



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:
Wendy Wicks
612-306-3698
wwicks@ucare.org

UCare Foundation honors National Public Health Week with grant-giving across Minnesota

More than \$400,000 provided to initiatives expanding access to dental care, chronic condition and preventive care, and community health workers in diverse communities

MINNEAPOLIS, Apr. 4, 2024 — [The UCare Foundation](#) is addressing health disparities – centered on lifting public health – through grants to 10 community organizations serving diverse urban and rural regions of the state. Individual grants range from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

Improving public health begins with healthier, safer environments and access to community resources. The UCare Foundation grants expand much-needed care and health education, and community health worker programs in public housing, tribal, Latine and BIPOC communities by making resources more conveniently and readily accessible at a local level. The funded programs focus on culturally competent care and tailored solutions to serve some of our most marginalized communities. The expanded resources, local solutions, and support for those living with chronic conditions contribute to achieving public health goals in Minnesota.

“The theme of this year’s [National Public Health Week](#) is Protecting, Connecting and Thriving: We Are All Public Health. As the Affiliate Representative to the Governing Council of the [Minnesota Public Health Association](#), I support UCare’s commitment to make Minnesota a healthier place for all,” said Annie Halland, UCare’s County, Tribal and Public Health Manager. “These UCare Foundation grants support community public health needs throughout our great state.”

Snapshot of UCare-sponsored programs across Minnesota

Dental care

[Children’s Dental Services](#), expanded resources to provide culturally targeted, comprehensive oral health care and education to 1,500 low-income American Indian

and Asian communities across Minnesota, specifically targeting children, youth, young adults, pregnant women and people, and family members of all ages.

[Hope Dental Clinic](#), *Pilot of Oral Health Outreach and Services for American Indian and Hmong Communities* working with community leaders and partner organizations to co-develop and pilot new strategies to expand access to oral health education and services for low-income American Indian and Hmong residents of St. Paul.

Chronic condition and preventive care

[Altru Health Foundation](#), *Emmi Platform* implementation for Altru Health System patients in Northwest Minnesota to improve quality of care through comprehensive, customizable digital health information available in 20 languages – optimal for rural patients who face barriers to care. The patient education platform helps increase understanding of medication use and knowledge of conditions and symptoms to empower patients to better manage their care.

[American Diabetes Association \(Minnesota\)](#), *2023 ADA Camp Needlepoint* funding to offset the costs of camp for campers and offer critical financial aid that some families need to make the camp experience a reality for their children. The camps provide more than 400 children living with diabetes every summer a powerful and life-changing experience.

[Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota](#), *Education and Support for Latine Minnesotans with Epilepsy* supporting a Community Health Worker to build relationships with health care providers and health and human service organizations, create epilepsy resources tailored to the Latine community and create a Latine Outreach Committee to guide the Foundation to adapt and transform its work to better meet the needs of the Latine community.

[Southside Community Health Services](#), *Patient-Centered Diabetes Care* funding to support the implementation and administration of the Minneapolis clinic's Chronic Condition Program's Optimal Diabetes Care Policy and Procedure for staff and its Diabetes Self-Management Education for patients. Funding also supports the clinic's goal to receive Diabetes Self-Management Education Accreditation.

[St. Luke's Foundation](#), *Increase Patient Preventative and Follow-up Compliance Pilot Program* to help close gaps in preventive care and improve quality outcomes. Staff will work with St. Luke's Quality Management Team in Duluth to prioritize patients, reaching out via phone, email, text or letter, informing them of upcoming appointments, arranging transportation and helping with rescheduling as needed.

[University of Minnesota Foundation](#), *Culturally-based Diabetes Prevention Program Pilots for Black and Indigenous Women* tests two culturally grounded program models that support the health and well-being of Black and Indigenous women. By reclaiming traditional ways of knowing and embracing a highly participatory, community-engaged, co-creation process, this project centers on two simplified, culturally relevant diabetes prevention program models for women ages 35 and older.

Community Health Workers

[M Health Fairview](#) *Transitions Program* expansion to the University of Minnesota Medical Center Emergency Department (ED). The program will expand from a rural to a metro setting, with UCare funding supporting a new Community Health Worker role in the University of Minnesota Medical Center ED. This role supports patients who frequently visit the ED by connecting them to services in the M Health Fairview system or in the community to avoid unnecessary ED use.

[Volunteers of America Minnesota](#) *Community Health Worker Services within Minneapolis Public Housing* funding to support Community Health Worker (CHW) positions within Minneapolis Public Housing Authority Highrise buildings. The CHWs focus on identifying individuals facing chronic health conditions (primarily diabetes and hypertension) and offering long-term individualized services to manage these conditions, as well as group education, exercise and socialization activities.

About UCare

[UCare](#) is an independent, nonprofit health plan providing health care and administrative services to nearly 600,000 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 14 consecutive years since the rankings began in 2010.

About the UCare Foundation

Since 1998, the [UCare Foundation](#) has improved the lives of UCare members and their communities through grants that address urgent community health needs. We focus grant-making on initiatives that improve the health of underserved individuals across Minnesota. The UCare Foundation funds high-impact services, education, community outreach and research addressing health equity, social drivers and access barriers.