

**COLORADO  
RURAL HEALTH  
CENTER**

*The State Office of Rural Health*

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**Estes Park Medical Center Receives National Recognition as a Leading Critical  
Access Hospital**

*Nominated by the Colorado Rural Health Center, the hospital received recognition for keeping pace with health care transformation and sustaining access to health services for the community*

Denver, Colo – The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) recently nominated Estes Park Medical Center for recognition attributed to their advancements and innovation to expand care coordination, patient access, prevention and wellness, and community partnerships to improve citizen health.

The Critical Access Hospital Recognition was established by the National Rural Health Resource Center and the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy to recognize the excellent work among critical access hospitals (CAHs) throughout the country. The recognition promotes excellence and innovation and honors the achievements and results of CAHs while publicizing successful strategies. This year, five CAHs were chosen for recognition.

“We were compelled to nominate Estes Park Medical Center, impart for their efforts regarding the new Estes Wellness Center, but also for their vision for a community that embraces the culture and principles of wellness,” said Michelle Mills, chief executive at CRHC.

In April 2014, the hospital joined with the historic Stanley Hotel, the town of Estes Park, and University of Colorado Health to begin an ambitious public-private partnership in the form of a wellness center which will help establish Estes Park as a global destination for wellness and adventure tourism. The Estes Wellness Center will be a 15,000 SF facility operated as a 501(c)(3) by EPMC, providing an array of services including physical fitness, metabolic fitness, nutritional fitness, sleep, stress, and quality of life/life satisfaction.

Critical access hospitals are a vital component of the healthcare delivery system in rural communities. For Estes Park Medical Center this was made apparent during last year's historic floods, when flood waters washed away roads down the canyon to the Front Range, forcing patient transfers either over Trail Ridge Road (the highest continuous paved road in the US) to another critical access hospital or by helicopter.

"This recognition is testimony to the high quality, affordable, and necessary care that critical access hospitals provide to rural communities," says Mills. "Their innovative community partnerships and creation of a new wellness center are truly making them a leader in rural healthcare."

### **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 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 Coloradans have access to comprehensive, affordable health care services of the highest quality. For more information visit [coruralhealth.org](http://coruralhealth.org), call 303-832-7493, or call toll free 800-851-6782 from rural Colorado.

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