



*The State Office of Rural Health*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Emerging Trends in Emergency Management Discussed at 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum  
Conference**

*More than 200 healthcare professionals from around Colorado took part in this  
educational event for safety net providers*

**Denver, CO** –The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum offered more than twenty hours of high quality educational programming and networking during the two and a half day event April 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> at the Sheraton Denver West in Lakewood.

“We are very pleased with the success of this year’s annual Forum,” said Michelle Mills, chief executive officer at Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC). “From an educational perspective, the conference is designed to provide high quality programming on a broad variety of topics. We covered everything from healthcare policy to rural health clinic billing and emergency preparedness.”

“Attending this conference is a great way for rural providers and other interested parties to learn from one another, make new connections and get involved in potential future collaborative efforts,” added Mills.

Thought provoking and inspiring speeches and discussions were delivered by speakers including Mike Bielmaier, director of emergency medical services at Estes Park Medical Center, and Dr. William Moorhead, president of All Clear Emergency Management Group, who both spoke on the subject of emergency preparedness.

Ron Seedorf, of CRHC, manages the Hospital Preparedness contract through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Emergency Preparedness & Response Section that provides funds to help hospitals, clinics and first responder agencies enhance their capacity to respond in the event of a mass casualty or pandemic events.

"Healthcare facilities play a vital role in emergency preparedness efforts, whether they are natural disasters, mass violence or pandemic outbreaks," says Seedorf. "Although facilities have general emergency management plans in place, there is always a need for ongoing training and reassessment of current emergency readiness plans."

Dr. William Moorhead spoke to attendees about the need for rural healthcare providers to find creative approaches to developing or enhancing an emergency management program. Dr. Moorhead has over 20 years' experience in the emergency management field both as a first responder and in State and local government capacities in North Carolina.

Mike Bielmaier presented on the emergency response and lessons learned from the 2013 floods in Estes Park.

"We are always looking for guest speaker's whose expertise and experience can enrich and enhance our attendees understanding of emergency preparedness issues," says Mills.

In addition to emergency preparedness, the conference featured a motivational keynote, health reform implementation panel, and a variety of sessions and educational workshops. The agenda for the conference can be found at [www.coruralhealth.org/events/forum.htm](http://www.coruralhealth.org/events/forum.htm).

The Forum is a conference co-hosted by the Colorado Rural Health Center and ClinicNET to deepen dialogue between safety net providers in Colorado, and serves as

a platform to discuss the challenges and strengths for this group of providers caring for Colorado's underserved populations.

### **About The Colorado Rural Health Center**

The Colorado Rural Health Center was established in 1991 as Colorado's State Office of Rural Health. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, CRHC's 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 to ensure that rural Coloradoans have access to comprehensive, affordable healthcare services of the highest quality. For more information visit [www.coruralhealth.org](http://www.coruralhealth.org), call 303-832-7493, or call toll free 800-851-6782 from rural Colorado.