



The State Office of Rural Health

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All Twenty Nine Colorado Critical Access Hospitals Join Colorado Rural Health Center Membership

The Colorado Rural Health Center is proud to welcome Aspen Valley Hospital District as the newest rural health facility member and this month's featured member.

Denver, CO— Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) this month became the newest member of the Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC). Each month, CRHC recognizes one of its members whose work supports CRHC's vision that all rural Coloradans have access to comprehensive, affordable, high quality health care.

As this month's featured member, Aspen Valley Hospital is recognized for delivering excellent health care to the city of Aspen and surrounding residents. AVH boasts several national awards for service excellence, including 2013 HealthStrong™ Top 100 Critical Access Hospital recognition and they are the first Colorado hospital to be selected as a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network.

"Critical Access Hospitals are a vital component of the rural health care delivery system," said Michelle Mills, chief executive officer at CRHC. "With the recent addition of Aspen Valley Hospital, we now have all twenty nine Critical Access Hospitals in Colorado engaged in our membership constituency."

Mills added, "We know that Aspen Valley Hospital shares our commitment to and enthusiasm for enhancing rural health, and we are excited to work together in the future."

Located 220 miles west of Denver in Pitkin County, Aspen is a world-class destination with approximately 6,600 year-around residents and approximately 50,000 visitors.

Using CRHC's Health Awareness for Rural Communities Data Bank, several county-level health indicators stand out. For instance, Pitkin County has an adult obesity rate of 29 percent, compared to the state average of 56 percent. The projected growth for

ambulatory surgery visits is 3.3 percent compared to the 7.2 percent state average. Furthermore, like many rural and frontier areas in the state, the projected population growth for those age 65 and older (28.8 percent) surpasses the state average of 24 percent.

AVH became members this month in order to position the hospital to take advantage of several resources offered at CRHC. Caleb Siem, CRHC's critical access hospital program manager visited the hospital in May.

"I was impressed by the hospital's advanced health facility," says Siem. "After speaking with several of the staff, it became apparent that there were several services that would be valuable to them, such as our swing bed webinars, educational workshops and networking resources."

Aspen Valley Hospital prides itself as being a true "community hospital" providing extraordinary health care and commitment to quality care. The current day hospital stands as a legacy embodying the spirit of the first Aspen hospital built in 1891.

This quote describing the hospital was written by a reporter in the 1890s and still accurately describes the spirit of Aspen Valley Hospital. "The average citizen acquiesces in the general belief that such an institution [the hospital], built as it was by private subscription and standing with its doors open for afflicted humanity, is an honor to the city and a most welcome abode for those in misfortune who enjoy its rare benefits."

For further information about Aspen Valley Hospital, please visit their [website](#). To learn more about the city of Aspen or to plan your next visit, please visit the [Aspen Chamber Resort Association website](#). If you'd like to learn more about CRHC membership, visit the [CRHC website](#). If you're interested in the Health Awareness for Rural Communities Data Bank, please read the following [issue paper](#).

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 health care issues; and as the State Rural Health Association, advocating for policy change to ensure that rural Coloradoans have access to comprehensive, affordable health care services of the highest quality. For more information visit www.coruralhealth.org, call 303-832-7493, or call toll free 800-851-6782 from rural Colorado.

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