The Colorado Health Foundation™

Colorado Health Foundation Invests $1.2 million in Safety Net Clinics Working to Enhance Health Engagement through Patient Portal Use

DENVER, CO — The Colorado Health Foundation recently announced funding for a second and final cohort of safety net clinics to participate in a $1.5 million initiative to enhance health engagement through patient portal use. These organizations include: Clinica Tepeyac, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, High Plains Community Health Center, Kids First Health Care, Mental Health Center of Denver, Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association, Saint Joseph Hospital – Bruner Family Medicine and Sunrise Community Health Center.

The first cohort of awardees was finalized earlier this year and include: Clinica Family Health Services, Doctors Care, Metro Community Provider Network, Salud Family Health Centers, Summit Community Care Clinic and The Rocky Mountain Youth Clinics.

Currently, safety net practices across Colorado are leveraging the federal Meaningful Use program (which provides financial incentives to improve care through the “meaningful use” of certified electronic health records) to stand up patient portals. Under this program, health care providers are required to provide electronic access to patient health information and ensure that a portion of their patients log-on and view this information. The Foundation’s portal program is intended to build upon this federal initiative, foster even higher levels of patient engagement and improve the health of Coloradans.

“Given our past HIT-related funding and the momentum that has been created by Meaningful Use, this is an opportune time for the Foundation to invest in this area,” said Dara Hessee, senior program officer at the Colorado Health Foundation. “These projects have the potential to increase the number of underserved Coloradans who are engaged in their health, strengthen patient-provider communication and improve patient satisfaction.”

In addition to funding, grantees receive technical assistance to address critical elements of portal implementation beyond functionality to foster an environment where patients are empowered to access and take action on their health information. Grantees will also participate in a peer learning community, a network of support that will help all clinics address barriers and share best practices.

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