Thank you for making 2019 an amazing year!

On behalf of the staff and board of the Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC), I want to offer my heartfelt gratitude for all the support and collaboration in 2019. As the State Office of Rural Health and Rural Health Association, the commitment to CRHC’s mission “to enhance healthcare services by providing information, education, linkages, tools and energy towards addressing rural healthcare issues” and our vision “to improve healthcare services available in rural communities to ensure that all rural Coloradans to have access to comprehensive, affordable, high quality healthcare” has never been stronger.

CRHC invested $2.6 Million in rural communities in 2019.

CRHC receives grant funding each year for programs that align with our mission and vision. Over $1,300,000 in federal funding was received to support Colorado’s rural hospitals and clinics as well as over $600,000 in private funding to support quality improvement efforts to Colorado’s rural hospitals and clinics and over $940,000 in state funding to support quality improvement and emergency preparedness efforts. CRHC provided nearly 14,000 technical assistance encounters, worked with three rural clinics to help them achieve RHC accreditation, worked with 29 critical access hospitals and rural health clinics on the iCARE program that demonstrated a 3% average readmission rate (a 35% decrease since 2013), hosted four billing and coding boot camps educating over 140 individuals, provided EMS education funding through the Colorado Resource for Emergency And Trauma Education (CREATE) program for 820 students, provided 240 hours of HIT support, and distributed 380 Snapshots of Rural Health. On top of our work directly with members, our policy team tracked 78 bills and took a position on 44 bills. CRHC’s workforce team made 53 direct referrals to active jobs in rural communities and gave 12 presentations to potential rural workforce candidates. Finally CRHC provided education and networking through our Annual Forum and Annual Conference which had over 320 attendees.

As the Chief Executive Officer of CRHC, it is my privilege to serve all 47 rural communities. With your ongoing support, CRHC will continue to be a voice and a resource. Thank you!

Michelle Mills, CEO
Colorado Rural Health Center
About Us

Our Organization
The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) was established in 1991 as Colorado’s State Office of Rural Health. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, CRHC serves dual roles as the State Office of Rural Health with the mission of assisting rural communities in addressing healthcare issues; and as the State Rural Health Association, advocating for policy change on behalf of its members and all rural healthcare providers.

Mission & Vision
Our mission is to enhance healthcare services in the state by providing information, education, linkages, tools, and energy toward addressing rural health issues. Our vision is to improve healthcare services available in rural communities to ensure that all rural Coloradans have access to comprehensive, affordable, high quality healthcare.

$2.6 Million

CHRC invests this much grant funding into our members. CRHC receives grant funding each year with one mission: to pass the benefits on to rural facilities and to make their work more successful.

2019 Operating Budget

Thank you to all of our members, partners, sponsors, board members, and staff.
Colorado's 53 Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) were supported through certified rural health clinic compliance training and support, billing and coding workshops, healthy clinic assessments, gap analysis studies, HIT support, feasibility studies, customer service trainings, and quality improvement initiatives.
Clinic Transformation and Sustainability Assessments (CTSA)

CRHC helps rural clinics by facilitating Clinic Transformation and Sustainability Assessments (formerly known as Healthy Clinic Assessments) on the clinic’s daily operations and processes. The CTSA focuses on streamlining processes and workflow which increase efficiency and clinic revenue by assessing and optimizing basic business operations, while creating an overall improvement in quality.

Clinics that have been evaluated for consecutive years have shown marked improvement in both specific measures and overall scores.

3 RHCs Added in Colorado

Colorado saw the addition of three new Rural Health Clinics in 2019. CRHC’s Quality Improvement Team was instrumental in the conversion process in Saguache and Salida.

Eight counties benefited from CTSAs and four recommendations were made that led to the clinic participating in other CRHC activities.

Clinic Improvement Services Conducted

- 4 RHC 101s completed
- 3 Policy and Procedure Manuals Distributed
- 4 Mock Surveys Completed
- 1 Annual Evaluation Templates Distributed
The three primary goals of CRHC’s iCARE program are to work with hospitals and clinics to:
1. Improve communications in transitions of care
2. Improve the clinical process and systems to reduce readmissions, particularly for heart failure, pneumonia, and diabetic patients
3. Maintain low readmission rates

iCARE Participation and Progress

Colorado: iCARE Hospitals and Clinics, 2019

Facility Participation
- Critical Access Hospitals: 14
- Clinics: 15

Readmission Rates (2013-2019)

From 2016-2019, iCARE CAHs reported an average 3% readmission rate, a 35% decrease since 2013. The national hospital average is 15.3%.

10 Years of Quality Improvement

Since the program’s founding in 2009, CRHC’s iCARE program has been a cornerstone in rural facilities’ quality improvement programs across the state. The program served as a model nationally for effective programs aimed at reducing avoidable readmissions. After 10 years and thousands of readmissions avoided, CRHC is retiring the iCARE program.

In 2020, CRHC is launching a new quality improvement program called Colorado’s Rural Sustainability Program (CORS). The CORS Program will have four overarching measures, aimed at increasing the sustainability of rural communities and access to care:

- Reduce All Cause Readmissions
- Reduce Chronic Disease
- Increase Community Engagement
- Increase Cost Savings
Through the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant (FLEX), Colorado Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) are supported through quality improvement initiatives, educational webinars and workshops, financial education, HIT support, regional workshops, and peer learning opportunities.

**CAH Training and Education**

CAH staff viewed swing bed and utilization management webinars and training resources

Individuals attended Quality Network, Admission Criteria, or MBQIP Rapid Cycle Improvement Group Webinars.

**Billing and Coding Webinar Attendees**

**Technology for Healthcare Excellence (THE) Consortium Webinar Attendees**

**Bootcamps: Coding and Billing for Critical Access Hospitals**

In 2019, CRHC hosted 4 Billing and Coding Bootcamps across the state. Bootcamps taught Critical Access Hospital revenue cycle, coding, and billing staff what they need to know about their clinical documentation, professional coding, and medical billing processes. CRHC staff and speakers provided a thorough overview of the coding and billing processes in a CAH. Held in 4 locations (Fruita, Haxtun, Lamar, and Alamosa), classes taught CPT, HCPCS-II, and ICD-10-CM coding and billing with a focus on their impact on revenue, facility mission, population, and public health reporting.

**Bootcamp Attendance:**
The Colorado Resource for Emergency and Trauma Education (CREATE) provides education and training for emergency medical and trauma service providers working in Colorado.

$446,717 awarded for EMS education

2019 CREATE Accomplishments

Awarded Funds by Region
- Plains to Peaks = $25,661
- Northeast = $32,419
- San Luis Valley = $35,975
- Southwest = $107,707
- Central Mountains = $4,498
- Northwest = $17,950
  - Western = $94,115
  - Foothills = $66,913
  - Mile-High = $61,479

Types of facilities that received funds
- EMS Transport: 25
- Fire with EMS: 21
- Fire with EMS, non transport: 6
- College: 3
- Hospitals: 8
- RETACs: 5

A Diverse Education

Typical Courses Approved
- EMR
- AEMT
- EMT
- I to P Bridge
- Paramedic, Trauma Conferences
- Critical Care
- EKG for Basic Life Support providers
- I.V. Certification
- Rural Trauma Team Development Course (RTTDC)
- Transcarotid Artery Revascularization (TCAR)
Health Information Technology

Health information technology (HIT) is the use of applications to record, store, protect, retrieve and transfer information electronically. Through Technology for Healthcare Excellence (THE) Consortium, CRHC assists rural facilities to advance their HIT solutions.

Direct IT Support

In 2019, CRHC provided 240 hours of HIT support across the state. Activities included the following:

- Remote Monitoring
- Anti-Virus
- Patch Management
- Onsite and Remote Support
- Hiring and Training

HIT Report Writing

CRHC IT staff wrote 83 reports for members in 2019. Report topics:
- County Health Rankings (CHR) Reports
- Rural vs. Urban comparisons CHR
- Total Access to Healthcare, Obesity/Diabetes, Opioids, Oral Health white papers
- Snapshots of Rural Health (Regional and State-wide)

83 Reports Written

Report Recipients
- Beacon Fund
- CU Anschutz
- University of Colorado
- UC Health
- CQI Grant
- Opioid Planning Grantees
- CRHC Policy and Advocacy

693 Total HARC Data Bank Indicators (+72 increase from 2018)

CRHC maintains the Health Awareness for Rural Communities (HARC) Data Bank in order to track data pertaining to the health of rural communities and the state of healthcare across the state and nation. Data is constantly updated for use in report writing for members, partners, and policy makers as well as for publication in the annual Snapshot of Rural Health.
CRHC’s policy and advocacy program tracks state and federal legislation and regulations that hold the potential of impacting access and delivery of care for rural health providers and communities.

2019 Accomplishments:

Testifying on Behalf of our Members

- SB19-234 Sunset Professional Review Committees
- HB19-1269 Mental Health Parity Insurance Medicaid
- HB19-1287 Treatment for Opioids and Substance Use Disorders
- HB19-1095 Physician Assistants Supervision and Liability
- HB19-1088 Modify Income Tax Credit Health Care Preceptors
- HB19-1241 University of Colorado Training and Scholarships Rural Physicians
- HB19-1038 Dental Services for Pregnant Women on CHP+

Testified on Legislation

- HB19-1233 Investments in Primary Care to Reduce Health Costs
- HB19-1120 Youth Mental Health Education and Suicide Prevention
- SB19-015 Create Statewide Health Care Review Committee
- HB19-1239 Census Outreach Grant Program

Snapshots of Rural Health and Regional Snapshots

380 Snapshots Distributed

The Snapshot of Rural Health serves as the definitive resource on rural health in Colorado and is distributed to lawmakers, community partners, and members in January each year.

Tracking the Bills that Matter

- 78 Bills Tracked
- 44 Positions Taken
- 3 Bills Supported
- 5 Bills Monitored
- 3 Bills Opposed

18x Bills Monitored
Workforce recruitment placements in 2019

Colorado Health Service Corps (CHSC) Awardees

Colorado Health Service Corps, 2019 awardees at Rural Health Clinics

Rural Essential Access Provider, 2019 awardees at rural, primary care clinics
Events

The Forum 2019

April 3-5, 2019
Renaissance Denver
Stapleton Hotel
Denver, CO

Sessions Included:
• Patient Navigator Training Collaborative
• Maximizing Health Outcomes:
  Chronic Disease Prevention and Management Programs to Help You Achieve Medicaid and Medicare Performance Measures
• Innovative and Interactive Approaches to Suicide Assessment and Safety Planning
• Workforce Recruitment and Retention Panel

140 Participants
32 Facilities Represented
12 Sponsors
37 Exhibitors

“Everything was really good throughout the entire conference and I learned a great deal but the extra meeting with HCPF was exceptional. Thank you.”
-Survey Respondent

Conference Sponsors
Annual Rural Health Conference 2019

October 23-25, 2019
Renaissance Denver
Stapleton Hotel
Denver, CO

Topics Included:
• Food is Medicine, Food is Health: Ways Hospitals Have Helped Patients Be and Stay Healthier Through Addressing Diet Quality, Food Insecurity, and Sustainability
• Finding Success in the Hospital Transformation Program
• Strategies for Accessible and Affordable Health Care in the Rural Setting
• Telehealth and Other Opportunities to Provide Great Care in Rural Settings
• Get Funded! Panel

Attendees 182 + 38 Facilities Represented
Exhibitors 41 Sponsors 15

“Staff members were engaged with meeting attendees on a personal level. That probably speaks to the increased comfort level of the staff because they have been around for awhile and understand what CRHC is all about.”

-Survey Respondent

Conference Sponsors
2019 Board of Directors

Jason McCormick, Board Chair
Alan-Michael Vargas, MD, Board Chair
Beka Warren, RN, Ph.D, Board Secretary & Treasurer
Julie Drake
Tammy Dunker

John Gardner
Nancy King, LPC
Craig Loveless
Doug Miller, FNP
Kay Whitley

2019 Funders
Thank you for your continued support of the Colorado Rural Health Center!

The State Office of Rural Health