

CMO Dr. Cara Christ introduces Colby Bower, incoming VP of Provider Partnerships

pages.azblue.com/Introducing-our-new-VP-of-Provider-Partnerships---Mar-2022.html

[Sign in – Secure Provider Portal](#) 



Over the past two years, our healthcare system and providers have faced many challenges as we have worked together to reduce serious outcomes of COVID-19 for our members and communities.

Blue Cross[®] Blue Shield[®] of Arizona (BCBSAZ) remains committed to working with our providers

and community partners to address COVID-19 and other major health issues brought to light by the pandemic. We will continue to keep you updated on our activities, including our coverage of COVID-19 vaccines, tests, and treatments in accordance with the authorizations and guidance of the [FDA](#), [NIH](#), [IDSA](#), [CDC](#), and [ADHS](#).

[+ In This Issue](#)

[See current COVID-19 emergency measures](#)

Introducing Colby Bower

BCBSAZ has been fortunate to have Marcus Montoya as Vice President of Provider Partnerships for the past 11 years. He has expanded the scope, versatility, and quality of the provider network through innovative strategies and strong partnerships. With his retirement planned for May 2022, Marcus has agreed to work alongside his successor for the next several months for a smooth transition. We are excited that Colby Bower is stepping into that role.

I know the value Colby brings through working with him during his more than 11 years at the Arizona Department of Health Services. He last served as the Assistant Director for both Public Health Licensing and Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs. In his Public Health Licensing role, Colby was

responsible for multiple aspects of healthcare quality, including facility and provider licensing, certification, regulation, and accreditation validation.

Colby's long career in healthcare administration and policy spans a broad spectrum of assignments and engagement with most types of providers, giving him depth of knowledge and insight into the rich Arizona healthcare landscape. He has worked collaboratively to implement healthcare legislative initiatives, including the Hospital-at-Home pilot program, the integration of behavioral health services into our licensed healthcare facilities, the Opioid Epidemic Act, and the perpetual licensing of healthcare facilities.

I trust that his extensive industry background will serve all of us well in his new position. Colby has worked closely with Marcus over the past several weeks to understand the key accountabilities of BCBSAZ contracting, provider relations, and network operations. His enthusiasm for the work is reflected in this comment:

"I'm extremely excited to join such a dynamic team and to partner with providers to drive quality and improved health outcomes for our members and the Arizona community. I look forward to working with everyone and hope to build on the outstanding quality of the BCBSAZ provider network."

When Colby is not working to improve healthcare, he enjoys spending time with family, tinkering with various hobbies, and being outdoors.

Please join me in welcoming Colby. Thank you for your partnership in service to our members. I look forward to working with all of you to inspire health across Arizona.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cara M. Christ M.D." The signature is fluid and cursive, with the initials "M.D." written in a smaller, more blocky font at the end.

Cara M. Christ, M.D., M.S.
Chief Medical Officer
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona

Our members can take a digital ID card with them wherever they go with the MyBlue AZSM mobile app.

