



The State Office of Rural Health

For Immediate Release

Contact: Bridgette Olson, Outreach Program Manager

303-832-7493 or bo@coruralhealth.org

Colorado Rural Health Center Increases Number of Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) in Rural Communities

The Colorado Rural Health Center completed a three year grant program to increase the number of AEDs in rural communities and provide defibrillator and basic life support training.

Denver, Colo – The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) recently concluded its three year, Rural Access to Emergency Devices (RAED) grant program, funded by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) within the U.S. Department of Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). ORHP administers grant programs designed to build healthcare capacity at both the local and State levels.

As part of its mission to improve healthcare services available in rural communities through education and healthcare programs, CRHC announced favorable results of the RAED grant program, designed to increase and promote the use of AEDs in rural communities throughout Colorado.

According to the American College of Emergency Physicians the widespread availability and use of AEDs is crucial to the emergency medical services (EMS) delivery system. Cardiac arrest can be reversed if the victim is treated with AED defibrillation within a few minutes. Rescuers trained in operating portable AEDs can produce high, long-term survival rates for witnessed cardiac arrest.

CRHC managed the RAED grant program as the lead applicant and fiscal agent, developing community partnerships, providing defibrillator and basic life support training (CPR), and placing AEDs with first responder agencies and local organizations, such as schools, hospitals and other public facilities.

During the three year program, 167 AEDs were placed with rural first responder agencies and community organizations and 1,470 individuals were trained to use AEDs with CPR.

“The ultimate goal of this project was to save lives in the event of cardiac arrests by increasing the number of AEDs in rural communities,” said Michelle Mills, CRHC’s chief

executive officer. “Increasing the awareness and likelihood of proper usage of AEDs by first responders and laypeople in rural Colorado was also a vital component of the program,” Mills added.

CRHC worked in tandem with the eleven Colorado Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Councils (RETACs) to build community partnerships and help facilitate the placement of AEDs and training of first responders and community members in the use of AEDs and CPR.

To learn more about the RAED grant program, contact CRHC at info@coruralhealth.org or call 303.832.8493.

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 Coloradans 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.

###