



BLUE CROSS

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Premera Blue Cross and Spokane's New Pro Soccer Teams Celebrate Local Educators

Premera brings in a focus on mental health and teacher appreciation through its new USL Spokane sponsorship

Spokane, Wash., – (August 6, 2024) – Premera Blue Cross, a leading health plan in the Pacific Northwest, is partnering with USL Spokane, which includes the pro women's club Spokane Zephyr FC and pro men's club Spokane Velocity FC, as a new sponsor for the upcoming season. Through this multi-year sponsorship, Premera and USL Spokane will honor Spokane's educators and bring awareness to the importance of normalizing conversations about mental health.

The new Teacher of the Match program, sponsored by Premera, celebrates Spokane Public Schools' teachers and employees. During every Velocity FC and Zephyr FC home match, one teacher or employee will be selected by the school district to receive tickets to attend and be recognized during the game.

Throughout the year, Premera will also support in-game and off-field initiatives with USL Spokane to help raise awareness and normalize conversations about mental health.

"As the Inland Northwest's hometown health plan, we are eager to be part of the energy the Velocity FC and the Zephyr FC teams are bringing to our region," said David Condon, vice president at Premera Blue Cross. "The club shares our commitment to supporting the community and we look forward to working with them to shine the light on topics like mental health that are important to people living in the Inland Northwest."

"Premera is a key piece to our athlete's health and recovery on and off the field," said Tate Kelly, vice president of partnerships for USL Spokane. "We are thankful for Premera believing in what we are building for eastern Washington and north Idaho. We appreciate their continued support in the Club, our city's teachers, and the health of our community."

As an Impact Blue Elite Partner, Premera branding will also be incorporated into ONE Spokane Stadium year-round.

Premera is focused on normalizing conversations around mental health and improving access to mental health care. In Spokane, Premera has invested in several local organizations to support their mental health initiatives, including Family Promise of Spokane, NAMI Spokane, Transitions, Volunteers of America, and YWCA Spokane. Premera also created a new program for its members, Matchmaker™ for Behavioral Health, which takes the time and stress out of finding a new provider. To meet the increased demand for care across the state, Premera

expanded its behavioral health provider network in Washington by 22 percent in the last three years.

About Premera Blue Cross

Premera Blue Cross, a not-for-profit, independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association based in Mountlake Terrace, Wash., is a leading health plan in the Pacific Northwest, providing comprehensive health benefits and tailored services to more than 2.75 million people, from individuals to Fortune 100 companies.

About USL Spokane

Aequus Sports LLC/USL Spokane has launched two professional soccer teams in Spokane, Wash. Spokane Zephyr FC, a women's professional team, plays in the USL Super League that is sanctioned as Division One by the U.S. Soccer Federation, with a home opener August 17 at ONE Spokane Stadium. The men's team, Spokane Velocity FC, is a Division III team in USL League One currently competing in their first season.

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