP to focus on what they do best.



“As president of Sleep in Heavenly Peace Winnipeg, I have seen firsthand the incredible impact Manitoba Blue Cross has had on our mission that no child should sleep on the floor in our town. Their support has allowed us to build and deliver more beds, provide proper bedding and bring comfort and dignity to families who need it most. I will never forget the joy on children's faces when they see their very own bed for the first time, and these moments have been made possible because of Manitoba Blue Cross. We are truly grateful for their partnership and the difference they are making in our community.”

Jim Thiessen
Chapter President,
Sleep in Heavenly Peace Winnipeg


KIDTHINK's Escape the Stigma Carnival


In April 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross had the opportunity to support KIDTHINK Children's Mental Health Centre's Escape the Stigma Carnival.

This memorable evening featured a vibrant carnival theme, including interactive games, a casual dinner with cocktails and a thrilling live performance by world-renowned escape artist Dean Gunnarson. More than just a night of entertainment, the event served as a platform to help break the stigma surrounding children's mental health.

Attendees also enjoyed exciting raffle prizes and an incredible live auction, with all proceeds supporting mental health services for children and families across Manitoba. This includes funding for the organization's client care program, which offers free mental health sessions to multi-barriered families—ensuring children receive the vital support they need, regardless of financial circumstances.



 **\$300K** raised during the event to support mental health services for children across Manitoba

 **400+** people from the community attended

“ We were honoured to have Manitoba Blue Cross sponsor our Escape the Stigma Carnival event as a Big Top Sponsor! Their generosity helped children and their caregivers across Manitoba 'Escape the Stigma' of mental health and remove financial barriers to receive timely, vital mental health services.

Lindsay Flint

Fund Development Manager,
KIDTHINK Children's Mental Health Centre Inc.

ABOUT KIDTHINK

Having received charitable status in 2019, KIDTHINK Children's Mental Health Centre Inc. is a Manitoba-based non-profit dedicated to nurturing brighter futures through early intervention and prevention of mental health challenges in children aged 12 and under. They follow a holistic approach by supporting not only the child but their entire support system—offering integrated clinical services, community outreach and research.



Trees of Joy Winnipeg

In November 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross participated as a sponsor in Make-A-Wish Canada's Trees of Joy Winnipeg for the second consecutive year.

This heartwarming event pairs sponsors with a wish kid and their family to create a personalized holiday tree, bringing each child's vision to life.

Hosted at The Gates On Roblin, a group of Manitoba Blue Cross employees, along with various other sponsors, came together to design and decorate their respective wish kid's dream Christmas tree, incorporating that child's favourite things and personal interests. Once completed, the decorated trees were unveiled and sponsors had the opportunity to meet their wish kids and families, sharing personal stories and memories. Following the event, the decorated trees were delivered to the wish kids' homes to enjoy.

Through our participation in Trees of Joy Winnipeg, we were reminded of the strength found in coming together to brighten a child's world during the holiday season.



23

wish kids and their families received a tree and one special tree was created for the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at the HSC Winnipeg Children's Hospital



360

people attended the event




\$260K

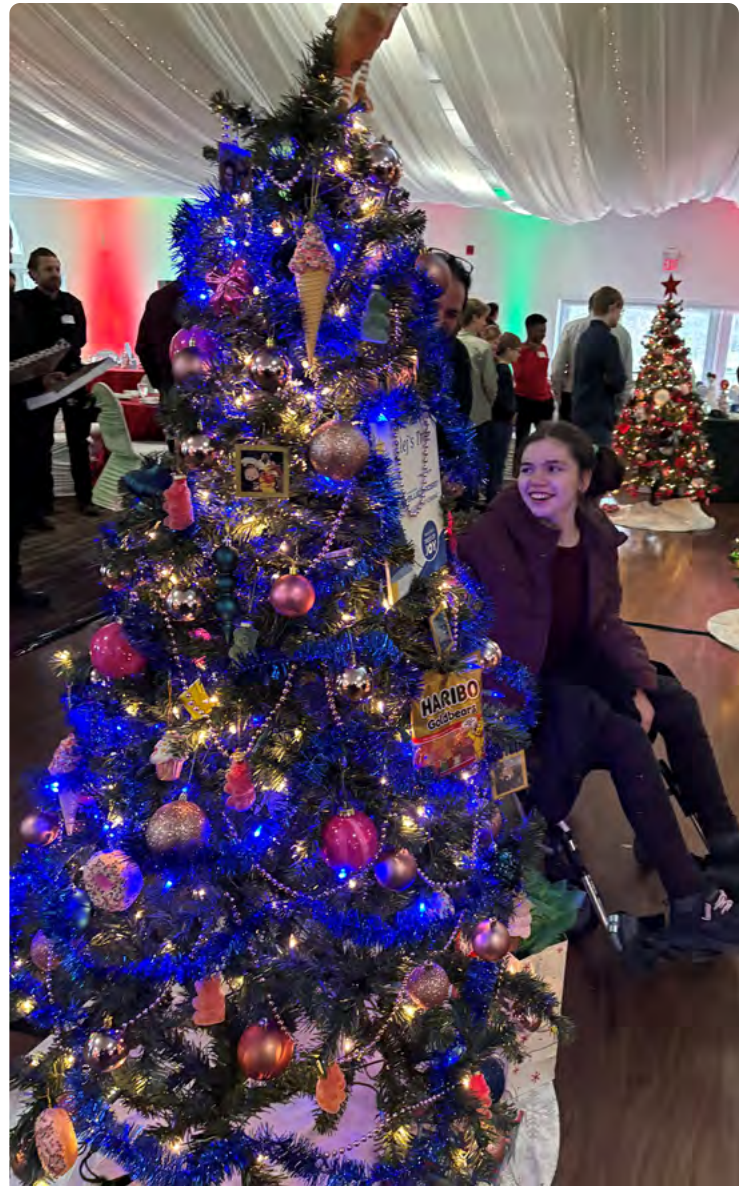
was raised through
Trees of Joy Winnipeg

ABOUT MAKE-A-WISH CANADA

Make-A-Wish Canada is a non-profit organization that grants life-changing wishes for children living with critical illnesses, helping to support emotional well-being and strength throughout their treatment journey. For many children, these wishes involve once-in-a-lifetime travel experiences, offering opportunities to create joyful memories, spend meaningful time with family and experience a sense of freedom and normalcy beyond their medical care.

Since 1989, as part of the Canadian Association of Blue Cross Plans, Manitoba Blue Cross has been a proud partner, providing premium-free travel coverage to Manitoba children and their families any time a travel wish is granted.

 **65** individuals, including wish kids and their family members, received travel coverage from Manitoba Blue Cross to help fulfill their travel wishes in 2025



“The Trees of Joy experience was amazing for Alejandra, her sister Isabel and for both of us as parents. Seeing the care that was put into making a perfect tree for Alej brought us all so much joy. All of the details were so well thought-out, and Christmas certainly came early for those lucky kiddos. We loved meeting the Manitoba Blue Cross team, sharing stories with them and making memories. We are deeply grateful.

Alej adores her tree. She is an early riser, so every morning, we come down and turn on the tree for her. She likes to stand by it, point, and say, “Look it!” She always flashes that beautiful smile of hers when she does, which brightens up the room in the wee hours of the morning, and her joy in that moment makes the world a little better.

Alejandra's family,
Recipient of a customized tree

Support for Manitoban wildfire evacuees

In June 2025, wildfires began to sweep across Manitoba, displacing families and disrupting entire communities during the spring and summer months. As the situation forced people from their homes, the emotional and physical toll was immediate and profound. In response to this crisis, Manitoba Blue Cross stepped in to provide compassionate, practical support to those affected.

Recognizing the strain on individuals and the resulting impact on the province's healthcare system, we offered complimentary health supports, including counselling sessions and virtual care health services to all Manitoban wildfire evacuees.



“Beyond rebuilding what is lost, true healing means addressing the well-being of those individuals impacted, and it was critical that we began that work immediately. As a local organization that cares for all Manitobans, we are committed to supporting the health and wellness of everyone who has lost their home, their community or their sense of security.

Benjamin Graham
President and Chief Executive Officer,
Manitoba Blue Cross

 **Nearly 33K**
Manitobans were evacuated

 **\$2,500**
was donated by Manitoba Blue Cross to Manitoba Animal Alliance in support of animals affected by the wildfires

Through our trusted Employee Assistance Program (EAP), individuals could access up to three counselling sessions as well as immediate mental health assistance through a 24/7 support line. Individuals who preferred a self-guided online service could also choose to access internet-based cognitive behavioural therapy with Manitoba Blue Cross's partner MindBeacon. To address physical health needs, those displaced could get the convenience of medical support online or over the phone with our partner Gotodoctor. From infections and rashes to allergies and other common concerns, displaced individuals could access timely care without needing to travel.



In addition, EAP team members responded in multiple ways, from making in-person connections and offering support at reception and shelter sites to collaborating closely with Shared Health by participating in planning meetings and contributing expertise in critical incident stress management.

Together, these efforts reflected Manitoba Blue Cross's ongoing commitment to caring for Manitobans, especially in times of uncertainty and need.

“When people are uprooted from their homes, the impact is felt in countless ways across entire communities, which is why we focused on making comprehensive support easily accessible. Whether that meant speaking to a counsellor, connecting with a healthcare provider or just finding a caring voice on the other end of the line, we wanted Manitobans affected by the wildfires to feel seen, heard and cared for.”

Jodie Voth

Manager,
Employee Assistance
Services,
Manitoba Blue Cross



Wildfire evacuees from Flin Flon, Manitoba, enjoyed the Winnipeg Goldeyes' National Indigenous Peoples Day game.

600

Winnipeg Goldeyes tickets were donated by Manitoba Blue Cross to wildfire evacuees, along with snack vouchers and complimentary transportation, for the National Indigenous Peoples Day game on June 21

Thompson service centre

In September 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross unveiled our new service centre in Thompson, Manitoba—marking an important step in expanding access to health and wellness resources across Northern Manitoba. This new location strengthens our commitment to ensuring that members and the broader community have direct, in-person access to the trusted, local support we are known for.

The Thompson service centre serves as a northern hub where members can receive personalized assistance with their benefit plans, submit claims and connect face-to-face with knowledgeable Manitoba Blue Cross representatives. By bringing these services closer to home, we are helping remove barriers to care and making it easier for individuals and families to navigate their health benefit coverage with confidence.



The Thompson service centre is located at 40 Moak Crescent, Unit 1.

The centre also welcomes members of the public looking to purchase travel coverage before their next trip, ensuring that Thompson residents and those in surrounding areas have convenient access to protection and peace of mind.


Recognizing that wellness extends beyond physical health, the Thompson location offers eligible members with Employee or Individual Assistance Program coverage the opportunity to access in-person counselling services. These confidential sessions provide a safe and supportive environment where individuals can address life's challenges, strengthen resilience and prioritize their mental and emotional well-being.


As a local health benefits provider, Manitoba Blue Cross is committed to building stronger relationships throughout the province, especially in Northern Manitoba, where access to health and wellness services can be more limited. By establishing a physical presence in Thompson, we are deepening community connections, enhancing accessibility and investing in the long-term well-being of northern residents.

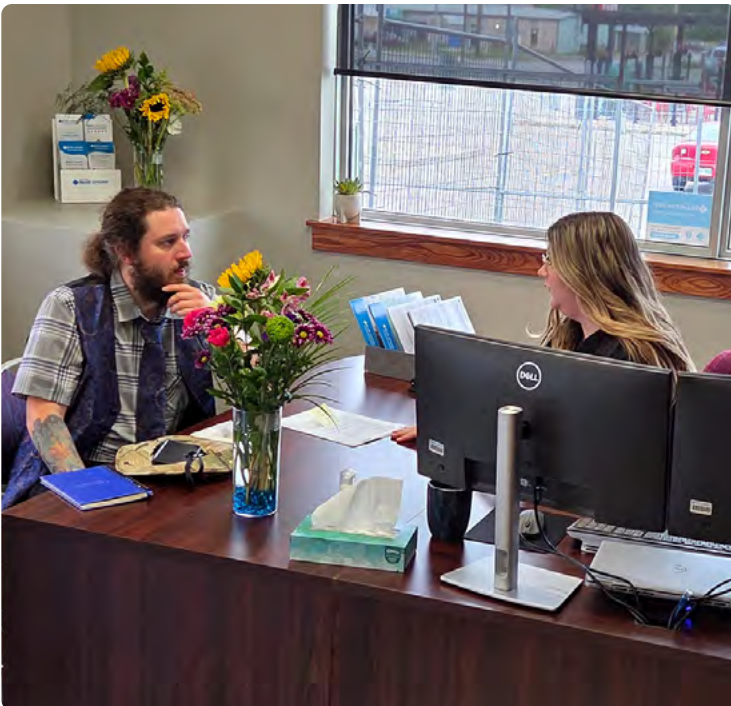
“As a Manitoba-based organization, we believe that everyone in the province deserves the right to access quality health and wellness resources, regardless of their postal code. This new location allows us to bring our vital services closer to members and further support the growing and diverse needs of Manitobans.”

Benjamin Graham

President and
Chief Executive Officer,
Manitoba Blue Cross

 **≈13K** people reside in
Thompson, Manitoba

 **≈45K** people from surrounding
communities visit Thompson,
Manitoba, for essential services





STARS partnership

In December 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross announced a ten-year partnership with STARS, pledging a generous \$3 million gift to support their critical mission operations throughout Manitoba.

Every day, STARS takes to the sky to provide lifesaving care to people in their most vulnerable moments. Their medically equipped helicopters, staffed by critical care nurses, paramedics and physicians, bring hospital-level expertise to those who need it most. Whether responding to a farm accident, a highway collision or a medical emergency in a northern community, STARS reaches Manitobans when every second truly matters.


“ Since establishing our permanent base in Manitoba in 2012, STARS has become a trusted provider of critical care, completing over 10,000 missions to communities across the province. This extraordinary investment by Manitoba Blue Cross strengthens the foundation of our operations and enhances our ability to deliver world-class critical care anywhere in Manitoba for years to come.

Dr. John Froh

President and Chief Executive Officer,
STARS

The new partnership will see the STARS base at the Winnipeg airport renamed the STARS Manitoba Blue Cross Winnipeg Base. The base will be upgraded to include a new state-of-the-art medical simulation lab and additional space for both crew and equipment. These additions will ensure that STARS can continue to deliver the highest level of critical care. With more than 1,200 missions in 2024 alone, the need for their rapid response has never been clearer.

Through this partnership, Manitoba Blue Cross is honoured to help build upon a lasting foundation for emergency medical services that Manitobans can depend on today and in the future.

 **40** years of providing critical, life-saving care

“ At Manitoba Blue Cross, we believe that caring for the community means showing up not only in moments of celebration, but especially in times of urgency, uncertainty and need. That’s why partnering with STARS is such a natural fit, as we share a deep commitment to supporting the health and well-being of Manitobans. We’re truly proud, as the naming rights partner for their Winnipeg base, to know that our support is ensuring that communities across our province can continue to access the critical, lifesaving support that STARS delivers.

Benjamin Graham

President and Chief Executive Officer,
Manitoba Blue Cross



The Dream Factory

In July 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross solidified a partnership with The Dream Factory by committing to provide premium-free travel coverage to Manitoba children and their families any time a travel dream comes true. From thrilling amusement parks to tropical adventures, many Dream Kids wish for unforgettable trips that create lasting memories.

Additionally, our partnership grew even deeper as Manitoba Blue Cross employees volunteered at several of their signature events, including their Drop-In Dream Party, Magic Workshop and Hill of Dreams initiative. These special moments offer children and their families a much-needed break from hospital routines and help restore a sense of normalcy during incredibly challenging times.

Beyond volunteering, Manitoba Blue Cross also provided complimentary Winnipeg Jets and Winnipeg Goldeyes tickets, bottled water for The Dream Factory's community space, and a foosball table for their Dream Maker Auction.

Together, these efforts reflect Manitoba Blue Cross's commitment to uplifting children and families, especially those navigating medical journeys that profoundly shape their lives.





50+

dreams fulfilled for
Dream Kids in 2025

ABOUT THE DREAM FACTORY

For more than 40 years, The Dream Factory has been dedicated to creating meaningful experiences for kids facing life-threatening illnesses and supporting families throughout their medical journeys. In addition to making dreams come true, they provide ongoing support through financial assistance, local events and activities, as well as a caring community network.

“Manitoba Blue Cross’s ongoing support—from game tickets and bottled water to having volunteers come out and spend time at our events and activities, and now the travel insurance for our Dream Families—has truly made a difference. Manitoba Blue Cross has shown up in so many thoughtful and impactful ways.

The Dream Factory is always inspired by the engagement of the Manitoba Blue Cross team. They are true community leaders, and we are so grateful for everything they do.

Trish Taylor

Donor Relations Manager,
The Dream Factory



In 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross contributed to other valuable causes that support the **health and well-being of children, families and older adults**, including, but not limited to:



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Winnipeg's MEGABike



Children's Hospital Foundation of Manitoba's Teddy Bears' Picnic



Children's Rehabilitation Foundation's Cruisin' to Change Lives



Active Aging in Manitoba: Manitoba 55+ Games



Bravestone Centre's Sunday Brunch



Villa Rosa's Storytelling Gala



Home Instead's Be a Santa to a Senior



Variety Manitoba's Winter Wonderland

Run Your Lungs Out

In April 2025, CancerCare Manitoba Foundation hosted its third annual Run Your Lungs Out 24-Hour Treadmill Challenge, marking its return after a four-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This impactful event aims to inspire the community to create awareness of lung cancer through physical activity and raise funds to support research and treatment right here in Manitoba.

With eight treadmills running continuously for 24 hours in rotating 30-minute time slots, participants could run, walk, jog or even skip at their own pace. The event also featured a live DJ and news broadcast, spin classes, yoga and stretching sessions and dedicated aid and cheer stations to keep energy and spirits high.

A group of Manitoba Blue Cross employees enthusiastically participated, pushing themselves, supporting one another and sharing the excitement of this meaningful challenge.



8 Manitoba Blue Cross employees participated



\$125K raised through the event

“This event was a great opportunity to support a local initiative with a cause close to our hearts—or lungs, in this case! Our team had a strong showing, placing second in fundraising and making a memorable impact by blowing the power on several treadmills at once. Whoops! We look forward to participating in future years, continuing to raise funds for cancer research while highlighting the important role physical activity plays in reducing the risk of over 25 chronic diseases, including certain types of cancer.

Alex Edye-Mazowita
Disability Case Manager,
Manitoba Blue Cross

ABOUT CANCERCARE MANITOBA FOUNDATION

Since 1997, CancerCare Manitoba Foundation has been committed to supporting CancerCare Manitoba, the province’s leading centre for cancer research and treatment. The foundation raises funds to advance research, enhance patient care and provide vital support services for patients and their families. Importantly, all donations stay in Manitoba, directly benefiting the local community.

MS Walk

In May 2025, the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada hosted its annual MS Walk, a nationwide, one-day fundraising event that takes place in over 50 communities across the country, including Winnipeg and The Pas.

Funds raised through the MS Walk support individuals affected by multiple sclerosis (MS) by helping them navigate healthcare and support systems, building meaningful community connections and advancing critical health research. These efforts also drive advocacy initiatives aimed at removing barriers and improving quality of life for those living with MS.

This year, a group of Manitoba Blue Cross employees laced up their sneakers to join the Winnipeg walk and show their support. In addition to participating, we hosted an official checkpoint along the route, interacting with the community and offering complimentary bottled water to fellow participants.

Manitoba Blue Cross is proud to stand behind this meaningful cause—supporting individuals living with MS as well as the families, friends and communities that walk alongside them.



\$830

raised by the Manitoba Blue Cross team



12K

participants from coast to coast, including 800 in Manitoba



\$3.5M

raised through the event nationwide

ABOUT THE MS SOCIETY OF CANADA

For more than 75 years, the MS Society of Canada has been dedicated to improving the lives of Canadians affected by MS. With an unwavering vision of a world free of MS, the organization funds cutting-edge research into the cause, prevention and cure of the disease. They also provide a wide range of programs and services designed to support people living with MS and their families, enhancing their quality of life.

“Huge thank you to Manitoba Blue Cross for their generous support of the 2025 Winnipeg MS Walk. Their contribution helped us to provide a memorable and inspiring experience for our participants. Thanks to their partnership, we were able to reach our goals and work together towards a world free of MS.”

Paige Perron

Coordinator, Community Fundraising,
MS Canada

Golf 4 Project 11

In July 2025, the Golf 4 Project 11 memorial golf tournament teed off at Kingswood Golf and Country Club in La Salle, Manitoba. Under sunny skies, golfers came together to enjoy the game while raising awareness and support for the mental health of students across the province.

The annual tournament was founded in 2017 by Lisa Rowe, Kathryn Heidinger and Christie Houston in memory of their dear friend and classmate, Christy O’Dowda, who lost her struggle with mental health in February 2016. Since then, the three organizers have been dedicated to growing the event and its impact.

This year’s tournament marked the largest attendance to date, with enthusiastic participation in raffles, a silent auction and 50/50 draws. All proceeds support Project 11, a program delivering vital mental health curriculum to thousands of Manitoba children.

Manitoba Blue Cross’s wellness ambassadors were also on site, engaging with participants through interactive games and activities that highlighted the importance of mental wellness for all ages.



ABOUT PROJECT 11

Project 11 is a cross-curricular program that teaches students positive coping skills and mental wellness strategies through classroom lessons and activities. Inspired by former player of the Winnipeg Jets and Manitoba Moose, Rick Rypien (#11), who faced mental health challenges before his passing in 2011, the program carries forward his belief that early mental health awareness builds lifelong resilience.

“ We were so pleased to welcome Manitoba Blue Cross as a hole sponsor for the first time at Kingswood Golf and Country Club this summer. With 164 participants, incredible community support and perfect weather, it was truly a special day in memory of our dear friend, Christy O’Dowda. We are proud to continue our work in supporting those experiencing mental health challenges as well as promoting mental wellness. See you next year on July 23, 2026!

Lisa Rowe, Kathryn Heidinger and Christie Houston
Founders,
Golf 4 Project 11

 **\$25K+** raised through the event

 **164** participants

 **25+** volunteers

In 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross provided support for a range of organizations and events dedicated to **advancing health care and raising awareness for important causes**, including, but not limited to:



Grace Hospital Foundation's Grace Hospital Day



Crohn's and Colitis Canada's Winnipeg Gutsy & Glamorous Gala



Riverview Health Centre Foundation's Cycle on Life



Manitoba Motorcycle Ride for Dad

Women's Health Clinic's Fête de Fem Gala



Pink Ribbon Ladies Golf Classic for Hope in support of CancerCare Manitoba's Breast & Gyne Cancer Centre of Hope



Never Alone Cancer Foundation's Golf Classic



Easter Seals Drop Zone event in support of Manitoba Possible



St. Amant Foundation's Free the Spirit Festival

Community development

Manitoba Blue Cross invests in programs and partnerships that strengthen communities and empower charitable initiatives to expand their impact. Through collaboration and innovation, we help ensure community resources continue evolving to meet the changing needs of Manitobans. By fostering meaningful connections across the province and beyond, we help create communities that are strong, resilient and equipped for the future.



Winnipeg Goldeyes partnership

In 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross continued our partnership with the Winnipeg Goldeyes as part of our ten-year naming rights agreement for the team's downtown ballpark, Blue Cross Park. This ongoing collaboration celebrates not only the excitement of summer baseball but also the shared spirit of community.

The season kicked off on May 20, when our vice president and chief risk officer, Luke Johnston, had the honour of throwing the first pitch at the home opener game while our mascot, Big Blue, cheered on the team. Fans were also treated to a special surprise with the first 5,000 guests through the gates receiving an exclusive, limited edition Goldeyes jersey, prominently featuring the Manitoba Blue Cross logo.

Throughout the summer, our wellness ambassadors connected with fans at three of the Goldeyes' biggest games, sharing tips and resources on how to live well, stay active and support overall health and well-being. Their presence underscored our commitment to helping Manitobans lead healthier, happier lives.

Manitoba Blue Cross was proud to share the passion and tradition that makes Goldeyes baseball a cornerstone of summer in Winnipeg.

“Manitoba Blue Cross’s partnership with the Winnipeg Goldeyes has made a lasting impact on the community by supporting programs that promote health, wellness and youth engagement. Through their involvement in the Field of Dreams Golf Tournament and the Goldeyes Kids Skills Camps, they’ve helped create opportunities for young athletes to learn, grow and stay active. Their commitment continues to strengthen community spirit—both on and off the field.

Andrew Collier
General Manager,
Winnipeg Goldeyes Baseball Club



THE GIFT OF BASEBALL

Baseball has a special way of bringing the community together and creating moments of joy. This year, we were thrilled to extend the gift of baseball to many Manitobans across the province.

Throughout the season, we hosted several community organizations at our Blue Cross Park Skysuite, celebrating their incredible work. Each group was invited to bring up to 21 guests to enjoy a memorable experience.

Organizations included:

- Agape Table
- DASCH
- Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre
- Goals for G.R.O.W.
- Make-A-Wish Canada
- Peer Connections Manitoba
- Pink Ribbon Ladies Golf Classic for Hope committee
- Sleep in Heavenly Peace
- The Dream Factory
- United Way Winnipeg

ANNUAL KIDS SUMMER SKILLS CAMP

In July 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross participated in the Princess Auto & Winnipeg Goldeyes Annual Kids Summer Skills Camp, with our wellness ambassadors on site to promote the importance of healthy living through fun, interactive activities.

For over 20 years, the camp has offered children a hands-on opportunity to learn baseball skills directly from Goldeyes players in a positive, supportive environment—building confidence, teamwork and a love for the game.



WINNIPEG GOLDEYES FIELD OF DREAMS FOUNDATION

During the 2025 season, Manitoba Blue Cross connected with baseball fans through philanthropy by encouraging attendees during every home game to keep their eyes on the Manitoba Blue Cross pitch speed sign. The first time a Goldeyes pitcher hit 90 miles per hour or more in each game, we celebrated by donating \$50 to the Goldeyes Field of Dreams Foundation, resulting in a \$2,500 contribution supporting community programs and charitable organizations.

Additionally, for the second consecutive year, Manitoba Blue Cross supported the Winnipeg Goldeyes Field of Dreams golf tournament, with our wellness ambassadors once again on site to engage with participants and support the cause. Proceeds from the annual event go towards the Winnipeg Goldeyes Field of Dreams Foundation, helping a wide range of children's charities across Manitoba.



50

tickets were donated to St. Amant Foundation for the autism awareness game on July 3


Bike to Work Day

In June 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross hosted a pit stop for Bike Winnipeg’s Bike to Work Day as part of their annual Bike Week Winnipeg celebration. Our pit stop was spearheaded by Manitoba Blue Cross employees Nadege Vince, Jody Martens and Russ Morden, encouraging colleagues to enjoy the outdoors, reduce their carbon footprint and support their physical and mental well-being during their commute to work.



Starting bright and early at 6:30 a.m., a team of Manitoba Blue Cross employees set up a tent along the bike path on Empress Street, directly across from our home office. Cyclists were greeted with friendly cheers, complimentary coffee and snacks, free bike tune-ups and a chance to win a smartwatch.

Whether our employees ride for recreation, commuting, fitness or just for fun, we believe cycling should be equitable, safe and accessible for everyone. Supporting events like Bike to Work Day reflects our commitment to supporting community well-being, sustainability and active living.

 **100+** people engaged with us at our pit stop

 **Won bronze** for the best pit stop in the city (out of 76 stops)

ABOUT BIKE WINNIPEG

Bike Winnipeg is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that advocates for a healthy, sustainable and equitable city where year-round cycling is accessible to all. Through outreach, education and advocacy, they work to make cycling a safe, practical and appealing option for Winnipeggers.

“*I’ve always loved biking to work—it’s fun, energizing and a great way to start the day. Hosting a pit stop for Bike to Work Day was the perfect opportunity to share that experience with others while promoting health and wellness, encouraging sustainable commuting and fostering a stronger sense of community.*”

Nadege Vince
Content Creator,
Manitoba Blue Cross

“*Please send thanks to the people who ran the Manitoba Blue Cross Bike to Work Day station. I biked to work along Empress, and when I rounded the corner, I was greeted with lots of cheering and clapping from the Manitoba Blue Cross pit stop. That definitely made me start the day on a high note and have a great day at work.*”

Dale
Bike to Work Day participant

Manitoba High School Pitch Workshop

In June 2025, the Stu Clark Centre for Entrepreneurship (Asper School of Business, University of Manitoba), hosted their annual Manitoba High School Pitch Workshop. The event brought together ambitious students from across Manitoba for an energizing, fast-paced day focused on entrepreneurship.

Students who participated in the workshop received hands-on experience in the world of start-ups, including pitch coaching, mentorship and the unique opportunity to present their innovative ideas to a panel of industry experts through a live pitch competition. Each participant delivered a 90-second pitch, followed by a 90-second Q&A session with the judges.

One standout student walked away with a brand-new iPad, thanks to a generous donation from Manitoba Blue Cross. More than just a prize, this gift ensures continued access to the digital tools needed to grow their entrepreneurial journey.



ABOUT THE STU CLARK CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Stu Clark Centre for Entrepreneurship supports students, faculty and alumni of the University of Manitoba in turning their ideas into successful businesses. Through dynamic programs, supportive mentorship and experiential learning opportunities, the Centre is proud to help strengthen Manitoba's business ecosystem—one future entrepreneur at a time.



60

high school students attended the workshop

“Manitoba Blue Cross’s generous iPad donation as a grand prize added excitement and encouraged student engagement. The prize will support the winner’s learning journey and interest in entrepreneurship.”

Amy Jones

Event Manager,
Stu Clark Centre for Entrepreneurship



Wellness ambassadors

In 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross's wellness ambassador program returned for another summer of meaningful community engagement. The annual program gives students the opportunity to connect directly with communities while supporting Manitoba Blue Cross in promoting wellness through a variety of initiatives. This year, the ambassadors participated in many of Manitoba's most well-attended events, helping to strengthen community connections and promote wellness across the province. Key events included:

- Grace Hospital Day
- Manitoba 55+ Games hosted by Active Aging in Manitoba
- Motorcycle Ride for Dad
- Moose Hide Campaign
- Pride Winnipeg Festival and Parade
- Sleep in Heavenly Peace bed build initiative
- Winnipeg Goldeyes games
- Assiniboine Park's Summer Entertainment Series (Canada Day, Indigenous Peoples Day, Wellness Wednesdays)


Our wellness ambassadors supported these events by distributing wellness-focused educational materials, engaging community members through interactive activities and leading stretching and exercise sessions. Their presence added energy, encouragement and meaningful support to every event they attended throughout the summer.

“The most rewarding part of being a wellness ambassador is the opportunity to give back to the community while promoting wellness across the province. This role allowed me to apply the knowledge I gained through my degree in meaningful, real-world ways, developing creative initiatives that inspire healthy living and strengthen community connections.

Andrew Wiebe
Wellness Ambassador,
Manitoba Blue Cross

 **50+** events attended over a 4-month period

 **15K+** Manitobans reached

 **36%** of Manitobans who we interacted with indicated that improving their physical wellness was their highest need



“This summer, we were able to reach over 15,000 people from across the province. Being a wellness ambassador gave me the opportunity to develop skills related to my degree and gain unique experiences. A highlight this year was giving hand health presentations to members of senior groups in rural communities. I loved being able to hear directly from community members about how our initiatives helped them.”

Emily Melvin

Wellness Ambassador,
Manitoba Blue Cross



“What I valued most about being a wellness ambassador was the opportunity to immerse myself in the community and make a difference within such a diverse population. Seeing the positive impact firsthand was incredibly rewarding.”

Jeff Bi

Wellness Ambassador,
Manitoba Blue Cross


Santa Claus Parade

In November 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross employees, along with their families, friends and volunteers from Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP), came together to participate in the annual Manitoba Hydro Santa Claus Parade. This event not only celebrates the holiday season but also supports vital community initiatives such as collecting non-perishable food items and unwrapped toys for the Christmas Cheer Board.

A large crowd lined the streets of downtown Winnipeg to see colourful Christmas floats and a close-up look at the Canadian Football League's championship trophy. With the 112th Grey Cup kicking off in Winnipeg that Sunday, the Santa Claus Parade doubled as a Grey Cup event through a distinct football theme amongst holiday floats.

ABOUT THE SANTA CLAUS PARADE

First held in 1909, the Santa Claus Parade is Winnipeg's longest-running free community event. In 2012, the Winnipeg Parade Committee Inc.—a board-led, independent, community-based not-for-profit—was established to guide and produce the Parade and ensure the sustainability of the event for many years to come.

 **100K+** people watched live; either on TV or on-site





Manitoba Blue Cross and SHP partnered to create a memorable float that celebrated the magic of a good night's sleep. At its centre was a beautifully hand-crafted set of SHP bunk beds, surrounded by sparkling lights, festive presents and cozy holiday decorations. Designed to evoke the comfort of snuggling up during the holiday season, the float also highlighted the importance of all children in our community having access to a safe and comfortable place to sleep.

With many children lacking suitable beds that support their physical and mental well-being, SHP provides high-quality beds by building, assembling and delivering them to children and families in need.

Through this year's float, Manitoba Blue Cross and SHP showcased their shared commitment to supporting the overall health and wellness of children and families in Manitoba.

“ Helping organize the Santa Claus Parade float with Manitoba Blue Cross and Sleep in Heavenly Peace was truly meaningful to me—we continue to come together to promote this worthy cause in the community and ensure every child has a safe place to sleep. Plus, the float looked really cool!

Dallas McEvoy,
Application Development Team Lead,
Business Technology and Innovation Services,
Manitoba Blue Cross

United Way campaign


2025 represents the fifth consecutive record-breaking year for Manitoba Blue Cross's United Way Campaign, raising over \$183,000 with corporate match.

This year, the campaign committee chose to spotlight Main Street Project (MSP), a local non-profit supported by United Way. The campaign kicked off in the staff lounge with a presentation by MSP's executive director, Jamil Mahmood, who shared how United Way Winnipeg's ongoing support helps MSP provide essential services to the city's most vulnerable community members.

To further support MSP's mission, the United Way committee organized a collection drive for clothes and supplies, as well as participated in Socktober, MSP's annual initiative to collect 30,000 pairs of socks throughout October.

“ We were overjoyed with this year's campaign and we're truly grateful for the enthusiastic participation and support from all the staff. Everyone we talked to had an incredible experience, and there's been increased interest this year in learning more about the United Way.

Jackie Tapley,
United Way Campaign
Committee Co-chair,
Manitoba Blue Cross

 **23%** more money was raised in 2025 vs. 2024



Celebrating the spirit of our city, this year’s campaign theme—“The Game of WPG”—brought Manitoba Blue Cross employees together through friendly competition and team collaboration. Events included United Way Winnipeg’s plane pull competition, a bake sale, honey dill showdown, United Way-themed film premiere, Manitoba landmark-building contest and a special barbecue lunch.

Thanks to the enthusiasm, generosity and teamwork of everyone involved, Manitoba Blue Cross continues to make a meaningful impact by contributing to United Way and their incredible work.



Won United Way Winnipeg’s Campaign Chair Award

for the fifth consecutive year, demonstrating strong campaign growth and leadership

“It was so much fun to participate in the honey dill competition and see all the delicious, creative dishes everyone made! United Way is very dear to me because I experienced poverty growing up in Winnipeg, so having the chance to give back—even in a small way through this competition—meant a lot to me. Plus, meeting Chrissy Troy was so cool and I’ll admit, I felt a little starstruck!

Cecile Neufeld,
Customer Service Representative,
Manitoba Blue Cross





Employee volunteer commitment

In 2025, we continued to see an inspiring level of commitment from Manitoba Blue Cross employees who supported various causes within our communities. Through their dedication, our employees made a positive impact by volunteering at a range of organizations and events, including but not limited to:

- Christmas Cheer Board
- Harvest Manitoba
- Home Instead's Be a Santa to a Senior program
- Koats for Kids
- Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada's MS Walk
- Siloam Mission
- The Dream Factory
- United Way Winnipeg
- Villa Rosa
- Winnipeg Animal Services
- Winnipeg Humane Society

“Organizing Be a Santa to a Senior has been one of my favourite volunteer experiences. Our employees loved shopping for and personally delivering gifts to seniors who might not otherwise receive them. After sponsoring KeKiNan Centre in 2024, we were honoured to be asked to return and support them again in 2025.”

Deanna Phakonekham
Business Analyst,
Manitoba Blue Cross

We are deeply grateful for the generosity, compassion and enthusiasm our employees bring to every volunteer opportunity. Their willingness to give back not only supports important causes but also strengthens the community connections that define Manitoba Blue Cross.


“Volunteering within the community for local charities, such as United Way Winnipeg, in 2025 was personally meaningful to me and gave me a stronger sense of connection to the people around me. Working alongside others allowed me to see firsthand the challenges within my community and the importance of giving back. Knowing that my time and effort made a difference was incredibly rewarding and has motivated me to remain actively involved in my community in the years ahead.

Jackie Tapley
 Team Lead, Client Services,
 Manitoba Blue Cross

ABOUT OUR VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

In July 2023, Manitoba Blue Cross introduced a volunteer time off policy for both full-time and part-time employees. The policy provides all active and term employees with a designated number of paid hours to volunteer with approved organizations of their choice.

Corporate initiatives

 **640** volunteer hours utilized

 **140** employees volunteered

Individual efforts

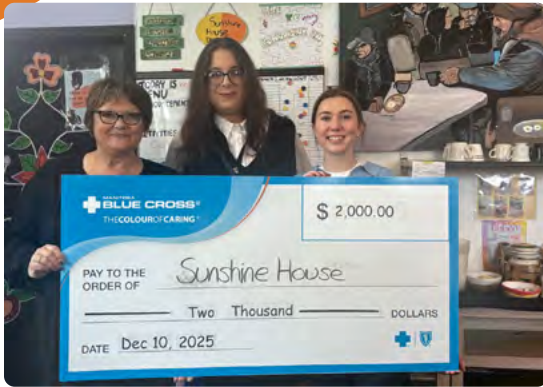
 **850** volunteer hours utilized

 **137** employees volunteered



Holiday giving

As part of our annual holiday giving initiative, we committed to providing charitable organizations with the support they need to maximize their impact. In December 2025, we provided funds to several valuable organizations in the community, including:



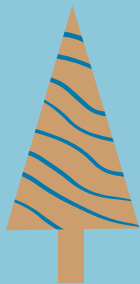
SUNSHINE HOUSE

Sunshine House is a welcoming community drop-in and resource centre dedicated to harm reduction and social inclusion. They offer programs and supports that meet people's social, community and recreational needs, while fostering connection, dignity and a sense of belonging.



N'DINAWEMAK INC—OUR RELATIVES' PLACE

N'Dinawemak is an Indigenous-led, 24/7 safe space that supports community members experiencing homelessness. Grounded in care, respect and cultural values, they provide a no-barrier environment where individuals can find safety, support and connection.



WEST END 24-HOUR SAFE SPACE FOR YOUTH

Operated by the Spence Neighbourhood Association, the West End 24-Hour Safe Space for Youth (WE24) offers an overnight refuge for youth ages 13 to 26. The space allows young people to rest, relax, access food and necessities and connect with resources in a supportive, kind and warm environment.



VELMA'S HOUSE

Velma's House is a 24/7 safe space for women and gender-diverse individuals located in the core area of Winnipeg. Operated by the Indigenous-led organization Ka Ni Kanichihk, they provide a culturally grounded, supportive environment focused on safety, respect and holistic well-being.



WILLOW PLACE

Willow Place is a 24-hour staffed shelter that provides inclusive, no-cost family violence prevention services. Supporting women experiencing domestic violence, they offer safety, advocacy and compassionate care while welcoming individuals of all cultures and backgrounds.



HARVEST MANITOBA

Harvest Manitoba collects healthy, nutritious food and distributes it to individuals and families in need across the province. Through a network of food banks and community agencies, they provide essential support while also leading education and advocacy efforts to address poverty and food insecurity.



Manitoba Blue Cross also contributed to a variety of **meaningful community events and initiatives** that bring Manitobans together, including, but not limited to:



The Salvation Army's Feeding the Homeless initiative



Manitoba Schools' Science Symposium



Agape Table's Charity Golf Tournament



The Salvation Army's Father's Day 5K Fun Run



Winnipeg Sea Bears' Summer Series camp

Diversity, equity and inclusion

Manitoba Blue Cross is committed to building communities where all Manitobans feel valued, included and supported. We actively seek to expand our knowledge, foster understanding and uplift the diverse populations across Manitoba. By celebrating and championing inclusivity, we aim to create a welcoming environment where every voice is heard, valued and empowered. Through continuous learning and meaningful engagement, we strive to help shape a more equitable and inclusive future for all.




Moose Hide Campaign

In May 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross employees engaged in the Moose Hide Campaign, a powerful grassroots movement aimed at ending violence toward women and children. The campaign is grounded in Indigenous ceremony and traditional ways of learning and healing, inviting people of all ages, genders and backgrounds to participate in impactful activities.

All Manitoba Blue Cross employees received a complimentary moose hide pin, symbolizing their personal commitment to honour, respect and protect the women and children in their lives, and to speak out against gender-based and domestic violence.



 **5M+** moose hide pins have been distributed free of charge to communities, schools and workplaces across Canada

“We’re grateful to Manitoba Blue Cross for helping us share the medicine of the Moose Hide Campaign across the province. Their support helped bring this sacred medicine—and the conversations it carries—into more hearts and communities, lighting the path toward healing and ending violence.”

Raven Lacerte
Co-Founder & Executive Director,
Moose Hide Campaign



- 1 in 2 Canadian women have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16
- Every 2.5 days, a woman or girl is murdered in Canada



Later that month, over 50 Manitoba Blue Cross team members took that commitment a step further, proudly marching in Winnipeg as part of the Moose Hide Campaign Day. Moose hide pins were visible on the lapels of our orange shirts while we walked in solidarity with hundreds of others from the community, united in a call for change.

The day began at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, with a drum performance by Blazing Buffalo and an opening prayer by Elder Mae Louise Campbell. From there, participants marched to the Manitoba Legislative Building for more performances and speeches, including one from Manitoba Blue Cross's vice president of people and corporate services, Diane Sparrow DeGrave.

We were also honoured to support the event by sponsoring an inspiring performance by the Aboriginal School of Dance and providing a booth staffed with wellness ambassadors who handed out complimentary bottled water to attendees.

By participating in the Moose Hide Campaign, Manitoba Blue Cross reaffirmed our commitment to reconciliation and creating safer communities for all Manitobans.

“Today, we used our feet symbolically to take a stand against violence, we used them literally to walk to raise awareness and ultimately, we'll use them to effect positive social change.”

Diane Sparrow DeGrave

Vice President of People and Corporate Services,
Manitoba Blue Cross



50+

Manitoba Blue Cross employees participated in the Moose Hide Campaign walk






Pride Winnipeg


In June 2025, Manitoba Blue Cross proudly participated in the Pride Winnipeg Parade for the third consecutive year, demonstrating our continued commitment to supporting the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. The event brought together Manitoba Blue Cross employee volunteers, along with their friends and families, to march in celebration of love, equality and self-expression.

Led by our mascot, Big Blue, we made our way from the Manitoba Legislative Building and concluded just outside of Blue Cross Park. With unwavering energy, our team walked together in solidarity with our 2SLGBTQIA+ community members and allies.

At the same time, our wellness ambassadors were stationed at the Pride Winnipeg Festival, located at The Forks. Engaging with festivalgoers all weekend long, they shared wellness tips and facilitated meaningful conversations.

Manitoba Blue Cross is honoured to take part in Pride Winnipeg each year, recognizing that supporting the 2SLGBTQIA+ community goes far beyond this event—it's a year-round commitment to standing up for equity, celebrating diversity and creating safe, welcoming spaces for everyone.

 **10K+** people attended the parade

 **140+** parade floats participated

“ This was my third consecutive year participating in the Pride Parade with Manitoba Blue Cross, and each year it gets bigger and better! Seeing how proud my colleagues were to represent the organization during the parade was truly inspiring. The energy was infectious, and the support from onlookers was uplifting. I’m proud to have been able to physically show my support for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community alongside my co-workers. I’m already looking forward to next year!

Lindsay McLeod
Community Relations Coordinator,
Manitoba Blue Cross



ABOUT PRIDE WINNIPEG

Since 1987, Pride Winnipeg has been a cornerstone of celebration and advocacy for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Held annually in June, it includes a wide variety of cultural events that honour diversity and support individuals within and allied to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.



YWCA Women of Distinction Awards

In April 2025, the YWCA Women of Distinction Awards marked their 40th anniversary with an inspirational evening in Brandon, Manitoba, celebrating the dedication and remarkable achievements of women across the Westman community. Through four incredible decades, this event has highlighted the importance of female leadership while honouring the changemakers whose contributions not only shape today but also inspire future generations to carry forward a legacy of impact.

Manitoba Blue Cross attended this milestone celebration, with two of our own leaders taking the stage as award presenters. Brenda Slikker, vice president and chief experience officer, and Diane Sparrow Degrave, vice president of people and corporate services, had the honour of presenting the Healthy Living, Recreation, Wellness Award, recognizing the advocates of healthy living who promote wellness, encourage active lifestyles and foster holistic health practices within the community.

Lindsay McLeod, our community relations coordinator, also presented the Young Woman of Distinction Award, which spotlights remarkable women aged 18 to 25 who are stepping out to shape the world, leading with passion and innovation and making significant contributions to their fields or communities.

Manitoba Blue Cross was honoured to be a part of this impactful event, celebrating the achievements of women and supporting inclusive leadership in our community.



ABOUT THE YWCA WOMEN OF DISTINCTION AWARDS

Since 1985, the annual YWCA Women of Distinction gala has honoured the talent, achievement, imagination and innovation of women in the community. Proceeds from ticket and raffle sales go to support the programs and services provided by YWCA Westman Women's Shelter, helping individuals affected by domestic, family and gender-based violence.



41

women were nominated across 10 different categories



Nearly
400

people were in attendance

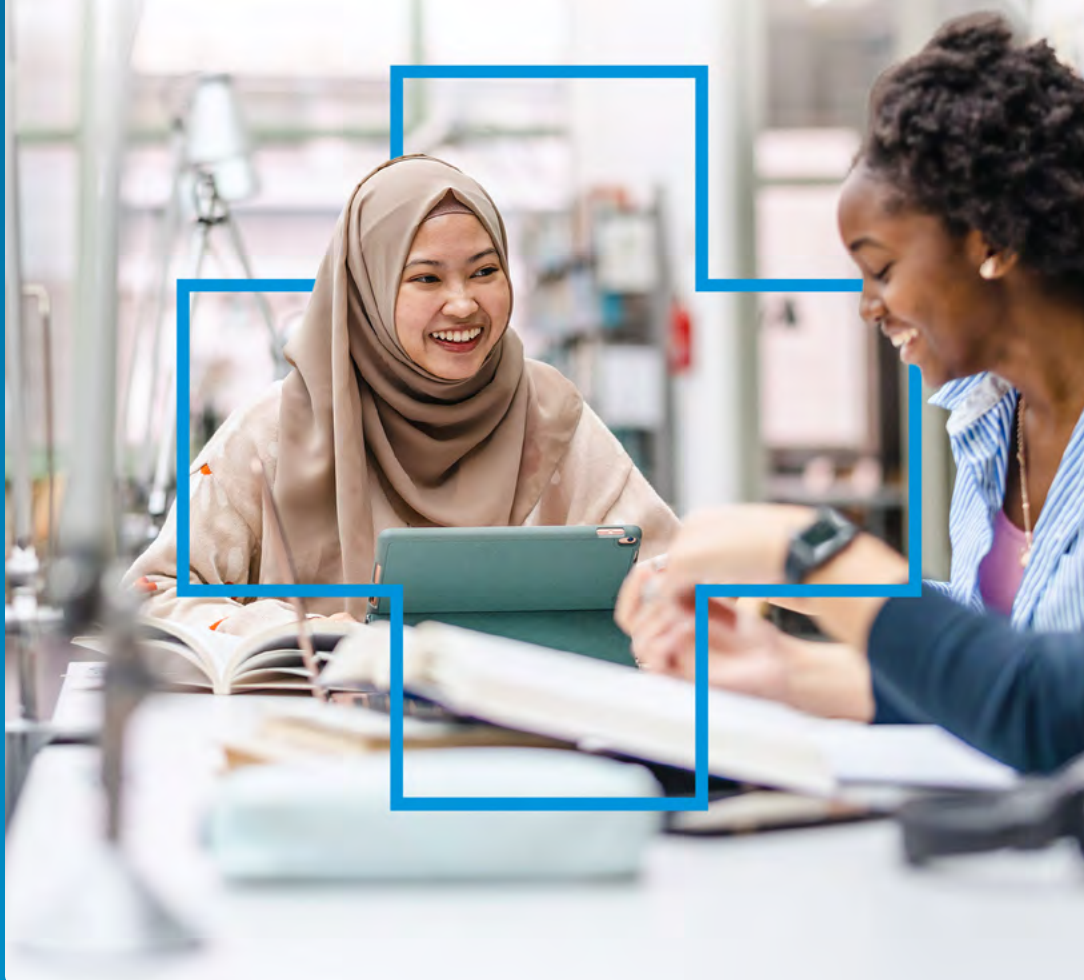


27

organizations from the Westman area provided support to help make the event possible

Scholarships and bursaries

Manitoba Blue Cross believes that today's youth are the leaders of tomorrow. With the rising cost of education, financial barriers may prevent many students from accessing post-secondary opportunities. We are committed to fostering learning and growth by offering scholarships and bursaries to Manitobans who may not otherwise have the opportunity to pursue higher education. By investing in Manitoba students, we help build a brighter future for our communities and empower the next generation to succeed.



Support for Manitoba students

As the rising cost of living and post-secondary expenses continue to place a significant financial strain on students and their families, Manitoba Blue Cross continued our commitment to awarding a range of scholarships and bursaries to Manitoba students in 2025. These awards are designed to help ease financial barriers for Manitobans pursuing full-time studies at post-secondary institutions within the province, including support for Indigenous students, those with disabilities and individuals studying fields such as social work, medical rehabilitation and dental medicine.

ABOUT OUR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Since 1985, Manitoba Blue Cross has been providing scholarships and bursaries to recognize high scholastic achievement, encourage more students to pursue higher education and help ease financial strain. Over the past three decades, we've had the honour of supporting hundreds of students, empowering them to turn their educational aspirations into reality.



Manitoba Blue Cross attended the University of Manitoba's College of Rehabilitation Sciences Spring Awards Ceremony, where we presented the Manitoba Blue Cross Rehabilitation Scholarships.

“ Thank you to Manitoba Blue Cross for this award. I am beyond thrilled to be the recipient of the Manitoba Blue Cross Rehabilitation Sciences Scholarship. I have worked very hard over the last two years, both inside and outside the classroom, and it means a lot to me to be recognized for this accomplishment. I am a mature student, and it has been difficult returning to school with more responsibilities than I had during my first degree. Balancing working, studying, planning a wedding and taking care of my home and family has been challenging, but receiving this award has lifted a great deal of financial burden.

Again, thank you to Manitoba Blue Cross's donation, which has made this award possible.

Rachel Donnelly
Student, College of Rehabilitation Sciences,
University of Manitoba

In 2025, recipients attended the following post-secondary institutions:

- Assiniboine Community College
- Brandon University
- Canadian Mennonite University
- University College of the North (Flin Flon)
- University of Manitoba

 **\$57,560** awarded to students across Manitoba

We also had the honour of providing funding to support Shad Canada’s program at the University of Manitoba and the Pan Am Clinic Foundation’s Medical Careers Exploration Program, empowering high school students to explore post-secondary pathways and potential career opportunities.



Manitoba Blue Cross’s wellness ambassadors, Jeff Bi and Emily Melvin, presented on the topic of taking effective study breaks to high school students attending Shad Canada’s program at the University of Manitoba.

“ I am writing to express my gratitude for the generous bursary that was funded by Manitoba Blue Cross. Pursuing a post-secondary education, especially one that made a career in the film industry possible, did not seem like a reality, and it is with Manitoba Blue Cross’s generosity that I can do so.

I am currently finishing up a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Communications and Media and have been enjoying classes relating to journalism and documentary filmmaking. Over the last year, I have also had the chance to intern at a local film production company, getting hands-on experience in a research assistant role and, most recently, an assistant editor role.

Attending the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) has given me the chance for this internship, allowing me to make connections within the industry and take courses offered by Film Training Manitoba that directly relate to the career I am hoping to pursue after graduation. Growing up, I always had an interest in making short films, specifically enjoying the post-production/editing stage. Coming from a small town, I assumed this interest would remain a hobby, but attending CMU has made a career in this field feel achievable.

Thank you to Manitoba Blue Cross once again for their incredible generosity that opens doors for students to pursue future careers that may not always have seemed possible.

With sincere gratitude,

Amanda Dueck
Student, Communications and Media,
Canadian Mennonite University

INDSPIRE

Through the Manitoba Blue Cross Indigenous Northern Scholarships, in partnership with Indspire, we provide comprehensive educational support to Indigenous students pursuing careers in social work and counselling. This includes personal health plan coverage during the school year and the unique possibility of an internship, co-op placement or practicum with Manitoba Blue Cross's renowned Employee Assistance Program.



4 Indigenous students were awarded funds through the Manitoba Blue Cross Indigenous Northern Scholarships

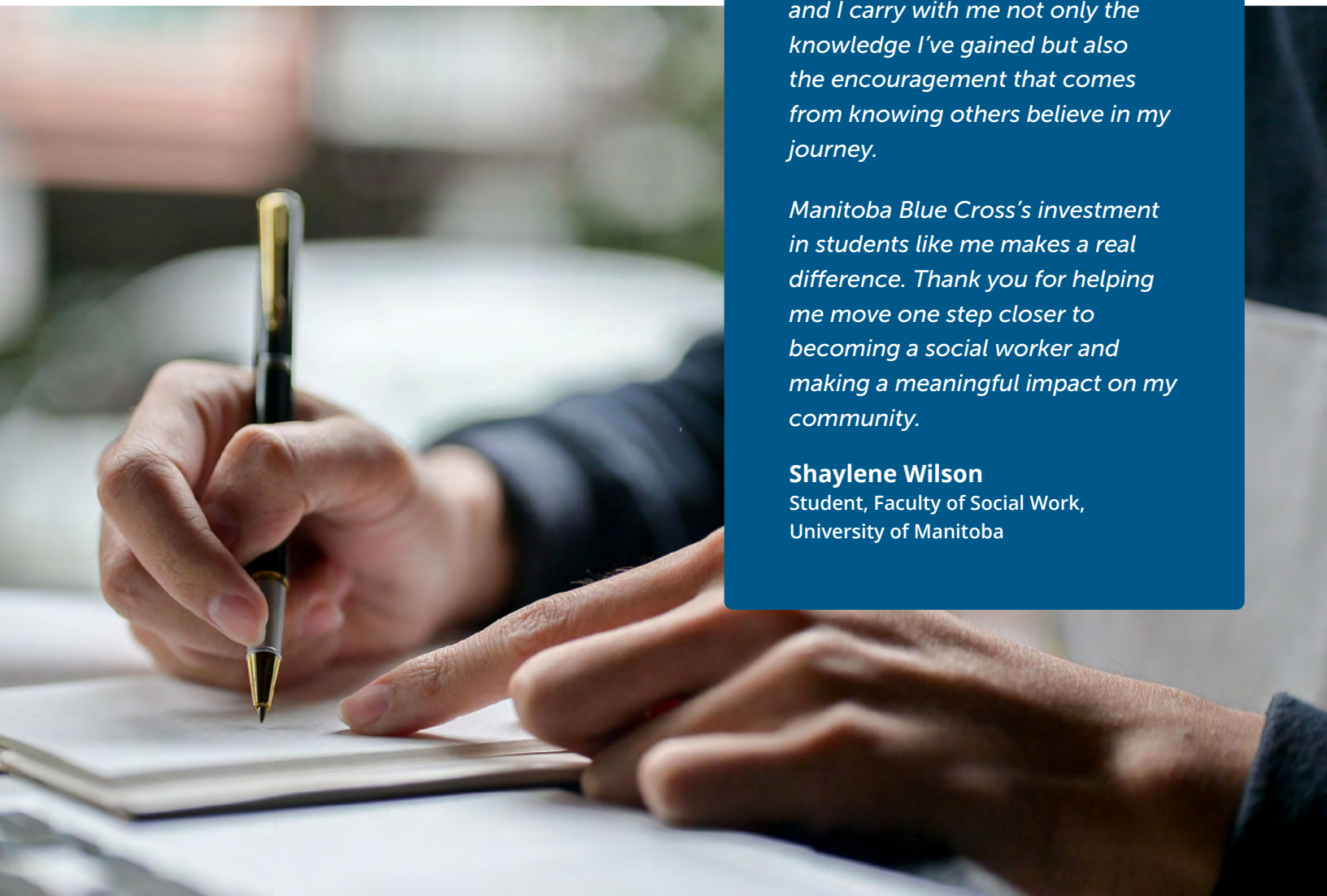
“ I would like to thank Manitoba Blue Cross for selecting me as the recipient of the Bachelor of Social Work Manitoba Blue Cross Indigenous Northern Scholarship for two years in a row. As a single mother pursuing my Bachelor of Social Work degree, this support has meant more than words can express. It has helped ease the financial burden of my studies and allowed me to stay focused on my academic goals and my family.

Thanks to their generosity, I've been able to continue my education with confidence and determination. I'm on track to graduate in April 2026, and I carry with me not only the knowledge I've gained but also the encouragement that comes from knowing others believe in my journey.

Manitoba Blue Cross's investment in students like me makes a real difference. Thank you for helping me move one step closer to becoming a social worker and making a meaningful impact on my community.

Shaylene Wilson

Student, Faculty of Social Work,
University of Manitoba



Health education and research

Manitoba Blue Cross is dedicated to advancing health education and research through our support of the Manitoba Medical Service Foundation (MMSF). As the primary contributor of funding and administrative resources, we help drive Manitoba-based research and education, ranging from medical and scientific studies to the work of allied health professionals. Through our ongoing investment in MMSF, we contribute to innovation and improved health outcomes, ensuring a healthier future for all Manitobans.



The Manitoba Medical Service Foundation

The Manitoba Medical Service Foundation (MMSF) is dedicated to strengthening health care in Manitoba by supporting locally driven education and research initiatives across medicine, science and allied health disciplines, including social work, physiotherapy, kinesiology, nursing and dental medicine. Through the continued and generous partnership of Manitoba Blue Cross, MMSF invests in the work of Manitoba researchers and students whose ideas and discoveries are helping to shape the future of health care.



MMSF ALUMNI AMASS FEDERAL FUNDING

Throughout 2025, over a dozen MMSF alumni collectively received over \$10 million in federal funding.

In February, ten previously MMSF-funded researchers received \$7.8 million from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). Their projects featured a diverse range of focus areas, including Ebola, rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis and hypertension.

In the fall, a Prairies-based team researching sexually transmitted and bloodborne infections (STBBI) received \$800,000 from CIHR. Three MMSF alumni are part of the team working to further understand diseases like HIV/AIDS.


Also in the fall, MMSF alumni received \$1.8 million from Health Canada's Oral Health Access Fund to advance the oral health of local, at-risk populations.


ABOUT THE MMSF


Established in 1943, the Manitoba Medical Service (MMS) provided equitable health care for Manitobans until universal Medicare arrived in 1969. Rather than receiving individual disbursements, MMS shareholders created a lasting legacy by donating the remaining funds. With support from Manitoba Blue Cross, MMSF was formally established in 1971 with a vision to service Manitobans through health education and research in collaboration with other Manitoba-based organizations.

 **14** researchers received operating grants (\$496,050 in total)

 **\$92K** in BSc Dental and BSc Medicine funding

 **12** students received awards (\$12,000 in total)

 **\$200K** in operating funds provided by Manitoba Blue Cross

 **2** researchers received early career awards

 **\$839,800** in total funding



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We are proud to stand as one of the most trusted benefits providers in Canada and as a top employer year after year.




2025 COMMUNITY AWARD
2025 HEALTH AND WELLNESS AWARD
2025 LEADERS OF THE YEAR AWARD
2025 REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR AWARD
2025 SUPPORT AWARD


Stay connected to us

Follow along as we create meaningful connections and engage with Manitoba communities all year long.

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