



Positive Press

The Official Newsletter of the Southern Colorado Health Network

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QUEER COS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Summary of Findings

In September of 2019, Rebecca Willey and Melissa Chizmar of the Colorado Springs Prevention Department of SCHN were given a small grant to study gaps in services for the Colorado Springs queer community. They conducted focus groups, interviews and an online survey with a total of 64 people. They presented the data to the larger community on Friday, May 28.

They found that the participants of the needs assessment feel that there is a lack of community, visibility, queer spaces, queer-affirming healthcare and other services in Colorado Springs, which impedes the community's ability to survive and thrive. This lack of services also increases the risk of negative downstream effects like negative health outcomes, violence, homelessness, and substance misuse. The high turnover and overall growth of the population in Colorado Springs increases the need for queer spaces even more.

100% of the survey's respondents feel there is a need for a queer community center with free sexual health services.

One survey respondent wrote: "The resources that have previously been allocated are simply insufficient for the size and diversity of our community here. As a trans woman, I am constantly asked why I don't move to Denver. I always have the same answer. Because Colorado Springs is my home. I have the ability to be my loud and proud self for those who can't or are not ready to. And this city needs to know we're here. People's lives depend on that."



The needs assessment participants called for a need to co-creating a space for the queer community to access **basic needs**, to **gather** and build community, and to organize and engage in activism to **resist** oppressive systems and create change.

CALL TO ACTION: Committed funders and partners are needed to create and sustain affirming services for the Colorado Springs queer community. If interested in finding out about how you can get involved, please reach out to:

rebecca.willey@coloradohealthnetwork.org or
melissa.chizmar@coloradohealthnetwork.org

June is Pride Month!

The month of June was chosen for LGBT Pride Month to commemorate the riots held by members of the LGBT community against a police raid that took place at the Stonewall Inn in New York City on June 28, 1969.

The so-called Stonewall riots were a "tipping point" for the gay liberation movement in the United States, according to the Library of Congress. The uproar also paved the way for the modern fight for LGBT rights.

Pride Month events draw millions of participants from around the world each year. Typically, there are month long celebrations and in-person gatherings that take place across the nation, including pride parades, marches, parties, concerts, workshops and symposiums. Memorials are also often held for members of the LGBT community who have lost their lives to hate crimes or HIV/AIDS.

Find out how to join PrideFest 2021!

Denver Pride: www.denverpride.org

Pueblo Pride: www.socoequality.org

Colorado Springs PrideFest: www.cospridefest.com

Juneteenth Festival

Juneteenth, an annual holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States, has been celebrated by African-Americans since the late 1800s. SCHN is a proud supporter of the Colorado Springs Juneteenth Festival as we work to support people living with or at risk of acquiring HIV in all communities. Stop by during the festival and visit the SCHN booth!

June 18-21

America the Beautiful Park, Colorado Springs

www.csjuneteenthfestival.com



JUNE HIV AWARENESS AND TESTING DAYS

HIV Long-Term Survivors Awareness Day (HLTSAD) is June 5, 2021. This June 5th also marks the 40th anniversary of the first reported cases of AIDS identified in the US in 1981.



Since 1995, National HIV Testing Day has been observed and recognized on June 27th each year. In the United States, there are nearly 1.1 million people living with HIV and almost one in five do not know that they are infected. Getting the test is the first step to find out if you have HIV.



Anyone who tests positive should know the steps to living a longer and healthier life with HIV and how to help stop the spread of HIV to others. These steps include getting medical care, HIV education, and taking the proper medications regularly. Go to www.aids.gov or www.cdc.gov to find a testing site near you.

CLIENTS: EARN \$\$\$ BY TAKING A SURVEY OR JOINING A VIRTUAL FOCUS GROUP

WE NEED YOUR VOICE!

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH HIV PREVENTION OR CARE SERVICES AND
HELP DECIDE THE DIRECTION OF FUTURE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN TWO WAYS:

Survey

Earn a \$25 gift card for completing a 30 minute survey

Link: <https://omniinstitute.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV6hAyKFKjurVovY>

Complete survey at SCHN office on computer

Call your case manager for assistance

Focus Group (Clients are selected for the focus group)

Earn a \$30 gift card for taking part in a virtual focus group!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/cointerestform>

Eligibility At least 18 years old and live in Colorado



ACCESS POINT PUEBLO UPDATE

Access Point and the prevention team in Pueblo have continued to be busy as ever! In the month of May, program participants reversed 25 overdoses, making for 135 lives saved in 2021. Staff completed a community clean up and responded to two community calls reporting syringes; getting 19 syringes off of the streets of Pueblo. The Pueblo team received cross training for Hepatitis C & STI testing and are eager to start testing clients soon. With recent certifications in Phlebotomy, staff are excited to soon provide confirmatory testing and streamline result delivery and linkage-to-care. To kick off the expansion of our testing, which now includes syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia, Access Point Pueblo hosted a small resource fair on May 24. The event was a huge success; with 6 individuals accessing testing services, 300 lbs of food distributed, clothing distribution, 15+ free haircuts, Acudetox, and resources for local clinics. Prevention Coordinators in Pueblo continue to assess needs for prevention services across the Southeastern region, and are busy reaching out to rural counties; including Crowley, Otero, and Prowers. If you know of anyone in rural Southeastern Colorado who would benefit from testing services or syringe access please contact the Pueblo office and ask for Christine or Lizzy.



PUEBLO FOOD PANTRY UPDATE by Teresa Martinez

On Monday May 24th, SCHN and community agencies assembled at the Pueblo Convention Center to fill 1,000 backpacks for the homeless. Each backpack was filled with: soup, chili beans, Vienna sausage, shelf stable milk, saltine crackers, fruit cups and granola bars. Back packs were distributed to Harbor House, the Rescue Mission and SCHN received some as well. All agencies who participate in the Pueblo County Food Project Hunger Task Force are also able to access these backpacks. It was great to see so many agencies come together to complete this task and we appreciated the assistance from Harbor House and the Rescue Mission participants.

The Pueblo County Food Project Hunger Task Force continues to provide food for our Ryan White and Access Point participants as well as providing fresh fruits and vegetable as they become available in Pueblo County. A special thank you to all Pueblo Farmers who participate and donate to the project.

I encourage all of our clients to stop by and access our food pantry as we have so much more to offer.

Pantry is open 5 days a week, 9am-3pm and we encourage appointments, but we will also take walk-ins. Gaby and I look forward to seeing you!



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CHN FESTIVAL FOR LIFE SLATED FOR 8/21/21 IN CHEESMAN PARK

Colorado Health Network is thrilled to bring the Festival For Life back in 2021 with a hybrid virtual and in-person event.

On Saturday, 8/21/21 Colorado Health Network will host an in-person Festival at Cheesman Park in Denver from 9am – 1pm. This socially distanced, outdoor event will include a display of panels from the AIDS Memorial Quilt, a ceremonial walk around the park (not a full 5K), the 10th annual Diva Dash, a refreshment garden, and informational booths from partner agencies and vendors.



www.coloradohealthnetwork.org

Save the Date:

Sept. 30 to Oct. 2, 2021

We would like to invite all female and non-binary Clients of CHN to participate in the 2021 Women's Retreat. Portions of the retreat will be virtual/online and portions will be held in person. More details will be available in the coming months. Please reach out to your case manager or to the Behavioral Health Department for more details by calling 719/578-9092.



HEALTH ACCESS/INSURANCE UPDATE

If you receive a check from the IRS or your insurance company, it may be owed back to the SDAP program. Connect with your Health Access Program Coordinator if you receive a payment in the mail from your insurance carrier or the IRS.

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) has changed the amount of Advanced Premium Tax Credits (APTC) that many clients are eligible for on Marketplace plans with Connect for Health Colorado. If you haven't yet met with your Health Access Program Coordinator to review your insurance enrollment with the Marketplace, Connect for Health Colorado, reach out to your Case Manager or Health Access Program Coordinator as soon as possible to make the necessary updates to your account.

Just a reminder, as of July 1st SDAP will no longer be accepting verbal signatures on documents for recertification. Connect with your Case Manager or Health Access Program Coordinator for assistance with ADAP recertifications. You can also complete your recertification easily online at COenroll.com Contact your HAPC for more information on completing ADAP recertification online.

Access Point Pueblo

Free, sterile supplies available for those who need them. **Tuesday & Thursday**
10am-12:00pm & 1:30pm-4:00pm
Southern Colorado Health Network
807 N. Greenwood St., Ste 200
Pueblo, CO 81003



719-621-1105

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Are you interested in receiving the Positive Press through e-mail? If so, please contact your Case Manager to be added to our e-mail list! You'll get the newest Positive Press in the fastest way possible, and you'll save some trees, too!
<https://www.facebook.com/SoColoAIDSProj>



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