



The Colorado Health Foundation™

Building Better Health: Cheryl's Story



Open enrollment takes on new meaning in rugged mountain counties like Chaffee and Lake, home to the breathtaking views around Salida and Leadville, yet also home to heart-straining social challenges.

You need to find a pass through the rugged terrain, says Cheryl Walker, family health coordinator for Chaffee County.

Residents who get paid to change beds at luxury resorts on the I-70 corridor rarely make enough to afford insurance on their own. Even the toughest ranchers have been known to shed a tear when they find out they can qualify for Medicaid expansion or an exchange subsidy.

Now, Walker wants to sign up even more this next go-round. The county uses funding from [Connect for Health Colorado](#) to hire coverage guides. The guides work with new clients to write letters to the editor of local newspapers explaining the Affordable Care Act.

“In small communities, it’s all about building a trusted network,” Walker says.

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