



Special Delivery **ONLINE**

Colorado Rural Health Center

Winter 2004

CRHC News.....	1	Resources & Meetings.....	5-6
General News.....	2-3	Funding Opportunities.....	7
Member News.....	4	Calendar.....	8

CRHC News

The Colorado Rural Health Center is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to enhance healthcare services in Colorado. CRHC does this by providing information, education, linkages, tools, and energy toward addressing rural healthcare issues. There are numerous ways to be involved in CRHC's efforts including membership. Just call or write for more information. The Special Delivery newsletter is posted on the Colorado Rural Health Center's Website quarterly to give our constituents information about programs and resources available.

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2004 Colorado Rural Health Conference Fast Approaching



The 2004 Annual Colorado Rural Conference, "*Rural Communities: The Heart of Colorado*", is right around the corner! The conference will be held July 13-15, 2004 at the Raintree Plaza Hotel in Longmont, Colorado. This two-day extravaganza is packed with educational seminars, workshops, networking opportunities, exhibits, and entertainment. This is the one conference you don't want to miss!

This year the Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) has partnered with the Colorado Rural Development Council (CRDC) to host a collaborative event focused on a variety of broad rural issues. Over 300 participants from an assortment of disciplines including healthcare, economic development, telecommunications, and more will attend this premier event to learn about rural Colorado. To sponsor the conference or purchase an exhibit booth, please call CRHC at 303-832-7493 or visit www.coruralhealth.org.



Colorado Rural Outreach Program (CROP) NEXT DEADLINE – APRIL 20th



CRHC is proud to announce the next grant cycle for the Colorado Rural Outreach Program (CROP). The application deadline is **April 20, 2004**. CROP was created by and is a program of the Colorado Medical Society Foundation. The program is managed by CRHC. All correspondence or inquiries should be directed to: Suzi Herbka, Colorado Rural Health Center, 225 E. 16th Ave., Suite 1050, Denver, CO 80203.

The Colorado Trust, Boettcher Foundation, COPIC Medical Foundation, and the Colorado Medical Society generously provide the major funding for CROP.

If you interested in receiving a full application packet, please contact CRHC. If you have questions regarding your eligibility or project idea, please contact Suzi Herbka at 303-832-7443 or 800-851-6782. Or by email at sh@coruralhealth.org.

Your Community Needs an AED? Read On...

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CRHC recently purchased over 100 Automated External Defibrillators for rural Colorado thanks to a grant from the federal Office of Rural Health Policy. While the placement of these 115 AEDs has already been determined, you have an opportunity to secure an AED for your community. Cardiac Science, Inc. has generously donated 3 additional AEDs for distribution. CRHC decided to put these 3 AEDs up for raffle. If you did not receive an AED through the grant and need one, put together a poem, story, or other creative work about why your area needs an AED and submit it to CRHC by May 15th. You can fax, email or "snail-mail" your entry. Preference will be given to areas that were not included in the overall grant awards. Only communities in Colorado's 47 rural counties are eligible.



Good luck and remember -- put your heart in it!

2004 Rural Health Excellence Award

The Colorado Rural Health Center is now accepting applications for the 2004 Rural Health Excellence Award. This prestigious award is given annually to honor someone who has made a notable contribution to health, healthcare, or healthcare delivery system in rural Colorado.

A volunteer committee of CRHC members will be appointed to oversee the difficult but inspiring task of selecting the winner of the Excellence Award from among the deserving nominees. The award is presented to the winner during the Annual Rural Health Conference in July. The person submitting the winning nomination can help plan the presentation (sometimes they have kept it a surprise) and present the award if they wish.



To be eligible for the award, a candidate must have made a significant contribution to the health, healthcare, or healthcare delivery system of a rural Colorado community, area, or region. Healthcare providers, board members, administrators, volunteers and others are eligible for nomination.

Despite their enormous contributions, CRHC Board Members are not eligible for nomination while serving on the board.

The deadline for entries is May 14, 2004.



March Breakfast Club Meeting

David Bartsch and Maria Monroe De Vita from Triwest will give an overview of the Status of Mental Health Care in Colorado. Carol Breslau from The Colorado Trust will provide a brief history of the Mental Health Funders Collaborative and how the mental health assessment developed.

The March Breakfast Club meeting will be held Friday, March 5th at 8:00am. The meeting is generously sponsored by COPIC Companies and will be held in their boardroom. For more information or to RSVP, please call 303-832-7493. Please RSVP by Monday, March 1st!

CPR Program Helps Improve Dental Statistics in Rural Colorado

In January 2003, Keefe Memorial Hospital in Cheyenne Wells posted a dental position through the Colorado Provider Recruitment program (CPR). At the time, Cheyenne was one of nine counties in Colorado without a licensed dentist. The community was in need of a dental provider, especially to treat Medicaid beneficiaries and participants in the CHP+ (Child Health Plan Plus), a program that provides health insurance coverage for low-income children. Keefe Memorial Hospital, the local rural community hospital, offered a four chair dental clinic to a provider to treat patients at least two days per week. After almost a full year of searching for interested candidates, CPR placed Dr. Ron Johnston in November 2003. Dr. Johnston is in private practice in Fort Collins with his wife, Samantha. He was interested in providing community-based dental care as well as receiving assistance with repayment of his dental school loans. Dr. Johnston works part-time in Cheyenne Wells and part-time in Fort Collins. Working in Cheyenne Wells, Dr. Johnston is eligible for loan repayment through the state oral health loan repayment program as well as the National Health Service Corps.



Dental clinic at Keefe Memorial Hospital.

During his first week on the job in Cheyenne Wells, the hospital hosted a welcome reception for community members to meet Dr. Johnston. His dental assistant, Jennifer said, "We love it here. The community has welcomed us with open arms." Thanks to the efforts of the CPR program staff and Dr. Ron Johnston, there is now one less county in Colorado without a licensed dentist, and one more licensed dentist providing services to Medicaid and CHP+ patients in rural Colorado.



Marva Jean Jackson

Rural Community Health Scholarships

The Colorado Rural Health Center has created a NEW scholarship program to support rural "grow your own" efforts. Small grants - up to \$500, will be available to match scholarship awards that help rural communities grow the providers they will need tomorrow. Public or private entities in rural areas can apply for these grants.

CRHC considers applications on a quarterly basis. The deadlines for submission are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. Six communities have been awarded grants and have helped further local health providers' education in nursing, pharmacy, and counseling.

Marva Jean recently retired after 41 years of service to the federal government, primarily helping underserved communities obtain the resources and health providers they needed. We thought it would be nice way to say thank you. To find out more about the program, or to apply, contact CRHC.

We Need A Hand!



As a small nonprofit organization, we sometimes need a little help from our members. CRHC has expanded our office and would like to decorate our new conference room with lovely, colorful posters depicting rural events – concerts, races, festivals, etc. Please send your posters to CRHC at 225 E. 16th Ave. #1050, Denver, CO 80203 or next time your in Denver – bring them on by and get the grand tour of our new office!

5th Annual Rural Health Clinics Forum

The 2004 Rural Health Clinics forum will be held Thursday and Friday, April 8-9 at the Holiday Inn Select in Denver.

This year's Forum will be even bigger and better than the last four! On Thursday, our lunchtime topic is "How to Be a Better Board Member and How to Work Better with Your Board." Board members are encouraged to attend.

Other topics throughout the Forum include Cost Reporting, Billing/Coding, Human Resources, Disaster Planning and More!

Registration forms will be mailed out this month.

CTAP – Colorado Technical Assistance Program

\$\$\$Money for Travel\$\$\$

Thanks to the generosity of the *Caring for Colorado Foundation*, we will resume the CTAP program.

This program reimburses travel expenses for folks from rural Colorado traveling to a different rural community to learn about or provide assistance for a healthcare issue (rural to rural visits only). Past participants of CTAP traveled to new communities and gathered information on many different issues such as procedures, patient flows, and staffing as well as general management. By applying new techniques, hospitals, clinics, and organizations were able to cut costs. For more details about CTAP, visit our website at www.coruralhealth.org or call Suzi Herbka at 1-800-851-6782. See *Funding Opportunities* for more information.

CRHC Receives Award of Appreciation from East Morgan County Hospital



Lou Ann Wilroy, CRHC and Anne Platte, EMCH.

In December 2003, East Morgan County Hospital, a Critical Access Hospital in Brush, presented the CRHC with an award of appreciation for generous support. Anne Platt, hospital CEO, Jody Brown, Foundation Coordinator, and Karen Temple, Marketing and Community Relations Director, presented the award to Lou Ann Wilroy, Critical Access Hospital Program Director, on a site visit to the Eastern Plains facility on December 1, 2003. The hospital, a long-time organizational member, has benefited from numerous grant programs administered by CRHC in the past three years.

For three consecutive years, Critical Access Hospital technical assistance grants funded the following activities: strategic planning, community needs assessment and education, financial analysis, and staff development/training. In 2003, a Rural Health Seed Grant from CRHC and a SHIP (Small Hospital Improvement Program) grant helped support the hospital in purchasing the Picture Archive & Communication System (PACS) to improve access to radiology services for the community. PACS electronically captures, transmits, displays and saves radiology images into digital archives, and allows electronic transfer of images to radiologists and specialists nationwide, which helps minimize rural geographical boundaries. The hospital also received SHIP grant funding in 2002 to assist with HIPAA compliance and reduction of medication errors.

In addition to benefiting from grant programs, East Morgan County Hospital has participated in the Annual Rural Health Conference, Critical Access Hospital workshops, Rural Health Clinics Forum, and other CRHC events for many years. CRHC values its relationships with rural hospitals and greatly appreciates its rural organizational members.

General News

CMS Now Accepting Comments on Proposed Regulations Via the Internet

Private citizens, companies and others who want to comment on proposed Medicare and Medicaid regulations now, for the first time, can submit their opinions electronically via the Internet. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has recently announced that the new electronic process will begin with the rule proposing changes to the prospective payment system for long-term care hospitals, published in the January 30th *Federal Register*. Those wanting to comment electronically can do so through the www.regulations.gov web site or the link to the new CMS system provided in CMS' published rules. In addition to comments on proposed or final regulations, the new CMS system will be open for comment on other documents, including policy notices soliciting public input and notices asking for other information, such as nominations for advisory committees. CMS will continue to consider written comments delivered either by hand or through the mail to the addresses identified in the published rules by the close of the comment period.

CMS Announces Guidelines for Reporting Hospital Quality Data

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the guidelines hospitals should use in submitting their quality performance data to comply with the Section 501 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act (MMA). Hospitals that do not submit performance data for 10 quality measures will receive 4 percent smaller Medicare payments in fiscal year 2005 than hospitals that do report quality data.

CMS has notified hospitals that in order to qualify for the full monetary update, they must sign up with the Quality Improvement Organizations' data warehouse by June 1, 2004 and transmit the required data by July 1, 2004, which will reflect patient discharges during the most recent quarter available. Hospitals whose data submission is started but not completed by July 1 will be allowed a 30-day grace period to complete that data submission. In Colorado, hospitals sign up through the Colorado Foundation for Medical Care at 303-695-3300. For additional information or to download fact sheets with further details for hospitals, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/quality/hospital.

Coalition Formed to Develop State's First Oral Health Plan



Oral Health Awareness Colorado (OHAC), a coalition of federal, state, and community organizations has been formed to develop the state's first formal oral health plan aimed at improving the general health of the residents of Colorado.

The coalition also is launching a statewide public awareness campaign to heighten understanding of the importance of good oral health to general health. The comprehensive campaign, called "Be a Smart Mouth", will be targeted at all Coloradoans, ranging from school children and their parents to seniors and other special populations.

The coalition had been formed, in large part, to address the burden of oral diseases in the state. Development of a strategic Colorado oral health plan, based on appropriate oral health needs assessment and findings at both the state and local levels, will be key to improving the health and well being of citizens, as well as to develop future policies and actions.

During the upcoming months, the coalition will be seeking input from state and community leaders and organizations in the development of a state oral health plan. A gathering of community stakeholders, including health professionals, educators, business leaders and consumers, will be held this spring to begin the planning process. For more information, call (303) 692-2428.

Thank You, Thank You!

In addition to renewing their investment with CRHC, here are a few who made an additional contribution to CRHC's programs. Thank you for your generosity!

Anonymous
 Maribeth Berry
 Brenda Higgins
 Mary Jean Berg, MD
 Debra Olesen, JSI Research and Training Institute
 Michael Barkett
 Denise Denton
 Randy Evetts
 Herman Schreivogel, Lincoln Community Hospital
 Rich Rivera
 Jim Brundige
 Russ Johnson, SLV Regional Medical Center
 Jim Murphy, Weisbrod Memorial Hospital
 Plan de Salud Community Health Center
 Lindy Nelson
 Toloa Pearl

(As of December 15, 2003)

East Morgan County Hospital Featured in National Newsletter

East Morgan County Hospital in Brush was recently recognized in the Technical Assistance and Services Center's newsletter, On TASC, which is published by the Rural Health Resource Center in Minnesota. EMCH recently hosted an open house to show off its latest \$1.3 million Phase II remodel project that included remodeling and expanding laboratory and diagnostic services, admissions and the gift shop. This is just one of the many improvements EMCH continually makes to remain a leader in healthcare delivery and meet the needs of its community. The Technical Assistance and Services Center (TASC) is funded by the federal Office of Rural Health Policy and was created to help states during Critical Access Hospital conversion. Conversion often requires access to technical and informational resources that are not always available in state programs and rural communities.

February is National Children's Dental Health Month



Kids in Need of Dentistry (KIND) will be working to provide underserved children with the benefits of good oral healthcare. KIND will host its 4th annual "Toothbrushes for Tots", a product drive aimed at gathering new children's toothbrushes, sugar free toothpaste, and dental floss. Through this campaign, KIND will be able to distribute dental products to children who receive care through its Denver and Colorado Springs clinics, and its Miles for Smiles mobile dental clinic that serves children in various rural counties throughout Western Colorado. For more information about the product drive, please call 303-733-3710 or visit the KIND website at www.kindsmiles.org.



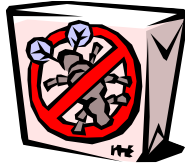
Where in Colorado can you see this sign?

Be the first person to call with the correct answer, and win a prize from CRHC's prize box!

Resources and Meetings

New On-line Tool Will Help Physicians Diagnose and Report Pesticide Poisonings

Pesticide Action Network (PAN) and the Northwest Regional Primary Care Association (NWRPCA) recently launched a new Online Pesticide Poisoning Diagnostic Tool, which is designed to help healthcare professionals diagnose and report pesticide related illnesses. The tool is accessible for the home page of the PAN Pesticide Database at www.pesticideinfo.org. Users can access symptom, first aid, and treatment information for about 1,900 pesticides. The website also provides reporting information for all 50 states.



This project was made possible through funding from EPA Region 9, the Northwest Regional Primary Care Association (through a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration), and the David B. Gold Foundation.

Useful Web Resources

The Denison Memorial Library compiled these web pages that offer useful resources.

Rural Health Concerns

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ruralhealthconcerns.html>

Farm Safety

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/farmsafety.html>

Pesticides

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/pesticides.html>

Amphetamine Abuse

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/amphetamineabuse.html>

Suicide - Includes Rural Suicide Prevention

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/suicide.html>

West Nile Virus

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/westnilevirus.html>

Celebrate Nonprofit Week with these Workshops

Workshops (cost-per-person, per workshop is \$10 CANPO members, \$12 nonmembers)

Marketing: Telling Your Organization's Story

Monday, March 1: 11:30am-1:00pm

Presented by Mandy Rigg, Consultant & Gizane Indart, Denver Children's Advocacy Center.

Boulder County Recycling Center, 1901 63rd St., Boulder.

Media Mania

Tuesday, March 2: 11:30am-1:00pm

Presented by Julie Speer Hunniford, Executive Director & Co-Founder of Little Voice.

Developmental Disabilities Resource Center, 11177 W. 8th Ave, Lakewood.

Developing an Effective Education Program

Wednesday, March 3: 11:30am-1:00pm

Presented by Ben Lawhon, Leave No Trace & Marcy Smallridge, Alzheimer's Association.

Aurora Mental Health Center, 11059 E Bethany Dr., Aurora.

Playing Nice: Networks to Mergers

Thursday, March 4: 11:30am-1:00pm

Presented by Linda Boedeker, Gay and Lesbian Fund of Colorado.

The Gill Foundation, 2215 Market St Ste 205, Denver.

For more information about these workshops, visit www.canpo.org/cnw.cfm or call 303-832-5710.

Ambulance Tool

The American Ambulance Association (AAA) has released a tool that ambulance services can use to predict what level of relief the Regional Fee Schedule provision of the 2003 Prescription Drug Act will provide them. The tool includes list of ambulance provisions from the Bill, a set of instructions on how to use the tool, and an Excel spreadsheet that will calculate the impact. It is available to AAA members in the Members Only section of the AAA website. Regional Ambulance Fee Schedule provisions take effect July 1, 2004. For more information, visit <https://www.amg-inc.com/aaa/joinaaa.htm>.



National Colon/Rectal Conference Coming to Denver

The University of Colorado is participating in a program funded by the CDC and a private foundation to coordinate a national colon/rectal cancer screening conference in Denver in November. The CDC wants rural involvement. They have requested recommendations for rural physicians who might be interested in participating in planning the conference. They need doctors who are interested in colon/rectal care. Call CRHC for more information!

Rural & Frontier EMS Agenda for the Future

The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) has developed a new web site for the Rural and Frontier EMS Agenda for the Future. A draft of the document has been placed on the website. The writing team is looking for ideas and comments, as well as stories about local EMS models – what works and what doesn't work. This is your opportunity to bring a national level of attention to Colorado's issues, barriers, best practices or ideas and priorities concerning the provision of EMS in rural and frontier areas. Your ideas may become part of the Agenda that will be published this fall.

To provide comments or get more information on the project, visit the Rural EMS Agenda for the Future website at <http://www.nrharural.org/EMSagenda/index.html>.

Funding Opportunities

New Funding Opportunity from The Colorado Trust

Under its Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative, The Colorado Trust is accepting Letters of Intent from community organizations that want to address immigrant integration. Visit www.coloradotrust.org to learn more about immigrant integration and for Letters of Intent requirements.

Letters are due to The Colorado Trust on **Friday, April 16th at noon.**

Telecommunications Funding Guide

CRHC has developed a new telecommunications funding guide. The guide contains information about federal grants, private foundations, and other programs that support telehealth-related projects. Also included is information about the Universal Service Fund, which helps offset telecommunications costs for rural communities. If you would like a copy of the funding guide, contact CRHC and we will send you one, or you can download it from our website.

Start-up Funds for Interfaith Community Volunteer Caregiving Programs

Faith in Action, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is an interfaith volunteer caregiving program that brings together religious congregations and community organizations to provide volunteer care to neighbors with long-term health needs. The program offers start-up grants of up to \$35,000, technical support and advice to help communities organize new coalitions for volunteer caregiving. For more information, visit www.fiavolunteers.org.

CTAP \$\$\$Money for Travel\$\$\$

Thanks to the generosity of the *Caring for Colorado Foundation*, we are able to resume our CTAP program. This program reimburses travel expenses for folks from rural Colorado traveling to a different rural community to learn about or provide assistance for a healthcare issue (rural to rural visits only). The intent is to build mentor-type relationships between rural communities. For more details see our website or call Suzi Herbka at 1-800-851-6782.