

The Community

Serving underserved Coloradans
with Dignity & Respect

March

News from Colorado Health Network, Inc.

2019

CHNews from the CEO

Dear CHN clients, donors, volunteers and friends:

Spring time is nearly upon us which means the days are getting longer, the temperatures are beginning to rise and our staff are gearing up for the annual Red Ribbon Ball in Colorado Springs on April 20th. If you've never attended this fun event, please visit our web site in the coming weeks for more information and to purchase tickets.



In this edition of The Community, you'll read about the opening of the CHN Medical Clinic and the continued expansion of oral health care services to our rural offices.

As we continue to expand our array of services, I'd like to remind you of a few basic facts. With access to treatment and care, HIV can be managed as a chronic disease today. The services that CHN provides to clients helps eliminate barriers to treatment and care so that our clients can focus on their health! With improved health comes improved quality of life!

Absent a cure for HIV/AIDS, the combination of HIV treatment and the use of PrEP can effectively eliminate the transmission

of HIV. Treating HIV with a regular, daily dose of medication will reduce a person's HIV viral load to undetectable levels. When a person has an undetectable viral load, they will not transmit HIV to others and they'll also be much healthier! You may have heard of this expressed as the "U = U" campaign, or "Undetectable = Untransmittable".

In addition, when a person who is at risk of contracting HIV is taking a regular, daily dose of Truvada for PrEP, their risk of contracting HIV is reduced by more than 90 percent.

As we celebrate these advancements in health care, let's remember that too many people still do not have access to the health care that they need or they're facing other barriers to regular treatment and care. Supporting the work of Colorado Health Network helps ensure that more people will have access to the benefits brought by HIV treatment and HIV prevention mechanisms.

Thank you for your continued support – it is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Darrell J. Vigil, MBA
Chief Executive Officer

New Medical Clinic at Colorado Health Network

On January 22, 2019, another milestone was celebrated in Colorado Health Network's (CHN) history. Following years of preparation and strategic planning, 'community clinic' has now been added to the list of services offered at Colorado Health Network.

"We aim to provide a sex-positive environment and look forward to expanding our scope of services, both local and state-wide, in the months to come," said Lili Carrillo, CHN Clinical Services Officer.

The medical clinic will provide services for those living with HIV and will include full preventative care, transgender and gender non-conforming expansive care, and for those seeking PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) to reduce the transmission of HIV.

"There has been tremendous support and excitement from the community," said Darrell Vigil, CEO of CHN. "We expanded our partnership with Denver Health to include some oversight of clinical protocols and to be a resource for our medical provider."

By opening the clinic, CHN was able to fulfill a need in the community by providing a continuum of care under one roof. Clients will be able to meet with their case manager, access the food bank and receive clinical care all on the same day.

Clients will also be able to access care after 'normal' business hours that other clinics do not offer, such as nights and weekend availability.

For more information or to schedule an appointment call 303.962.5317.



Randal McDavid, Director of Medical Services, with a client.

Colorado Springs / Denver / Fort Collins / Greeley / Grand Junction / Pueblo



The Red Ribbon Ball serves as Southern Colorado Health Network's (SCHN) annual signature fundraising benefit, raising nearly \$50,000 supporting HIV services and programs throughout southern Colorado.

This year Cuban Sounds, Fantastic Dancing, Exotic Food and more are in store for everyone who attends. Follow SCHN's Facebook page for more information.

Finding ways to engage Youth!

The Colorado Health Network's (CHN) Youth Advisory Board (YAB) is a new initiative to drive the development of innovative new programs that directly respond to the needs of youth population as it relates to sexual health and HIV prevention strategies.

Youth and young people (defined here as ages 13-24) deserve equitable access to sexual health education and resources, including comprehensive HIV prevention and care strategies.

"Having a youth advisory board will strengthen CHN's ability to meaningfully contribute to providing more equitable access to sexual

health resources and care in Colorado," said Justin Sunshine, Director of Regional Programs Denver.

The initial goal of the YAB is to advise the development of new CHN programs related to HIV prevention and sexual health education. CHN aims to engage youth in an authentic and equitable way and as such, the goals of the YAB will evolve as the youth participants decide on their mission and vision.

If you or someone you know is interested in participating on the YAB, please email youthunfiltered@gmail.com or follow them on Instagram @come_unfiltered

Howard Dental Center expanding to Fort Collins

Accessing oral health care services can be stigmatizing for those living with HIV and fear of rejection because of their HIV status often stops people from seeing the dentist. That is why Colorado Health Network (CHN) and Howard Dental Center will be expanding to Fort Collins!

"CHN's clients in rural areas still struggle to gain access to culturally competent, stigma-free oral health care services and this can be especially challenging if they are uninsured or underinsured," said Darrell Vigil, CEO of Colorado Health Network.

"This is why we expanded dental services to Colorado Springs and why we're expanding services to Fort Collins this year. CHN is able to provide culturally competent, stigma-free services to clients who are on Medicaid

or private insurance, or at a low cost, or no cost, based on income eligibility."

With the expansion of the Greeley office more space became available in the Fort Collins location allowing CHN to open up a dental chair.

Still in the early phase of planning for this expansion and renovations to the Fort Collins office, CHN expects to start seeing clients in the Northern Colorado Health Network office by early fall.

Currently, dental services are available to clients at our offices in Denver and Colorado Springs.

To learn more about what CHN offers and for updates on the dental expansion follow our offices on Facebook.

Dates of Interest

March 10 – National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

March 20 – National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

April 10 – National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

April 16 - NCHN Open House

April 18 – National Transgender HIV Testing Day

April 20 – Brunch Benefit & Bar Wars Kick-off Party @ The Triangle Bar

April 20 – Red Ribbon Ball "One Red Hot Havana Night"

May 18 – HIV Vaccine Awareness Day

May 19 – National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

May 19 – National Hepatitis Testing Day

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