



The State Office of Rural Health

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Colorado Rural Health Center Celebrates 15th Annual Safety Net Clinic Week

The State Office of Rural Health celebrated safety net clinics with a governor's proclamation and an educational program

Aurora, Colo. – August 22, 2023 – Public officials and community leaders get an educational look at Colorado's community safety net clinics (CSNCs) and federally certified rural health clinics (RHCs) during the 15th Annual Safety Net Clinic Week (SNCW), August 14-18. The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) hosted celebratory events included an educational webinar and the reading of a governor's proclamation.

Safety net clinics provide high quality care and offer much needed access to healthcare services in urban and rural communities to those who are uninsured, underinsured, or insured through public programs like Medicaid, CHP+ and Medicare," said CRHC CEO Michelle Mills. "We host SNCW each year to educate policy makers about the dire need to support the safety net across the state."

Even though supplemental federal funding is unavailable to them, CSNCs and RHCs provide essential healthcare services to rural and underserved populations. While CSNCs and RHCs are diverse in their business and practice models, they are comparable in their commitment to providing health and healthcare services to people in need. They deliver meaningful results and value to their communities despite limited funding for general operations, workforce challenges, growing reporting and accountability requirements and changing payment and delivery models.

In an effort to raise awareness for Safety Net Clinics, Governor Polis signed a declaration proclaiming August 14-18 Safety Net Clinic Week in the state of Colorado. According to the proclamation, "these care settings often lack sufficient workforce and technical resources, but are creating innovative solutions to delivering patient-centered, high-quality care in an efficient and effective manner."

CRHC hosted an informational webinar for policymakers, funders, providers, and other healthcare partners on August 14. The event featured programming designed to inform the audience on exactly what an RHC is and why they are important. CRHC also presented on policy priorities for the upcoming legislative session and on the progress made by the organization's workforce, health information technology, and quality improvement teams.

CRHC also spotlighted innovative member projects with guest appearances by Jayden Miracle (Clinic Manager for the Family Practice of Holyoke), Audrey Reich Loy (San Luis Valley Health Director of Program Operations), and Alyssa Kunugi (San Luis Valley Health Director of Primary Care Clinic Operations).

“It was an honor to hear from the teams at Holyoke and San Luis Valley Health on the Team Based Care and Remote Patient Monitoring programs that are making a difference in patients’ lives across the state,” said Mills. “Showcasing the important work done by our members is what the week was all about. Happy Safety Net Clinic Week!”

Governor Polis’ declaration can be read (<https://coruralhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/SNCW-2023-Proclamation.pdf>) and a recording of the educational event can be seen here (https://youtu.be/cT7PY2V_qYE?si=4FjhEuDXrawFyfR9).

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 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, call 303-832-7493, or call toll free 800-851-6782 from rural Colorado.

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