



Positive Press

The Official Newsletter of the Southern Colorado Health Network

November 2021

Volume 14. Issue 11

HEALTH ACCESS/INSURANCE UPDATE: DEADLINES APPROACHING

It's that time of year again-Open Enrollment on Connect for Health Colorado, Colorado's insurance marketplace. November 1-January 15th Coloradans will be able to enroll in marketplace coverage for 2022. This is typically the ONLY time one can enroll in marketplace insurance throughout the year, without a qualifying life-change event, so don't miss out.

December 15th is the LAST DAY to enroll in coverage that begins January 1st 2022. Clients who enroll in plans after December 15th will likely not have coverage until February 2022. If you are not on Medicaid or enrolled in insurance through your employer, you may be eligible for marketplace insurance. Contact your Health Access Program Coordinator or Case Manager as soon as possible to get an appointment scheduled.

If you or your spouse is eligible for insurance through an employer, you may be eligible to enroll and receive premium assistance for the plan. Contact your HAPC or your Case Manager for more information.

MEDICAID ALERT

If you have Medicaid, you can expect to receive a notice from Health First Colorado (Medicaid) regarding your next renewal. It is very important that you read and respond to this renewal request within the deadline, **EVEN IF YOU KNOW YOU ARE OVER INCOME**. If you are over income for Medicaid and allow your coverage to lapse without trying to recertify, you won't qualify for a special enrollment period to enroll in a medical insurance plan through Connect for Health Colorado.



Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) Got Underway on November 1



LEAP

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) for 2021-22 started up again on November 1. LEAP is designed to help eligible low-income households with winter home heating costs and is available to all individuals meeting certain financial guidelines.

If you applied last year, you should have received the 2021-22 application in the mail. If you did not apply last year and would like to apply this year, your SCHN case manager can mail you an application or you can call 1-866-432-8435 to receive an application.

LEAP does not pay the entire cost of home heating. If qualified, you will receive a one-time payment sometime between 11/1/21 and 4/30/22. For additional information, call 1-866-432-8435.

World AIDS Day, December 1

2021 Theme: ***“Ending the HIV Epidemic: Equitable Access, Everyone’s Voice”***



Since 1988, each year on December 1, the world observes and commemorates World AIDS Day. People around the world unite to show support for people living with HIV and to remember those who have died from AIDS-related illnesses.

World AIDS Day was the first ever international day for global health. Beginning in 1988 and every year since, United Nations agencies, governments and civil society join together to campaign around specific themes and topics related to HIV. The UNAIDS World AIDS Day theme for 2021 is: End inequalities. End AIDS. End Pandemics.

Campaigns around the globe include: Awareness-raising activities; People wearing a red ribbon, the universal symbol of HIV/AIDS awareness; People living with HIV making their voice heard on issues important in their lives; Groups of people living with HIV and other civil society organizations involved in the AIDS response mobilizing in support of the communities they serve and to raise funds; Events highlighting the current state of the epidemic.

Globally, there have been between 35 to 45 million people who have died of HIV or AIDS-related illnesses and it is estimated that 38 million people are currently living with HIV. Today, scientific advances have been made in HIV treatment and prevention and there are laws to protect people living with HIV.

Nonetheless, World AIDS Day remains as relevant today as it has always been, reminding people and governments that HIV has not gone away. There is still a critical need for increased funding for the AIDS response, to increase awareness of the impact of HIV on people’s lives, to end stigma and discrimination, and to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV.

ACCESS POINT PUEBLO (APP) UPDATE

By Sarah Money, Syringe Access Program Manager

In the month of September, Access Point Pueblo served 686 people with a total of 1170 visits. It’s been busy! On that note, APP staffers saw a huge increase of overdoses in September, with 55 lives saved. Many of these overdoses are coming from illicit pills laced with fentanyl. APP staff is highly encouraging folx to pick up fentanyl test strips and naloxone as the drug supply continues to change.

September was a great month in many ways. Ascent Health, a substance use treatment provider in Colorado Springs, has signed an MOU with APP and is now on site every programming day! Folx are able to enroll immediately via telehealth and complete their intake appointment on site, or from their own homes. There has been a lot of interest and a handful of enrollments already!

Meetings will be starting soon to discuss opioid settlement funds, and APP staff are eagerly awaiting their role in the conversations. The community has come together to start and identify priorities and APP staffers are hopeful that our folx will receive more support and services they desperately need.

HIV/HCV/STI testing has been under high demand and we are working hard to meet the unexpected need! Testing has been minimal in the past, but with the addition of STI testing many more folx are coming in.

As previously mentioned, the APP mural to combat stigma is almost complete on the Pueblo Arkansas River levee. Huge thanks to the artist, Audra Hazel, for helping with the mural design and doing the hard work of painting the mural.

CHILDREN’S GIFTS, FOOD BASKETS AND FOOD CARDS TO BE DISTRIBUTED DEC. 8-17

ELIGIBLE COLORADO SPRINGS AREA CLIENTS WHO SIGNED UP FOR THE CHILDREN’S HOLIDAY GIFT PROGRAM WILL BE ABLE TO PICK-UP THE GIFTS FROM 9 TO 5 ON THE DAYS OF DECEMBER 8-17 AT THE COLORADO SPRINGS OFFICE. COLORADO SPRINGS AREA CLIENTS WHO SIGNED UP FOR A FOOD BASKET CAN PICK IT UP FROM 9 TO 5 ON THE DAYS OF DECEMBER 8-17. MONETARY HOLIDAY FOOD GIFT CARDS WILL BE MAILED TO SCHN CLIENTS IN OTHER SERVICE AREAS DURING THIS SAME TIME FRAME.



TOOLS AND TIPS TO COMBAT HOLIDAY AND WINTER BLUES AND BLAHS

It's that time of year again! The season we hope is filled with tasty food, fun activities, and quality time with friends and family. However, the holidays can also bring focus to stressors such as financial burdens, health concerns, particularly during COVID-19, and lack of free time. If you are looking for some tools to help you combat the winter blues and blahs, look no further!

Take Care of Yourself: Be mindful about your personal needs. They matter! In this time of togetherness, it is easy to get caught up in other's needs and space. During this time, it is helpful to ask ourselves questions about our overall functioning. Are you paying attention to how you feel when you eat? Are you sleeping enough? These are just a few foundational needs we have to address during this busy time. Do you feel fulfilled? When was the last time you had fun or a good laugh? How are you attending to your creative, spiritual, and emotional needs? These are also helpful questions that can jump start an impactful beginning to the New Year. This is the time to make yourself a priority!

Set Boundaries: Boundaries are important, especially during the holiday season. Boundaries allow you to have autonomy over your space and understand and communicate your limits and expectations. Think about small ways you are able to incorporate boundaries into your routine. Are you able to advocate for your needs and space with your loved ones? Do you need financial boundaries this season?

Get Sunlight: The winter months bring the cold weather and less sunlight. If you are able to, make sure you get some sunlight during the day, even it is by your favorite window or a short visit outside. If you experience Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) or if you are concerned about increased depression during this time, check in with your medical provider.

Move Your Body: Physical activity is helpful to produce endorphins and improve sleep. Strive to do physical activity at least a few days a week, even if you start with 10 minutes. Focus on your emotions and your body sensations as you increase your physical activity. Also pay attention to the type of physical activity you like to do. It is not a one size fits all. Have fun!

Limit Alcohol Intake: Keep in mind that alcohol is classified as a depressant and affects the nervous system, so drinking while already feeling down can worsen that feeling.

Get and Give Support: Reach out to your social network if you are feeling isolated. Plan ahead to meet with your loved ones. Create a fun new tradition with friends and/or family that highlights themes of the season. If you feel you need extra support, reach out to a professional to discuss your needs. If your cup is filled this season, think about reaching out and lending a hand to others through volunteer service or through donations.

Give Yourself Grace: Please be gentle with yourself. You are human, you are worthy, and uniquely you. Own it!

Crochet Corner

If you have been itching to get out to safely socialize and love to crochet or knit (or want to learn)—Join us at SCHN for some yarny fun! SCHN's Crochet Corner will be held the third Tuesday of every month for an hour to relax and let your creative side free! This group is open to all clients or staff who want to explore what fiber art is all about. Bring your own hooks, yarn, and projects – or let Case Manager Jennifer know ahead of time and we will have supplies available. You are welcome to bring your sack lunch. We are limited to 8 participants so please call asap to reserve your spot!

When: The 3rd Tuesday of every month, 12pm to 1pm

Where: SCHN Conference room (masks required)

Please RSVP to: Jennifer Bailey, 719-578-9092, jennifer.bailey@coloradohealthnetwork



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Positive Press

REDOBALL

Igniting Awareness for World AIDS Day

SAVE THE DATE 11.21.21

Reelworks Event Center



Orchestrated by Three Denver Icons



Jacob Mora
Choreographer



Sinna-G
Music



Debbie Scheer
Emcee

Denver's Visionary Fashion Runway Benefit • Thirteen Colorado Designers • More Than 60 Models
More information about Red Ball and ticket sales at coloradohealthnetwork.org/events/red-ball

SUPPORT SCHN THROUGH THE INDY GIVE! CAMPAIGN; NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2021

The Southern Colorado Health Network (SCHN) is pleased to once again be included in the Indy Give! Campaign. Indy Give! Is a year-end (November-December giving period) philanthropic initiative created to encourage everyone in the Pikes Peak region to give back and get involved with local nonprofits.

The Indy Give! Campaign enables SCHN to highlight its mission of meeting the evolving needs of people affected by HIV and other health conditions throughout southern Colorado and also provides SCHN with the opportunity to raise funds in order to support all SCHN programs and services.



Please plan to join us for some fun events that help raise funds to support the communities we serve. Stay tuned for more details on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/SouthernCHN

Information on how to support SCHN can be found at www.indygive.com/SCHN

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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<https://www.facebook.com/SoColoAIDSProj>



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