



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Online Directory Listing Over 1,700 Social Service Resources Launches Friday February 7

Bloomington, Ind. - An online social services database [Helping Bloomington Monroe](http://HelpingBloomingtonMonroe.org) (HelpingBloomingtonMonroe.org) listing over 1,700 free and reduced-cost programs serving area residents launches Friday, February 7. A partnership between the Bloomington Health Foundation (BHF), the City of Bloomington, and the Local Council of Women, the new resource facilitates easy and discreet access to information about and assistance with housing, transportation, legal services, mental health support, and other needs. Community members may learn more about the new resource in Facebook Live discussion with City officials Friday February 7 at 2 p.m., during which they may pose questions and suggestions.

Modeled after and administered by the Texas-based social service directory known as [Aunt Bertha](#), [Helping Bloomington Monroe](#) has been in development over the course of the last year. BHF funded the initiative after determining its usefulness to community partners including United Way, IU Health Bloomington Hospital, Monroe County Public Library, Centerstone, Monroe County Health Department, and others.



“One persistent local barrier to improving access to healthcare is simply knowing where to turn when you’re in need,” said Jon Barada, BHF President and CEO. “Many organizations have spent countless hours trying to curate and maintain lists of social service partners. The partnership with Aunt Bertha keeps the listings current and provides a platform for facilitating referrals. BHF is proud to provide funding and to join forces with others to tackle this issue with an innovative solution.”

“Bringing all of our service providers under one umbrella will prove to be a great help and comfort when life gets complicated,” said Mayor John Hamilton. “We are glad to partner with Bloomington Health Foundation and the Local Council of Women in providing a tool that contributes to greater equity in our community by delivering easier and more discrete access to information that can improve all residents’ quality of life.”

Individuals and agencies that provide social services -- including physicians, legal services, social workers, communities of faith, and more -- are encouraged to review their listing on the site to ensure the posted information is correct. In the near future, Aunt Bertha representatives will conduct training sessions in Bloomington for interested local social service organizations to help them get the most out of the platform.

“Bloomington is blessed with a lot of support services; the issue is to coordinate them and get them at the fingertips of providers and families,” said local physician Dr. Lee McKinley, who was instrumental in bringing the platform to Bloomington. “To give [a patient] a solution while they’re sitting there is very powerful. [This tool] will be used by social workers, educators, the school system...by so many people.”

Helping Bloomington Monroe is just one of many resources available locally. LookUpIndiana.org and Indiana 2-1-1 are additional online tools to assist Hoosiers in need.

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