



The State Office of Rural Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Colorado Rural Health Center Partners with Colorado Cancer Screening Program to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screening Across Rural Colorado

In recognition of March being Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, CRHC is highlighting the partnership with Colorado Cancer Screening Program (CCSP) of the University of Colorado which aims to identify and correct the causes of low screening rates across the state.

Denver, CO – The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) and the Colorado Cancer Screening Program (CCSP) have partnered together to offer monthly trainings, technical assistance sessions, and technical resources aimed at increasing Colorectal Cancer (CRC) screening in rural parts of the state.

Colorectal Cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer death nationally and in Colorado. Based on data just released, colorectal cancer is now a top cancer killer of young people in Colorado as the rates for patients under the age of 55 have been increasing, without clear answers why¹.

“Screening for Colorectal Cancer saves lives. Our rural facilities are dedicated to providing the best care possible and this CRHC partnership with the experts at CCSP is helping rural facilities make a difference” said CRHC CEO Michelle Mills.

¹ <https://kdvr.com/news/health/colon-cancer-is-now-a-top-cancer-killer-for-young-people-colorado-doctors/>

The Colorado Cancer Screening Program (CCSP) is a statewide program that partners with local, state, and national clinical and community partners to implement evidence-based interventions (EBI) for cancer screening, patient navigation, and population based research in cancer prevention and control in order to promote health equity. The CCSP facilitates training and technical assistance for healthcare teams to implement cancer prevention and control initiatives aimed at reducing barriers and increasing access to care. The program is coordinated through the University of Colorado Cancer Center and funded by the Cancer, Cardiovascular, and Pulmonary Disease (CCPD) Grants Program.

CCSP and CRHC have been working with Basin Clinic (Naturita, CO), Keefe Memorial (Cheyenne Wells, CO), Melissa Memorial (Holyoke, CO), Rio Grande (Del Norte, CO), Delta Hospital (Delta) and Radiant Healthcare (Rocky Ford, CO).

The goal of the CCSP program partnership is to implement evidence-based interventions to further improve colorectal cancer screening rates. CRHC has been holding monthly Technical Assistance sessions with the goals to review the following measures and provide quality improvement methodology in order to support better screening outcomes:

- Identify existing CRC screening workflow and key roles in clinics
- Complete a Root Cause/Gap Analysis
- Assist facilities with selecting the Evidence Based Intervention that they want to work on. The options are:
 - Client Reminders
 - Provider Reminders and Recall Systems
 - Provider assessment and feedback
 - Standing Orders
- Create Evidence Based Intervention Action Plans

“As a Cheyenne County native, I am committed to ensuring rural communities have ample access to care and our goal is to further our connections with rural health clinics and critical access hospitals in partnership with CRHC. Rural communities have some of the lowest screening rates in the state, I personally see lack of access to care in rural Colorado as one of the greatest health inequities in Colorado.” said CCSP Program Director Andrea (Andi) Dwyer.”

Since the program's 2016 inception, Clinics participating in the CRC screening program have navigated eligible patients into 39,349 endoscopic CRC screening exams with 286 cancer diagnoses, removed 1,070 advanced colorectal polyps, and increased screening access for those with Medicaid.

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 and the State Rural Health Association. The organization's mission is to enhance healthcare services in the state by providing information, education, linkages, tools, and energy toward addressing rural health issues. CRHC's vision is to improve healthcare services available in rural communities to ensure that all rural Coloradans have access to comprehensive, affordable, high quality healthcare. 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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