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Health Coverage Fellowship Chooses Class for 2019

BOSTON – January 8, 2019 – The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation today announced that thirteen medical journalists from across the nation have been selected for the 2019 class of the Health Coverage Fellowship.

The 2019 fellows are Lindsey Bever of *The Washington Post*, Larrison Campbell of *Mississippi Today*, Rhitu Chatterjee of NPR, Ethan DeWitt of the *Concord (NH) Monitor*, Shannon Dooling of WBUR Radio in Boston, Dan Haar of *Hearst CT Media*, Emmarie Huetteman of Kaiser Health News, Vivien Leigh of WCSH-TV in Portland (ME), Jennifer Moore of KSMU-Ozarks Public Radio, Bonnie Petrie of Texas Public Radio, Alyssa Jeong Perry of KPCC-Southern California Public Radio, Sumathi Reddy of *The Wall Street Journal*, and Ben Tinker of CNN.

The fellowship is designed to help the media improve its coverage of critical health care issues. It does that by bringing in as speakers more than 75 health officials, practitioners, researchers, and patients. It also brings the journalists out to watch first-hand how the system works, from walking the streets at night with mental health case workers to riding a Medflight helicopter or spending a morning in a crowded emergency room.

The program, which is entering its eighteenth year, is sponsored by the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, with support from the Blue Shield of California Foundation, Bower Foundation in Mississippi, Connecticut Health Foundation, Endowment for Health in New Hampshire, Kaiser Family Foundation, Kresge Foundation, Maine Health Access Foundation, Missouri Foundation for Health, National Institute for Health Care Management Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and, in Texas, the Episcopal Health Foundation, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, Methodist Healthcare Ministries, and St. David's Foundation.

The fellowship will run for nine days, beginning April 26, 2019. It is housed at Babson College's Center for Executive Education in Wellesley, MA. Larry Tye, who covered health and environmental issues at the *Boston Globe* for 15 years, directs the program. A former Nieman Fellow and author of eight books, Tye has taught journalism at Boston University, Northeastern, Tufts, and Harvard.

Next spring's fellowship will focus on a series of pressing issues – from the ongoing fight over the future of Obamacare to curbing drug costs, addressing mental illness, redressing public health threats, and rethinking end-of-life issues. Attention also will be given to breakthroughs in medical treatments and innovations in the delivery of care.

The teaching will not end when fellows head back to their stations or papers. Tye, the program director, will be on call for the journalists for the full year following their nine days in Wellesley. He will help when they are stuck for ideas or whom to call on a story. He also will assist in thinking out projects and carving out clearer definitions of beats. # # #