The Colorado Health Foundation™

New Initiative Launched to Advance Health Equity Through Innovation in Colorado's Safety Net

With Safety Net Clinics Facing Resource Gaps, the Colorado Innovation Community Will Use the Potential of Design-Thinking and Patient-Centered Technology to Enhance Services to Coloradans Living on Low Income

DENVER, CO – A two-year, $3 million initiative kicks off today to establish a robust statewide network of safety net providers that will learn how innovations around the delivery of care can improve the quality of care to underserved Coloradans. Despite the rapid expansion of health care models and technology solutions available in the field, safety net providers face barriers to innovation. Federally Qualified Health Centers, community behavioral health clinics and critical access hospitals and other safety net providers encounter challenges including limited time, resource and staffing capacity and high overhead expenses.

The Colorado Health Foundation, The Denver Foundation, Rose Community Foundation and Colorado Access have funded the new Colorado Innovation Community to support organizations as they explore effective and affordable patient-centered solutions. Ultimately, it is the goal of the Colorado Innovation Community to improve access to care and advance health equity among the state's Medicaid, uninsured and undocumented community members.

The Colorado Innovation Community is the first peer-learning collaborative of its kind focused on innovation in Colorado's safety net. Over the next two years, the founding members will meet regularly to identify, test and evaluate a broad set

of innovative health care practices that include participation in a training program on applying human-centered design to address the most pressing challenges for underserved communities.

The founding members selected to join the first cohort of the Colorado Innovation Community are:

- Clinica Family Health: Federally Qualified Health Center serving 56,000 patients through six outpatient clinics in South Boulder, Broomfield and West Adams County.
- Every Child Pediatrics: Community health clinic serving nearly 24,000 Colorado children in four stand-alone medical offices and nine school-based health centers across the state.
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health: Behavioral health clinic serving more than 32,000 people annually at 18 clinic locations in Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek counties.
- Melissa Memorial Hospital: Critical Access Hospital with 15 beds and a rural health clinic serving the more than 13,000 residents of Phillips County for over 100 years.
- Mental Health Center of Denver: Behavioral health clinic providing services and outreach to almost 70,000 children, families and adults annually at nine clinic locations and over 25 school-based sites in the City and County of Denver.
- Solvista Health: Behavioral health clinic serving more than 4,000 Coloradans at five locations across Fremont, Chaffee, Lake and Custer counties.
- STRIDE Community Health Center: Federally Qualified Health Center serving 54,000 Coloradans across nearly 20 health center locations in Adams, Arapahoe, Douglas, Jefferson and Park counties.

The Center for Care Innovations (CCI), a California-based nonprofit with nearly two decades of experience creating similar safety net innovation communities across the country, will manage the initiative. CCI will facilitate training and networking opportunities for the seven founding members initially selected for the cohort. As part of the Colorado Innovation Community, the initiative's funders and CCI are recognizing the importance of including safety net providers from rural communities, as they often face additional challenges due to workforce shortages and the long distances patients sometimes must travel to receive specialty and follow-up care.

"Safety net providers across Colorado often have limited time, resources and staff to effectively evaluate, adopt and scale innovative practices in their clinics such as patients using cell phones to remotely engage with their care team or using technology platforms to better connect with community-based partners," said Veenu Aulakh, CCI's president. "This learning collaborative creates a dedicated commitment of time and resources for them to connect with each other to learn about best practices and take advantage of other experts in the field."

In addition to the opportunity to learn from leading innovators and get hands-on support from technical experts, participating providers will receive grant funding to pilot the adoption of a new technology solutions that will solve an access to care challenge for their unique patient populations.

CCI will also be fostering partnerships with a broad array of organizations to strengthen the innovation ecosystem in Colorado to apply a human-centered approach and leverage technology to solve some of the most challenging problems facing safety net providers.

"The bottom line is while our safety net providers understand the complex health needs that exist for low-income and rural Coloradans, providers are currently ill-

equipped to effectively capitalize on innovative technologies that can increase access to culturally-competent care within their local communities," said Ben L. Bynum M.D., Colorado Health Foundation portfolio director of program related investments. "We see the launch of the Colorado Innovation Community as a catalyst for increasing the capacity of clinics to serve Coloradans living on low income with high-quality, comprehensive and integrated care that's centered on a patients' vulnerabilities, unique needs and individual preferences."

"Colorado Access decided to partner with the Colorado Innovation Community because we value innovation. As a Regional Accountable Entity (RAE) covering over 500,000 Coloradans who have low income, our board and staff have made supporting innovation a priority for this organization," said Marshall Thomas, M.D., CEO of Colorado Access. "Our chief information officer has been working closely with CCI so that we can serve as not only a funder, but also as a partner in evaluating the results of pilots throughout this initiative."

About the Center for Care Innovations

The Center for Care Innovations (CCI) is a nonprofit organization that provides creative, high quality, strategic design, implementation and program management for its partners.?CCI strives to build an ecosystem that supports healthy people and healthy communities. To learn more about CCI, visit www.careinnovations.org.

About The Denver Foundation

The Denver Foundation is a community foundation that inspires people and mobilizes resources to improve life in Metro Denver. In 2018, the Foundation and its donors awarded nearly $78 million in grants. The Denver Foundation has three roles: stewarding an endowment to meet current and future needs for Metro Denver, working with community leaders to address the core challenges that face the community and managing more than 1,000 charitable funds on behalf of individuals, families and businesses. To learn more about The Denver

Foundation, visit www.denverfoundation.org.

About Rose Community Foundation

Rose Community Foundation strives to enhance the quality of life of the Greater Denver community through leadership, grantmaking and donor engagement – stewarding philanthropic resources and investing in strategic and innovative solutions to enduring challenges and emerging issues. Since its founding in 1995, the Foundation has granted more than $290 million to organizations and initiatives focused on Aging, Child and Family Development, Education, Health and Jewish Life in seven-county Greater Denver—recently adding a cross-programmatic community action overlay of support for nonprofit organizations serving immigrants, refugees and communities vulnerable to discrimination and hate crimes. To learn more, please visit www.rcfdenver.org.

About Colorado Access

Founded in 1994, Colorado Access is a local, nonprofit health plan that serves members throughout Colorado. The company's members receive health care under Child Health Plan?Plus?(CHP+), Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) behavioral and physical health, and long-term support programs. Colorado Access is the state's largest single entry point agency, coordinating long-term service and supports for Health First Colorado recipients in five Denver metro area counties. To learn more about Colorado Access, visit www.coaccess.com.

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