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Communications Associate Position at the Colorado Health Foundation

Health Promotion Manager at Clínica Tepeyac

CKF News

CKF Coalition Meeting

Thursday, July 20 from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

CCHN (600 Grant St., Ste. 800, Denver)

[June 2017 Meeting Notes](#)

[June 2017 Meeting Recording](#)

- [CKF Meeting and Event Calendar](#)
- Contact [Liz Tansey](#) with questions

Health Policy

Federal Legislation Update

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Health Care Act (AHCA) on May 4.

Since then, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) scored the House bill and estimates that 23

million more individuals would become uninsured and Medicaid spending would be cut by \$834 billion, by 2026. A working group of 13 Republican Senators, including Colorado Senator Cory Gardner, is now working on the Senate's version of the bill. After implementing Rule 14, the Senate will be able to bypass the typical committee process and bring the drafted bill directly to the Senate floor for a vote. Many reports indicate that the Senate leadership's intent is to bring the bill to the floor for a vote before the July 4 recess; however other reports indicate that the process may take longer with a bill introduced in August. There is currently little transparency in the Senate's process and it is unclear what policy changes may be in the new bill, but it is likely that the Senate's version will keep a substantial amount of the House's version, including changing the federal funding structure for Medicaid by implementing per capita caps on federal Medicaid funding to states, and effectively ending the adult Medicaid expansion. CKF continues to monitor this legislation. See the resources section for more. Please reach out to CKF Senior Project Manager, Stephanie Brooks, with questions (sbrooks@cchn.org).

IRS: Taxpayers Should Still Make Individual Shared Responsibility Payments

There have been questions about the Individual Shared Responsibility Provision, or tax penalty, of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and whether it is still in effect after a January 20, 2017, Executive Order directed federal agencies to minimize enforcement of the provision. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued guidance that explains how they plan to balance this direction with existing legislation that requires individuals to follow the law and provide proof of Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC). The guidance states that everyone must still do one of the following:

1. Have and report MEC;
2. Claim or report a coverage exemption; OR
3. Calculate and make a shared responsibility payment for the months without MEC or an exemption.

Full IRS guidance is available [here](#).

Connect for Health Colorado Blog Post: Here for 2018

Connect for Health Colorado CEO, Kevin Patterson, writes a weekly blog post to stay in touch with stakeholders. In his [message from June 2](#), he reassured stakeholders that Connect for Health Colorado is preparing for the next Open Enrollment Period with the same mission they have had over the last six years. He also included the following 2018 insurance plan deadlines:

- June 19 – Deadline for health insurance companies to file proposed individual and small group plans and premiums for the 2018 plan year with the state Division of Insurance (DOI).
- July 14 – The proposed plans and premiums become available to the public.
- August 4 – Deadline for public comment.
- Late Summer/Early Fall – The DOI releases approved 2018 plans and premiums.
- November 1 – Open Enrollment for 2018 begins.

Connect for Health Colorado's Priorities for Health Reform

In May, Connect for Health Colorado published four priorities that are necessary to ensure the individual market has a stable and balanced risk pool, and that consumers are able to purchase and use health insurance on the individual market. The four priorities are federal funding, state authority and flexibility, fund tax credits to meet consumer need and assure a balanced risk pool, and define coverage and rating standards. [Learn more about the four priorities for health reform here](#).

Technology Updates

Without Updating, Older Browsers Will Not Display PEAK after July 22

Beginning July 22, 2017, individuals will only be able to access PEAK if their web browser and operating system meet certain requirements. For example, the web browser Microsoft Internet Explorer must be version 11 or higher, and the operating system must be Windows 7 or higher. In many cases, if an individual updates their web browser to Google Chrome, that may resolve the issue. A scrolling warning is currently running on PEAK, and the PEAK technical support line will be available to help. View more details [here](#).

Important Updates to PEAK in June

Substantial updates will be made to PEAK on Sunday June 25. Please attend one of the PEAK Outreach training webinars on **Friday, June 23** at 1:00 pm ([register here](#)) or **Monday, June 26** at 9:00 am ([register here](#)).

View a summary of the changes [here](#). Some highlights include:

- *Changes to Earned Income:* Users will now have the ability to add multiple paychecks from a single employer, including self-employment.
- *Help Pages:* Users will have the option of answering “Was this information helpful?” on help pages with a thumbs up or thumbs down
- *Spouse Verifications for Non-MAGI Medical Assistance Programs:* A spouse’s income may now be correctly requested to verify eligibility for some non-MAGI programs.

A support call will also be held **Thursday, June 29** from 3:00 to 3:45 pm. Call 1-877-820-7831, passcode 349141#.

Outreach and Enrollment

Free Summer Meals for Kids and Teens

Colorado families can find nearby summer food sites by using the online, interactive map at [KidsFoodFinder.org](#), or by calling Hunger Free Colorado's statewide food resource hotline toll-free at **(855) 855-4626**. The statewide summer food program is supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Colorado Department of Education, Hunger Free Colorado, and many sponsors and sites across the state.

New Medicare Cards Coming Next Year

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is readying a fraud prevention initiative that removes Social Security numbers from Medicare cards to help combat identity theft and safeguard taxpayer dollars. The new cards will use a unique, randomly-assigned number called a Medicare Beneficiary Identifier to replace the Social Security-based Health Insurance Claim Number currently used on the Medicare card. CMS will begin mailing new cards in April 2018 and will meet the congressional deadline for replacing all Medicare cards by April 2019. See the [press release here](#).

Resources

Colorado Legislative Wrap-Up Analyses

- The Colorado Health Institute's annual *Legislation in Review* report, released on June 1, covers the highlights and delves deep into the state of health policy in 2017. Read the [report](#) and [blog](#).
- The Colorado Consumer Health Initiative wrapped up the Colorado state legislative session with a [blog post](#) and [score card](#) report.

- The Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing's summary of bills that were passed as part of the Department's agenda, and bills that impact the department is now available on the HCPF website, [here](#).

HCPF One-Pagers on CHP+, Medicaid Buy-In Available

New resources covering [Child Health Plan Plus \(CHP+\)](#) and [Buy-In Programs for People with Disabilities](#) are now available on the HCPF along with resources for [Medicaid Expansion](#) and [Colorado's efforts to curb opioid abuse](#).

Colorado Children's Campaign KIDS COUNT Report Released

KIDS COUNT is a national and state-by-state project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation to track the status of children in the United States. The Colorado Children's Campaign produces KIDS COUNT in Colorado as part of that project. The report is designed to provide user-friendly state and county data, helping decision makers and advocates understand the challenges and opportunities facing children statewide, and focus attention and resources on the areas where they are needed most. This year's report, *Elevating Equity: A Vibrant Future for Colorado's Kids*, delves deeply into disparities in child well-being based on race and ethnicity. View the report and additional resources [here](#).

Resources on the Impact of the AHCA

Understanding the CBO Score of the AHCA

Kaiser Health News published a [list of various articles](#) which provide a detailed analysis of the May 24 CBO report on the House-passed version of the AHCA. The Kaiser Family Foundation also developed [interactive maps](#) to help illustrate how premiums and tax credits would change under the proposed legislation.

Rural Health Report Examines the Impact of Medicaid in Rural Areas and Small Towns

A new report released by the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families and the University of North Carolina Rural Health Research Program describes how adults and kids in rural areas and small towns are more likely to be covered by Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, than those in more urban areas. In Colorado, Medicaid provides health coverage to 26 percent of kids and families living in small towns and rural communities. See the full report, interactive map, and state-specific data, and other resources [here](#).

Report Shows ACA Repeal Would Disproportionately Impact Black and Hispanic Kids

In a [new report](#), the Institute for Child, Youth and Family Policy at Brandeis University explores the racial and ethnic breakdown of potential Medicaid coverage losses for children ages 6-19 if the AHCA were to become law. Almost 40 percent of Medicaid enrollees are children and a disproportionate number are children of color. With that in mind, a roll back of the federal minimum eligibility level for school-aged children (6-19) from 138 percent to 100 percent of the federal poverty level would harm children and exacerbate health disparities. The report finds that 4.7 million children would no longer be eligible for Medicaid, and Black and Hispanic children would be disproportionately affected.

CBPP Resources

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) released several resources on the ACHA including the following reports and analyses:

- *People of All Ages and Incomes Would Lose Coverage Under House Bill, CBO Data Show*. This [report](#), released on June 14 shows the coverage losses attributable to the

House's AHCA. The report succinctly illustrates data published by the CBO about health coverage losses due to the proposed legislation.

- *House Health Bill Would Effectively End ACA Medicaid Expansion.* This [analysis](#) includes new state-level estimates that the AHCA's cost shift to states would require them to come up with tens of billions more in annual funding from their own budgets in order to maintain their expansions. The House proposal would thus effectively end the Medicaid expansion now in effect in most or all of the 31 states and Washington, D.C. and preclude other states from adopting the expansion.
- *People Losing Medicaid under House Bill Would Face High Barriers to Coverage.* This [paper](#) examines the options people losing Medicaid under the House's ACHA would face in the individual market. For example, people age 60 or older with income at or below the poverty line would pay premiums on the individual-market that would consume at least 45 percent of their income. Middle-aged people with income at the poverty line would have premiums that consume more than one-fifth of income in most states.

Upcoming Calls, Trainings, and Events

DHS Offers Navigator Training

Denver Human Services (DHS) offers a navigator training for community partners. The navigator training includes an overview of the programs DHS offers, including food assistance, basic eligibility for Health First Colorado and cash programs, energy assistance, child support, childcare assistance program, PEAK, and a brief overview of the ACA. For more information and to register, please contact Kathy Crusan-Ford, Agency Trainer for SNAP Into Health, at Kathleen.Crusan-Ford@denvergov.org. The upcoming trainings will be held:

- **Friday, June 23** from 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. 1200 Federal Blvd., Room 1019, Denver
- **Friday, July 28** from 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. 1200 Federal Blvd., Room 1019, Denver

Jobs

Communications Associate Position at the Colorado Health Foundation

The Colorado Health Foundation is hiring a Communications Associate. This position closes on Friday, June 30, 2017. Learn more and apply [here](#).

Health Promotion Manager at Clínica Tepeyac

Clínica Tepeyac is hiring a Health Promotion Manager which will oversee health promotions and outreach and enrollment work. This position closes Friday, June 30, 2017. Learn more and apply [here](#).