



Newsletter January 2007

CONTENTS

HEALTH CENTER NEWS: Colorado Coalition for Homeless Documents Success of Housing First Collaborative, CCHN and CHCs Say Goodbye and Thank you to Kitty Stevens, 2 Coloradans Recognized for Leadership and Dedication, Denver Health Opens the Wellington E. Webb Center for Primary Care, Denver Health Recognized Nationally for Improved Immunization Rates, CHCs Improve Diabetes Patient Self-Management, Peak Vista Board Chair and Foundation Chair Honored..... *Pages 2-5*

POLICY UPDATE: 2007 Legislative Session Opens, Health Care Reform Commission Convenes...*Page 6*

WORKFORCE UPDATE: CCHN Hosts Round Four of HPI Scholarship Program, Rural Health Education Loan Repayment Help Available.....*Page 6-7*

CLINICAL UPDATE: Upcoming Teleconference on HPV Vaccine, COHOP Best Practices Summary Available.....*Page 7*

CHC RESOURCES: CHCs May Qualify for FEMA Funds for December's Snowstorms, Emergency Preparedness Moves Forward, Kaiser Permanente Courses Offered to CHC Staff, National Alcohol Screening Day Offers Flexible Program Options.....*Page 7-8*

CHAMPS UPDATE: Webcasts Scheduled on Gestational Diabetes and Tobacco Cessation.....*Page 9*

CCMCN UPDATE: CCMCN Receives Grant to Develop and Implement Tobacco Cessation Program.....*Page 9*

UPCOMING EVENTS: CCHN Annual Policy & Issues Forum, 2007 Excellence in Clinical Quality Awards Ceremony and Reception, MCPN 3rd Annual Green Tie Event, NACHC 2007 Annual Policy & Issues Forum.....*Page 10*

HEALTH CENTER NEWS

Colorado Coalition for Homeless Documents Success of Housing First Collaborative

Colorado Coalition for the Homeless documented significant cost savings from its Denver Housing First Collaborative (DHFC) program in a recently released report. The study was conducted based on a sample group of individuals who voluntarily participated in the survey.

The findings show that total emergency related costs for the group declined by 73 percent, or nearly \$600,000 in the 24 months of participation in the DHFC program compared with the 24 months prior to entry in the program. The total emergency cost savings averaged \$31,545 per participant.

The DHFC is designed to provide comprehensive housing and supportive services to chronically homeless individuals with disabilities. The program uses a housing first strategy combined with assertive community treatment services, providing integrated health, mental health, substance treatment and support services.

Utilization of emergency room care, inpatient medical and psychiatric care, detox services, incarceration, and emergency shelter were significantly reduced by participation in the program. Only outpatient health costs increased, as participants were directed to more appropriate and cost effective services by the program.

If the average cost savings of \$31,545 per persons are projected for the 150 chronically homeless individuals currently participating in CCH's two housing first programs, the total savings would amount to \$4.7 million. If these average costs savings are projected each of the 513 chronically homeless persons estimated in Denver who are eligible for the DHFC program, the savings would amount to \$16.1 million.

When the investment costs of providing comprehensive supportive housing and services through the Housing First Program are factored in, there is a net cost savings of \$4,745 per person. Thus, the total net cost savings for the current participants in the Denver housing first programs are projected to be \$711,734. The projected net cost savings for all 513 chronically homeless persons, if provided access housing first programs, would be \$2,424,131.

To download a full version of the study, go to www.coloradocoalition.org.

CCHN, CHCs Say Goodbye and Thank you to Kitty Stevens

Kitty Stevens, R.N., M.S.N., announced her retirement as director of the Primary Care Office in November of 2006 and welcomed a new director, Steve Holloway. The PCO is part of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Stevens has made a significant contribution to health care in Colorado. Under her leadership, the PCO collaborated with organizations, communities and individuals to increase access to primary health care services in areas of Colorado that lack adequate numbers of health professionals.

"I have learned a tremendous amount about Colorado and access to health care issues," said Stevens. "It is the participation in this struggle that is so compelling and has taught me so much respect for those organizations, communities and individuals who never 'give up the fight'".

Prior to her leadership at the PCO, Stevens worked for Rocky Mountain Rural Health in Park County, directing a federal Network Development grant. Through this grant, a network of health care providers was established and improvements were made in the health care delivery system. The majority of her background is in public health, perinatal education, case management, and rural health issues.

CCHN extends its appreciation to Stevens for all her hard work and dedication to Colorado's medically underserved populations. "We are blessed to have had the opportunity to work with a compassionate leader such as Kitty," said Ross Brooks, CCHN director of health center operations. "She truly helped improve the lives of many Coloradans."

CCHN also looks forward to working with the new PCO director. Holloway just completed service as state genetics coordinator, assigned to the Maternal and Child Health Section of the CDPHE. He is president-elect of the Colorado Public Health Association, and has been on the CPHA Board in various capacities since 2002. Before working for Maternal and Child Health, Steve was assigned by the Office of Local Liaison to lead the assessment of Colorado's health system capacity as part of a federal grant for Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response.

2 Coloradans Recognized for Leadership and Dedication

Two Coloradans were honored in November for outstanding leadership and dedication to the Community Health Center movement. Dianne Smith, Executive Director of Dove Creek Community Health Clinic, received the Outstanding Advocate of the Underserved Award. Barry Martin, M.D., Metro Community Provider Network (MCPN), was chosen for the Exceptional Clinical Leadership Award. The Community Health Association of Mountain/Plains States gives the awards annually, in conjunction with the Primary Care Conference co-hosted with the Northwest Regional Primary Care Association.



Smith's hard work and dedication has transformed the health care provided to the residents of Dolores County and surrounding communities in western Colorado. Because of the frontier setting and diverse terrain, the clinic provides health care to residents of southern San Miguel County as well as Montezuma County in Colorado, and part of San Juan County in Utah. Smith, born and raised in Dove Creek, has worked at the clinic for the past 17 years revolutionizing the health care services offered. She led her community in building a new clinic facility, improving health outcomes for patients with chronic diseases, and bringing in much needed dental services.

Martin is vice president for clinical affairs for MCPN, which serves the city of Aurora and Arapahoe and Jefferson counties in Colorado. His clinical practice focuses on adults with disabilities, including developmental disabilities, spinal cord and brain injuries, and other disabling conditions. He is the founder of the Center for Exceptional Healthcare, a clinical program devoted to excellence in the primary care of individuals with disabilities. For the past two years Martin has been an active member of the Colorado Alliance for Health and Independence (formerly the Medicaid Disability Redesign Committee), a group of providers, advocates and individuals with disabilities seeking to improve the way individuals with disabilities are able to get services in Colorado.



Denver Health Opens the Wellington E. Webb Center for Primary Care

Denver Health opened the Wellington E. Webb Center for Primary Care, November 15. Former Denver Mayor Wellington E. Webb, whose name the clinic bears, cut the ribbon with Patricia A. Gabow, M.D., Denver Health CEO and medical director, to open the new family health center.

“I continue to be humbled by this honor,” said Webb. “I am a baby of the public health care system, and I support it any way I can.”

Construction of the clinic was paid for using bond funds approved in the 2003 election, when 65 percent of Denver citizens voted to expand Denver Health services.

The 75,000 square-foot center includes adult and pediatric care, a dental clinic, outpatient pharmacy, radiology services, the Denver Health Medical Plan Clinic, and is the first in the nation located adjacent to an acute care medical facility (Denver Health Medical Center).



Denver Health Recognized Nationally for Improved Immunization Rates

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) named Denver Health's Community Health Services (CHS) recipient of the 10th annual Ernest Amory Codman Award on November 16, 2006.

CHS received the ambulatory care category award for improving immunization rates for young children. This initiative stemmed from an assessment that showed low immunization rates at its primary care sites were putting the community at risk for diseases that can easily be prevented. CHS changed this trend by developing an immunization registry to track patients, assess immunization levels, and improve the ability to vaccinate children on schedule. As a result, immunization rates improved by 46 percent for two-year-old patients and by 26 percent for one-year-old patients.

“Everyone at Denver Health is thrilled to receive this prestigious national award,” says Patricia A. Gabow, M.D., CEO and medical director. “Our safety net health care system has always been committed to providing the highest quality primary care to the vulnerable populations that we serve. It is most gratifying to be recognized by the Joint Commission for our achievements.”

Named for the physician regarded in health care as the “father of outcomes measurement,” the Ernest Amory Codman Award showcases the effective use of performance measurement by health care organizations to improve the quality and safety of health care. A panel of national experts in quality measurement and improvement selected the recipients of the 2006 awards.

CHCs Improve Diabetes Patient Self-Management

People's Clinic in Boulder, Mountain Family Health Center in Glenwood Springs, and partner Clinica Tepeyac in Denver recently completed participation in a six-month diabetes patient self-management project funded by the U.S. Agency for Health Research and Quality (AHRQ). The project assists Health Centers to redesign their system to increase patient self-management and goal setting. All three of these centers focused on integrating a self-management goal



From left: Mountain Family's Cathy Jones, RN, BSN, quality improvement coordinator, Gladys Andrade, medical assistant, Ken Davis, PA-C.

setting tool or reminder into their system, educating staff about how to establish patient self management goals, and improving diabetes clinical outcomes. The lessons learned and outcomes related to this

project were recently highlighted in Washington, D.C., at a national meeting with other participating Health Centers. Findings of this project will be published by AHRQ.



From left: People's Beth Versaw, clinical team lead, Kim Moore, medical records, and front desk supervisory, Cara Beatty, MD medical director, Hilary Helinek, collaborative and clinical quality improvement coordinator, Kevin Dryden, MD, family physician.

Peak Vista Board Chair and Foundation Chair Honored

Peak Vista Community Health Centers' board chair Sue Foerster and foundation chair Thomas R. Bates were both honored recently for their philanthropic work.

Peak Vista Board Chair Foerster was honored as the Outstanding Volunteer of the Year for the state of Colorado recently during National Philanthropy Day festivities in Denver in November. The work Foerster has done on behalf of Peak Vista has expanded medical services for the uninsured and working poor of El Paso and Teller counties. She emphasizes empowering people to help themselves, resulting in a significant impact on the community at large.

Foerster is completing a three-year term as chairman of the board of Peak Vista. In addition, she has served a number of other organizations including United Way, the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Newborn Hope, and Catholic Charities of Colorado Springs. She arrived in Colorado Springs 32 years ago and wasted no time in taking on volunteer challenges for her new community. What began as volunteer activities at her children's schools evolved into a journey of bigger and more complex volunteer fundraising and management initiatives.

Dr. Bates, chairman of the board of Peak Vista Community Health Centers Foundation, was recognized as the Outstanding Individual Donor at the 7th Annual Partners in Philanthropy luncheon in Colorado Springs on Nov. 1. He was nominated by Peak Vista CHC for his commitment to ensure that those facing obstacles receive exceptional health care and attain self-sufficiency.

Partners in Philanthropy hosts the annual luncheon to celebrate community philanthropy and recognize donors and outstanding volunteer leadership. The 2007 luncheon was sponsored by the Center for Nonprofit Excellence, the Pikes Peak Community Foundation, Pikes Peak United Way and the Pikes Peak Funders Forum.

POLICY UPDATE

2007 Legislative Session Opens, Health Care Reform Commission Convenes

The Sixty-Sixth Colorado General Assembly began on January 10 and is scheduled to end May 9. This session marks a new page in history with the Democrats leading the House, Senate and Governor's office.

What does this mean for health care and the Community Health Centers? We have a lot of optimism about where our new leaders will take us. But all eyes are currently on the Blue Ribbon Commission for Health Care Reform.

Created by Senate Bill (SB) 208, the panel is sometimes referred to as the 208 Commission. Last year a bill was passed to create the commission, charged with seeking, understanding and presenting comprehensive statewide health care reform options to the General Assembly and providing specific recommendations to improve the health care system in Colorado. Twenty-four members were appointed by bipartisan leadership.

The 208 Commission is meeting monthly and subcommittees have been established that meet almost weekly. For more information, please go to the following website: <http://www.colorado.gov/208commission/>.

CCHN expects to see legislation addressing the following:

- Covering All Kids by:
 - Increasing the federal poverty level for both Medicaid and CHP+,
 - Simplifying the application process.
- Changes to Medicaid managed care laws to bring statewide managed care back to Medicaid.

There will be many other health care bills this session and CCHN will need your help to ensure they benefit Community Health Centers and their patients. If you haven't already, please become an advocate for your Community Health Center by clicking on the following link and sign up to receive messages and action alerts on issues affecting your Health Center:

<http://votervoice.net/Core.aspx?AID=453&APP=Registration&>.

For additional information on the legislative session contact Elizabeth Garbe at Elizabeth@cchn.org

WORKFORCE UPDATE

CCHN Hosts Round Four of HPI Scholarship Program

CCHN recently marked round four of the Health Professions Initiative (HPI) scholarship program. To promote the program, CCHN traveled to Denver Health, Mountain Family Health Center in Glenwood Springs, and Peak Vista Community Health Center in Colorado Springs before the December blizzards prohibited further travel. During these visits, CCHN hosted information sessions for CHC leadership teams and potential interested applicants.

Despite the recent treacherous weather, CCHN received 29 applications statewide, more than in any other scholarship round to date. Round four HPI scholarship awards will be announced in early February. The HPI scholarship program aims to award qualifying high-achieving, entry-level employees with scholarships for continued education in health profession support staff positions.

For more information on the HPI scholarship program contact Amber Galloway at amber@cchn.org or 303.861.5165 x 234.

CCHN January 2007

- 6 -

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Rural Health Education Loan Repayment Help Available

The Colorado Rural Health Center is now accepting grant proposals for loan repayment for all types of health care providers, under its Colorado Rural Outreach Program (CROP). The matching grants, each up to \$10,000 per year, are funded through support from the Health Professions Initiative, an initiative of The Colorado Trust. Grant applications are due to CRHC by March 1, 2007.

Visit www.coruralhealth.org to learn more about CROP grants and to download application criteria.

CLINICAL UPDATE

Upcoming Teleconference on HPV Vaccine

The CCHN Immunization Initiative is presenting a quality improvement program, "Understanding the Newly Released HPV Vaccine." The teleconference will be presented by Rosemary Spence, RN, MA and Roberta Smith, RN, MSPH. All CHC staff members are welcome and encouraged to attend this live session and to participate in a live question-and-answer session with the speakers. The teleconference will address HPV pathophysiology and incidence, cultural variants with HPV, administration of the vaccine, and Colorado VFC requirements.

Participants can attend on Wednesday, February 14, or Wednesday, February 21, from 12:15 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. There are e-mail handouts for the program, so please RSVP to Paula Davis at paula@cchn.org to receive them prior to the program.

COHOP Best Practices Summary Available

Joint effort by fifteen medical teams at Colorado's CHCs has led to approximately 30 percent increase in prevention education during well-child exams. Staff from across the state shared their best practices at a meeting of CCHN's Children's Oral Health Partnership (COHOP) on October 20, 2006. COHOP increases medical-dental collaboration to improve oral health outcomes for Colorado's children under the age of three years. Prevention education during well-child exams gives parents instruction about dietary factors effecting tooth decay and to brush the child's teeth as soon as they erupt. Please contact Brenda Lantz at 303.861.5165 ext. 245 or brenda@cchn.org to receive a copy of the summary.

The Caring for Colorado Foundation supports this oral health partnership with funding through March 2007. For more information about COHOP please contact Brenda Lantz.

CHC RESOURCES

CHCs May Qualify for FEMA Funds for December's Snowstorms

Community Health Centers may qualify for disaster aid for two of the snowstorms that hit Colorado in December. Private non-profits that spent more than \$1,000 in snow removal and other emergency expenses can apply for 75 percent reimbursement. The counties that received the disaster declaration for the Dec. 18-22 storm are Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Custer, Denver, Douglas, El Paso, Elbert, Gilpin, Jefferson, Las Animas, Pueblo, and Washington. The disaster declaration for the Dec. 28-31

snowstorm is for Baca, Bent, Crowley, Otero, Prowers, and Pueblo counties. Additional counties may be added to the declaration later this week.

For more information, please contact Nancy Gilbert at (303) 861-5165, ext. 258 or nancy@cchn.org.

Emergency Preparedness Moves Forward

CCHN and CHCs have taken emergency preparedness important steps in the past four months under a grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The Health Centers completed a survey, qualified for \$1,000 of personal protective equipment, and began participating in monthly Primary Care Clinic Emergency Preparedness conference calls.

The goal of the survey was to establish the status of emergency planning in each CHC and to identify the types of technical support they need. CHCs are asking for a plan template for their emergency preparedness planning, help with contacting local emergency managers, and information on potential emergencies such as pandemic flu.

The grant allows for emergency equipment for CHCs that reach certain goals. The first goal, identifying one emergency contact, qualified each CHC for \$1,000 of personal protective equipment. Additional goals will qualify each CHC for a laptop computer and an 800MHz radio.

The Primary Care Clinic Emergency Preparedness conference phone calls began in December. It provides a forum for CHCs and Rural Health Centers (RHCs) to share information on emergency preparedness and to share best practices.

For more information, please contact Nancy Gilbert at (303) 861-5165, ext. 258 or nancy@cchn.org.

Kaiser Permanente Courses Offered to CHC Staff

Through collaboration with Kaiser Permanente, CCHN's members can attend two courses provided to Kaiser doctors. Several CHC and CCHN staff attended the Meeting Management Course Jan. 18. During this innovative and interactive course Janis Ground, project manager for the Colorado Permanente Medical Group, taught meeting facilitation skills. Essentials included the importance of beginning on time, the use and effectiveness of agendas and minutes, and the proper handling of different attendees.

At least one more session of the Kaiser Meeting Management Course will be offered in 2007. Also, there will be two sessions of the Kaiser Introduction to Management Course (for physicians only) scheduled for May and November. To register or for more information for the Introduction to Management Course, contact Brandi at brandi@cchn.org or 303-861-5165 ext.235. Further information will be sent out about the Meeting Management Course in late spring.

National Alcohol Screening Day Offers Flexible Program Options

Organizations around the country are invited to host a National Alcohol Screening Day (NASD) event on April 5, 2007. There are multiple program options available. Kits of materials to educate and screen community members are available for \$50 and include 50 AUDIT screening forms, publicity templates, posters, videos, educational materials and giveaways. An online screening designed for an organization or practice's website is available for \$150. It features anonymous screening available 24 hours per day and seven days a week for unlimited community use. Members of the public who take the screening online receive immediate results and referral options. Organizations that register for the online program can customize the welcome page and referral message, as well as generate reports and graphs of screening results, community demographics and utilization.

CCHN January 2007

- 8 -

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“Research indicates that brief interventions – such as talking about your drinking with a health professional at an NASD event – can help resolve mild to moderate alcohol problems as well as encourage those with more serious problems to seek treatment,” says Douglas G. Jacobs, M.D., president and CEO of Screening for Mental Health and an associate clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. “The goal of NASD is to provide tools that providers can use to make screening and brief intervention a common part of practice.”

To learn more about the program or to register online, visit www.NationalAlcoholScreeningDay.org.

CHAMPS UPDATE

Webcasts Scheduled on Gestational Diabetes and Tobacco Cessation

CHAMPS invites Region VIII CHC staff members to participate in two opportunities for continuing professional development. These events are designed to meet the unique needs of health centers throughout the region, and each offers 1.5 hours of Continuing Medical Education (CME) Credit. Region VIII Community, Migrant, and Homeless health centers may participate free of charge (including CME), although advance registration is required. Please visit www.champsonline.org/Events/Distance_Learning.asp for more details about each event, and to link directly to online registration pages for both webcasts.

Gestational Diabetes: New Concepts, New Guidelines

Presented by Linda Barbour, MD, MSPH, FACP

Wednesday, February 28, 2007

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM Mountain Time

Promoting Successful Tobacco Cessation:

Treatment Recommendations & Systems Changes for CHCs

Sponsored by Colorado Community Managed Care Network (CCMCN)

Presented by Jeffrey J. Cain, MD

Wednesday, March 28, 2007

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM Mountain Time

CCMCN UPDATE

CCMCN Receives Grant to Develop and Implement Tobacco Cessation Program

CCMCN has received funding through the Tobacco Cessation Grant Program to develop and implement a CHC Tobacco Cessation Program. CCMCN is working with five CHCs that have volunteered to be pilot sites. These sites are Pueblo Community Health Center, Clinica Campesina - Lafayette, Mountain Family Health Center - Black Hawk, Valley Wide - Center Clinic, and High Plains Community Health Center in Lamar. With help of these pilot sites, CCMCN is developing a tobacco cessation program focused on evidenced-based clinical guidelines that will be integrated into the CHC processes.

CCHN STAFF UPDATE

Please visit http://www.cchn.org/about_us/jobs.asp for current job openings at CCHN.

Please visit <http://www.cchn.org/activities/recruitment.asp> for openings at Colorado Community Health Centers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 20 & 21, 2007

CCHN Annual Policy & Issues Forum

CCHN's Annual Policy and Issues Forum will be held at the Warwick Hotel in Denver. **Deadline to sign up is Feb. 2.** For more information contact Tanah Wagenseller at 303-861-5165, ext. 241 or tanah@cchn.org.

March 1, 2007

2007 Excellence in Clinical Quality Awards Ceremony and Reception

CCHN's annual Excellence in Clinical Quality Awards Ceremony and Reception takes place from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Double Tree Hotel in Westminster. For more information contact Paula Davis at 303-861-5165 ext. 286 or paula@cchn.org.

March, 16-21, 2007

NACHC 2007 Annual Policy & Issues Forum

NACHC's Annual Policy & Issues Forum will take place at the Hilton Washington Hotel in Washington, DC. For more information and to register please visit: http://www.nachc.com/p_i%202007/default.html.

March 17, 2007

MCPN 3rd Annual Green Tie Event

Please visit www.mcpn.org for information or to purchase tickets for the 2007 St. Patrick's Day Green Tie Event, please go to www.blacktie-colorado.com/rsvp and enter event code: **greentie**.

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