



Newsletter August 2006

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HEALTH CENTER NEWS

Community-Directed Health Care Celebrated During National Health Center Week

Colorado's Community Health Centers (CHCs) celebrated their patients, their work, and their role in Colorado's good health during National Health Center Week August 6-12, 2006. The week included events at CHCs across the state. Governor Bill Owens issued a proclamation declaring National Health Center Week for the state of Colorado.

"Since the first CHC opened in Colorado in 1966, they have dramatically improved community health, lowered overall health care costs for the state, and provided access to quality care for more Coloradans," said Annette Kowal, Chief Executive Officer of the Colorado Community Health Network, the state association of CHCs. "They do it by listening to their communities: at least 51 percent of each board's members must be patients. That's real consumer-directed health care."

Fifteen CHCs operate 113 clinic sites in 34 Colorado counties. Approximately one out of every twelve Coloradans received care at a CHC in 2005. Ninety-three percent of patients served by CHCs have family incomes under 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. CHCs provide comprehensive primary health care, including immunizations, child and adult wellness check-ups, management of medical conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure, prenatal care, and screenings for a variety of conditions. Many sites also provide vision care, dental care, and mental health care services.

"There are a staggering 770,000 Coloradans who are uninsured. Community Health Centers served 396,000 patients in 2005, approximately 182,000 of whom were uninsured," said Kowal. "The need is bigger than we are. With the support of Coloradans, we plan to continue working hard as part of the solution."

See below for highlights of NHCW activities.

High Plains Community Health Center in Lamar scheduled a variety of exams all week, including well-woman exams and sports exams onsite and at Lamar Community College, sessions with the retinal camera for diabetics, a wellness presentation at the senior center, and a diabetes foot/wellness clinic. Staff wore special National Health Center Week T-shirts: standing from left to right: Kacee Lucero, Esther Whisenand, Monica Munn, Jessica Medina, and Jennifer Aguilera, patient facilitators, and Shae Emick, medical operations supervisor; in the back: Jay Brooke, High Plains executive director; seated in front: Scott Brown, patient facilitator.





On August 8, Salud Family Health Center's facility in Longmont celebrated National Health Center Week 2006 by hosting an open house with legislators, community leaders, and patients. State Senator Brandon Shaffer recognized Salud for providing essential care to Longmont residents who would otherwise be underserved. "People often talk about solutions to the health care crisis," Shaffer said, "but Salud Longmont is implementing real health care solutions every day." In conjunction with Sen. Shaffer's keynote address, the health center unveiled artwork provided to Salud by local Longmont artists. CCHN presented a Health Care Champion award to Dr. Gerald Rupp, an orthopedist who has volunteered his services at the center for four years.

The People's Clinic in Boulder marked National Health Center Week by hosting its first annual women's health fair on August 9, where all staff wore pink. New and existing patients were offered free breast and cervical exams in an effort to increase early detection for cancer. A total of 49 women received free pap smears and clinical breast exams. In some cases, up to three generations of women in a family came together. Eighteen of the women had never been to the health center. People's Clinic encouraged them to return for other primary health care services. Breast lumps were identified in four of the women examined. They were promptly referred for mammograms at Boulder Community Hospital at Foothills. In addition, 28 other women were referred for free or low-cost routine mammograms at the same location.



At the end of the day, the event was commemorated by staff, local officials, community members and People's Clinic board of directors with an appreciation ceremony. The event highlighted several community members who have been exceptional in supporting the community and clinic efforts. Barbara Pingrey, United Way, presented People's Clinic with a \$10,000 check to support fundraising efforts to purchase an ultrasound machine. City of Boulder Deputy Mayor Suzy Ageton read a declaration proclaiming August 6-10, 2006 as National Health Care Center Week. The declaration

highlighted People's Clinic commitment to achieving health care for all people by promoting one-hundred percent access and zero health disparities.

Uncompahgre Medical Center hosted an open house and the city of Norwood proclaimed August 6-12 National Health Center Week. Peak Vista Community Health Centers in Colorado Springs hosted a recognition reception for legislators and George Merkert, MD, recipient of CCHN's volunteer clinician award. Peak Vista also partnered with Pikes Peak Workforce to provide a panel of experts on health care careers for a staff lunch-and-learn gathering. Staff of Sunrise Community Health Center, who provide health care in Weld and Larimer counties, gathered to recognize three volunteer clinicians who received awards from CCHN for their care for CHC patients: Doctors Matt Uyemura, Carol Wheeler, and Charles Palmer.



MCPN held an open house and ribbon-cutting ceremony on August 10 at its newest location in Arvada. Cutting the ribbon from left to right are Vicky Reier, assistant to the city manager, City of Arvada; State Senator Sue Windels; Evania Archuleta, area representative, Senator Allard; David Myers, president and CEO, MCPN; Carol Salzman, Exempla Lutheran; and, Betty Sweeney, community liaison, Senator Salazar.



Salud Family Health Centers rounded out the week with a staff appreciation day. Employees from all of its facilities gathered in Fort Lupton for a chili cook-off, barbecue, tug-of-war and obstacle course competitions, and impromptu water balloon fights. Dr. Tillman Farley accepted his CCHN volunteer clinician award. Jerry Brasher, executive director of Salud, announced the first and second winners in the red and green chili categories and presented employee awards.

☯ Pueblo Says Farewell to a Special Board Member ☯

Pueblo Community Health Center lost a very dear friend and dedicated board member, Dr. Mike Davis. He was the PCHC Board Vice President and PCHC Foundation's inaugural president. In his free time, he was president of Pueblo Community College and loved to fly his plane. On August 3, 2006, his plane crashed near the Great Sand Dunes National Monument. Dr. Davis will be missed by his friends at CCHN, the Community Health Centers, and across Colorado.

With this tragic news, it did not feel right to continue with plans for PCHC's annual meeting during National Community Health Center Week. Therefore, the meeting was re-scheduled for Tuesday, September 19, from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. For more information, please contact Janet Fieldman at 719-543-8718 x152 or Janet.Fieldman@pueblochc.org.



☯ ☯

Bloom Takes on New Role in Health Care Community

Mike Bloom, Sunrise Community Health Center's president and CEO since 1996, departed this month to become executive director of the North Colorado Health Alliance. Sunrise bid him a sad farewell but welcomed new CEO Mitzi Moran.

Bloom will continue to work with Sunrise and other health care providers in his new role. The Alliance is a partnership among safety net providers designed to improve access to integrated health care services for the underserved populations in the northern Colorado community. Bloom is a co-founder of the Alliance.

"It is an honor and privilege to be part of Colorado's health center movement. And personally very satisfying to see the Colorado health centers getting recognition for the quality service we provide to our state's most vulnerable populations," said Bloom.



Bloom has made a significant contribution to health care in Colorado. Under his leadership, Sunrise tripled its patient visits over ten years. He worked hard to establish the organizational and management necessary to assure Sunrise's ability to meet future demand and opportunities.

Prior to his leadership at Sunrise, Bloom was manager of North Colorado Family Medicine in Greeley, and a consultant with Rural Health Consultants in Alamosa. Before that, Bloom advanced community health care in southern Colorado as executive director of Valley-Wide Health Services, Inc., based in Alamosa. Bloom also served in the Peace Corps in Panama and Bolivia.

"We'll miss Mike at Sunrise, but congratulate Mitzi and look forward to working with her as she takes the helm from Mike," said Annette Kowal, CEO of CCHN.

"Mike has been wonderful for health care in Colorado, because he doesn't just talk about health care meeting the needs of Coloradans, he makes it happen. We're very lucky to be able to continue to benefit from his expertise as he leads the Alliance."

Mitzi Moran has deep roots in Colorado, coming from a multigenerational farming family in Yuma. She worked at North Colorado Medical Center throughout her college days and beyond, in a variety of roles including outreach services, project management, and public relations. She joined Sunrise in 1998 as clinic manager, and served as director of operations before becoming Sunrise's vice president and chief operating officer in 2000.

"I learned a tremendous amount from a wonderful mentor: Mike Bloom," explained Moran. "We're very grateful that he is continuing to serve the safety net in Greeley – we need his knowledge, experience, and perspective."

Annette Kowal Named Chair of the NHSC Advisory Council

Annette Kowal, Chief Executive Officer of CCHN, has been appointed Chair of the National Advisory Council of the National Health Service Corps (NHSC). The purpose of the NHSC Advisory Council is to consult with, advise, and make recommendations to the Secretary and Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) about health professional shortage areas and assign personnel to improve the delivery of health care services in these areas. The NHSC Advisory Council consists of 15 members invited to serve on the committee by Michael Leavitt, Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

POLICY UPDATE

Special Session Legislation Institutes New Requirements

Governor Owens called a special session in July on undocumented immigrants in Colorado. A number of bills passed the legislature and were signed into law by the governor. House Bill Special Session (HBS) 1023, effective August 1, 2006, is already having an effect on Community Health Centers and their patients.

HBS 1023 requires applicants and re-applicants for public benefits to produce a valid ID card and sign an affidavit attesting to either citizenship or lawful presence in the U.S. HBS 1023 exempts prenatal care, immunizations, emergency care and some non-profits from the new requirements.

CCHN and CHC staff are concerned that citizens who are eligible for coverage will not be able to comply with the documentation requirements and will either lose or be denied coverage. Those especially at risk include the homeless, sick, and elderly. CHCs will continue to provide the services to patients without reimbursement from the state. However, the more people CHCs care for without reimbursement, the fewer people they are able to see overall.

For more information please contact Elizabeth Garbe, elizabeth@cchn.org.

CLINICAL UPDATE

Clinica Campesina Thornton Family Health Service Joins COHOP

CCHN's Children's Oral Health Outcomes Partnership (COHOP) is proud to announce the fifteenth team to join the project: Clinica Campesina's Thornton site under the leadership of Eugene Kim, DDS, and Belinda Rodriguez as the team lead. COHOP increases medical-dental collaboration to improve oral health outcomes for Colorado's children under the age of three years.

The Caring for Colorado Foundation supports this oral health partnership with funding through December 2006. For more information about COHOP please contact Brenda Lantz at 303.861.5165 ext. 245 or brenda@cchn.org.

Upcoming Training Encouraged for Medical and Dental Teams

A training session is available in Denver in September for medical or dental teams interested in enhancing their oral health skills:

- “Infant Oral Care Training” sponsored by National Network for Oral Health Access, the Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation and Region VIII Head Start.
- Instructor: Dr. Francisco Ramos Gomez, Associate Professor, Department of Orofacial Sciences, University of California, San Francisco
- September 18 & 19, 2006
- Registration: Contact Colleen Lampron, 720.838.7739 or colleenlampron@gmail.com

WORKFORCE UPDATE

Twelve CHC Health Professionals Receive Scholarships

CCHN awarded scholarships in July to 12 CHC entry-level employees who are in training to advance their health care careers while continuing to help patients. The goal of CCHN's Health Professions Initiative scholarship program is to support the training of Colorado CHCs' high-achieving entry-level staff to become allied health professionals committed to serving low-income, working families. The following individuals were selected to receive scholarship awards:

- Prisciliana Antillon, People's Clinic, Boulder, participating in the Mexican MD to United States RN Program.
- Melynda Caddell, Salud Family Health Center, Longmont, pursuing a bachelor's of science degree in dental hygiene.
- Edith Clason, Pueblo Community Health Center, Pueblo, pursuing an associate degree in nursing.
- Maranda Foster, High Plains Community Health Center, Lamar, pursuing an associate degree in nursing.
- Yvonne Garcia, Denver Health, Denver, pursuing certification in medical assisting.
- Lisa Hasser, High Plains Community Health Center, Lamar pursuing expanded functions dental assistant certification.
- Victor Montour, Clinica Campesina, Lafayette, pursuing an associate degree in nursing.
- Lisa Persons, Pueblo Community Health Center, Pueblo, pursuing certification in childbirth education.
- Shandra Robles, High Plains Community Health Center, Lamar, pursuing licensed practical nursing certification.
- Jaob Salido, Clinica Campesina, Thornton, pursuing an associate degree in nursing.
- Lacy Schick, High Plains Community Health Center, Lamar, pursuing licensed practical nursing certification.
- Brooke Woller, High Plains Community Health Center, Lamar, pursuing certification in expanded functions dental assisting.

Through a competitive application process, awardees are chosen based on their commitment to serving the underserved, strong support from their Community Health Center, and overall need for the scholarship award. The scholarships are funded by a grant from The Colorado Trust. Eight more scholarships will be awarded before March 2007. For more information on the program, please visit

<http://www.cchn.org/activities/scholarships-loan-repayment.asp>

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CHC RESOURCES

New CHP+ Educational Materials Available

The CHP+ Marketing and Outreach Team is providing new Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) educational materials for community organizations and marketing materials to offer families. These pieces were developed to educate Coloradans about what CHP+ is, who is eligible, and how families and pregnant women enroll. Additionally, regional outreach coordinators are available in cities throughout the state. If you are interested in scheduling a training presentation or if you know of a community event or meeting where CHP+ information can be distributed, please contact the coordinator in your region.

Materials can be downloaded from the CHP+ Web site. The site includes a map of the coordinators with their contact information. Please visit

<http://www.chpplus.org/chpweb/mainpage.cfm?pageToLoad=materialstext.cfm>.

Medicaid/CHP+ Policy Trainings Scheduled Around CO

HCPF will be conducting Family Medicaid and CHP+ Policy Training in Summit County on August 25, 2006. This training will be located at the County Commons in Frisco, 37 Peak One Drive. The training will be held from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. A representative from HCPF eligibility operations will be there to answer CBMS questions related to the two programs. Please contact Casey King to register for this training at sean-casey.king@state.co.us.

Other regional trainings for this year include Pueblo, Durango, Alamosa, Akron, and Denver. Information will be available soon. Please contact Ann Clemens, Family Medicaid Policy Specialist, with any questions at ann.clemens@state.co.us.

October 2 Deadline for CROP Grant Applications

Under its Colorado Rural Outreach Program (CROP), the Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) is now accepting grant proposals for loan repayment for all types of health care providers and for innovative temporary coverage (locum tenens) programs. 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. Please visit www.coruralhealth.org to learn more about CROP grants and to download application criteria. Grant applications are due to CRHC by October 2, 2006.

Family Healthline Merges with United Way 211

The Family Healthline has merged with the United Way 211 line. It is funded by the Maternal Child Health Program of the Primary Care Office, Department of Public Health and the Environment. The Family Healthline provides information and referral services for primary care, oral health and mental health services for low-income families. The merger will provide more complete coverage for the Family Healthline. The Family Healthline phone numbers (303-692-2229 and 800-688-7777) will remain the same but be rerouted to United Way. Callers will not know that the lines are being answered at another location and calls will still be answered as "Family Healthline."

CHAMPS UPDATE

Call for Nominations – 2006 CHAMPS Awards

CHAMPS is now accepting nominations for its annual awards honoring individuals in Region VIII who have exhibited outstanding leadership and dedication to the Community Health Center movement. Region VIII

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Health Centers, Primary Care Associations, and Primary Care Offices are invited to submit nominations for Exceptional Administrative Leadership, Exceptional Board Leadership, Exceptional Clinical Leadership, and Outstanding Advocate of the Underserved. To request an Awards Nomination Form, or to submit a nomination, please contact Andrea Martin at (303) 861-5165 x285 or andrea@CHAMPSonline.org. Nominations are due Friday, September 8, 2006.

Registration is Now Open for Upcoming CHAMPS Conference

The schedule for the CHAMPS/NWRPCA Annual Primary Care Conference is packed with timely educational sessions, valuable networking opportunities, and updates on regional and national issues. Join CHAMPS October 21-25, 2006, at the Marriott Denver City Center in Denver, Colorado, to connect with colleagues while earning continuing education credit and gaining professional insights. Visit www.CHAMPSonline.org/Events/Conference.asp for a link to the registration brochure, including session descriptions, hotel reservation details, and a summary of last year's conference in Seattle, Washington.

CHAMPS is Hosting Live Webcast : Managing Overweight and Obese Patients

Region VIII providers are invited to join CHAMPS on November 16 from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. MST for a live, clinically-themed webcast, *Practical Approaches to Managing Your Overweight and Obese Patients*. This event will be presented by Victoria A. Catenacci, MD, and is free for Region VIII Community, Migrant, and Homeless Health Centers. Continuing medical education (CME) credit of 1.5 hours will be offered, and advance registration is required. Please visit www.champsonline.org/Events/Distance_Learning.asp for more details and to link directly to online registration pages.

CCMCN UPDATE

CCMCN Receives Planning Grant for Tobacco Cessation Program

CCMCN was recently awarded a second grant to continue the planning process for a comprehensive, CHC-network-wide tobacco cessation program. The grant is through Colorado Clinical Guidelines Collaborative and State Tobacco Education and Prevention Program. The goal of the planning process in the next four months is to define the needs of the program and describe them in an implementation grant application, to be submitted in October 2006.

To assist this effort, an online survey is being conducted. Please encourage your CHC staff and all providers to complete the survey. The survey is general in nature and will illuminate general perceptions of what is needed to implement a CHC Tobacco Cessation Program that is unique and specifically designed for CHCs. The survey may be completed at any time during the month of August and takes only five-to-ten minutes to complete. Please go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/CHCTobaccoCessation>. For more information about the CHC Tobacco Cessation Program and this survey, or about CCMCN, contact Susan Roughton (susan@cchn.org), CCMCN's Director of Quality Improvement and Informatics.

Colorado Access Ends Medicaid Contract But Continues Other Services

Colorado Access (CA) discontinued its Medicaid contract. As of September 1, patients covered by Colorado Access Health Plan (AHP) will transition either to fee-for-service Medicaid, the Primary Care Physicians Program, or into Denver Health Medicaid Choice. CA decided to terminate its Medicaid contract after HCPF announced a 15 percent premium rate decrease that would apply to the plan's Medicaid enrollees. CA determined that this decrease would cause its Medicaid business line to operate at significant, non-sustainable losses. The plan's leadership indicated it desires to get back into serving Medicaid enrollees when the climate becomes more favorable.

Patients currently receiving health care at Community Health Centers (CHCs) will continue to receive CHC care, with Medicaid covering their health care services the same way it covers services for Medicaid patients who were not covered by CA. CA will still be paying AHP claims with dates of service through August 31 at contracted rates. Total AHP membership in July was 65,321; of those, 35,826 were receiving services at CHCs.

CA is not completely closing its doors. It will still be operating its three remaining lines of business, Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+), Access Behavioral Care (Medicaid Behavioral Health for the City and County of Denver) and Access Advantage (Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plan). In July, 8,749 of CA CHP+ members were CHC patients. In June, 637 of CA Advantage members were CHC patients.

CCHN STAFF UPDATE

CCHN has openings for an office manager and a part time bookkeeper. Please visit http://www.cchn.org/about_us/jobs.asp for details.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 31, 2006

MCPN Tyrone Braxton 2006 Celebrity Golf Classic

"Healthcare the Fairway" The Tyrone Braxton Celebrity Golf Tournament benefiting MCPN. For more information, please visit <http://mcpn.com/egolf.htm>.

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 at the Double Tree Hotel in Westminster. For more information contact Shannon Basford at 303-861-5165 ext. 260 or Shannon@cchn.org.

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. For more information contact Tanah Wagenseller at 303-861-5165, ext. 241 or tanah@cchn.org.



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