



The State Office of Rural Health

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DCMH Family Medicine Recognized as Colorado Rural Health Center's Featured Member of the Month

Denver, CO— The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) is proud to once again recognize DCMH Family Medicine as its featured member of the month. DCMH Family Medicine was featured in August 2013 as a leading rural private practice. Each month, the CRHC recognizes one of its members whose work supports the CRHC's vision that all rural Coloradans have access to comprehensive, affordable, high quality healthcare.

The Colorado Rural Health Center works with over 200 hospitals and clinics throughout rural Colorado. With a staff of nineteen, CRHC is poised to assist rural providers with a variety of technical assistance, consulting, education and training. This includes the three Quality Improvement Specialists, who work with rural health clinics to help support quality improvement initiatives, and development and identify opportunities to achieve excellence in process related standards.

Rural health clinics deliver preventative and primary healthcare services to patients who would otherwise have difficulty securing access to care for a variety of reasons including living in rural medically underserved or health professional shortage areas. Additionally, when compared to their urban counterparts, rural clinics must be able to provide high quality patient care with fewer resources which makes it imperative to ensure clinical processes are efficient and effective.

CRHC works with clinics to build a solid foundation of efficiency so they can move on to other, more intensive quality improvement programs. Kathryn Steele is CRHC's Quality Improvement Specialist working on the western slope. Recently Kathryn brought to attention the amazing work at DCMH Family Medicine and their recent recognition as the number one voted family practice in Delta County.

In addition to the North Fork Clinics in Hotchkiss and Paonia, DCMH Family Medicine (formerly Delta Family Physicians) is now owned and operated by Delta County Memorial Hospital (DCMH).

According to a press release issued by DCMH this is a time of challenging health care changes, and keeping rural primary care is a vital part of offering medical care to all Delta County residents. This is also an opportunity to leverage community resources and increase access to care to the entire population of Delta County.

“As the Quality Improvement Specialist for DCMH Family Medicine, I have been working with the practice for nearly three and half years,” says Kathryn. “The practice has made monumental strides in increasing access to care within the community they serve. They have worked diligently to obtain the education they needed to become certified coders and work flows have been streamlined in order to create a smooth movement of patients through the clinic in a very timely manner,” Kathryn adds.

Kathryn also says that internally DCMH Family Medicine has negotiated contracts and been assertive in capturing revenues to reinvest in the practice. Their employees have great morale and work very well together as a team. Kathryn also said that in spite of unknowns and changes with the management of the clinic - which could be devastating for some practices - the providers advocate extremely well to protect the interests of their staff.

CRHC helps RHCs by completing the Healthy Clinic Assessments (HCAs) on the clinic’s daily operations and processes. The HCAs provide a snapshot of each clinic’s internal processes and staff interaction. The goal of the HCA is to streamline the operational work flow and the policies and procedures of a clinic to maximize efficiency and create a seamlessly pleasant patient experience. Kathryn says that significant changes have been made to meet best practice recommendations and that DCMH Family Medicine’ healthy clinic assessments have shown excellent progress.

“I am so proud of everyone at DCMH Family Medicine and the degree to which the staff and providers go above and beyond to provide excellent patient care,” says Kathryn. “I also have to give a call out to Diane Dockett, Clinic Manager, for her steady, levelheaded management. She takes things in stride, works wherever she is needed, and minimizes the potential for pandemonium in an extremely busy practice.”

On behalf Kathryn and the staff at CRHC, we’d like to congratulate, thank, and recognize DCMH Family Medicine for consistently taking advantage of the opportunities offered through CRHC to improve and grow their practice. We are honored to be a small part of their progress and continually evolving strategy to bring the best of care to Delta County and beyond.

To read DCMH Family Medicine’s 2013 member feature article, [click here](#).

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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