

Demand for Paramedic School Surges in Pandemic



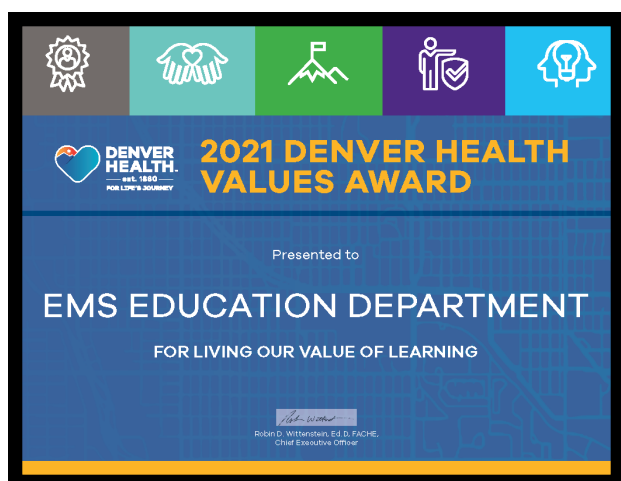
In a time when other emergency medical service (EMS) programs shut down, the [Denver Health Paramedic School](#) not only stayed open; it grew – and not by a little. According to Denver Health Paramedic Division Assistant Chief Justin Harper, pictured second from the right above with EMS Education Department staff, program applications have quadrupled since pre-pandemic days. In the presence of COVID, student enrollment in the school's paramedic program has doubled, and enrollment in its emergency medical technician (EMT) program has tripled.

Finding a way to accommodate the surge in demand for EMS-trained professionals during the challenging circumstances was no easy task. But the 17-member EMS Education team didn't let clinic shutdowns, social distancing requirements and supply shortages keep them from teaching the life-saving skills no community should go without. They devised innovative solutions, including simulations in place of clinical hours in the Emergency Room, a rigorous boot camp and virtual learning for classroom instruction. The team's determination, hard work and nimble spirit have served the school, the organization and the city.



So far, they've put more than 600 EMTs and 100 paramedics through the infection prevention-modified programs – and the new grads' knowledge is being put to use fast. Our Paramedic Division has already hired 26 of the paramedics they trained since COVID hit. "What this team has been able to accomplish on the fly is remarkable to me, and I couldn't be more proud of them," said Harper, who oversees instruction and training within the division.

The team's achievements haven't gone unnoticed. Earlier this year, Chief Executive Officer Robin Wittenstein presented them with a 2021 Denver Health Values Award for Learning.

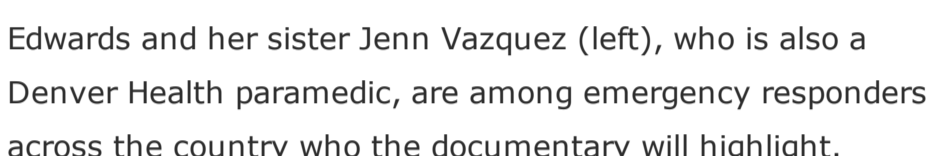
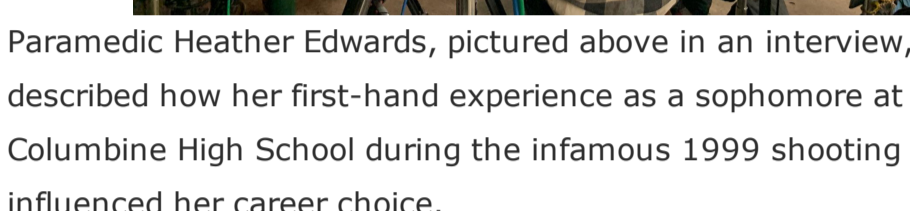
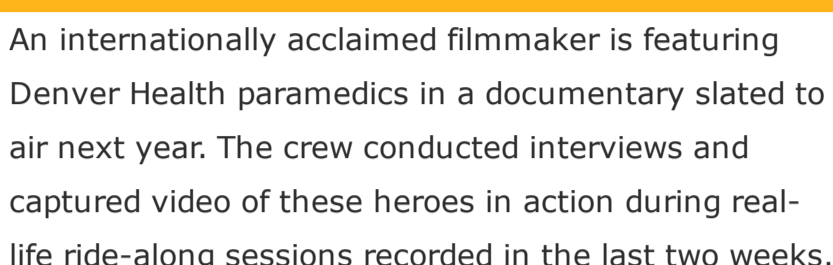


Equally impressive is the department's new career pipeline program at South High School. Students there began learning Denver Health Paramedic School curriculum in September and will be able to graduate in spring as nationally and state-certified EMTs. They'll also have the opportunity for employment in our Paramedic Division.

The department offers scholarships for low-income earners and people of diverse backgrounds. In addition, the team is focusing on training paramedics not only in Denver but also in Colorado's rural areas. "We feel it's really valuable to give back to the community, and it's an important part of our role as an Anchor Institution," Harper said.

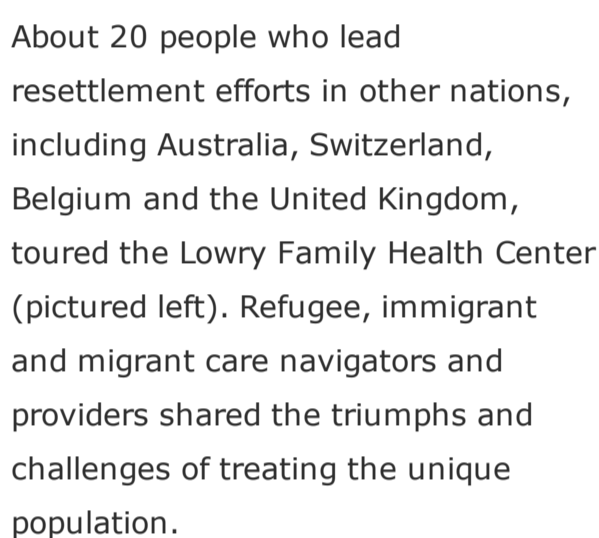
The EMS Education Department is an incredible example of the people who make Denver Health what it is: our staff. Thank you for being the [heart of Denver Health](#).



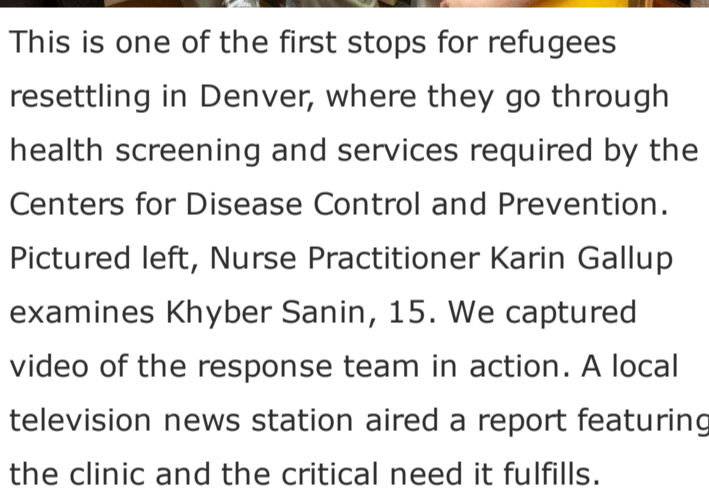
[Read more](#)

International Officials Learn from Refugee Response Team

Denver Health's Refugee Clinic hosted visitors from around the world yesterday, who came here to learn how we screen our patients and take some of those ideas back to their own countries.

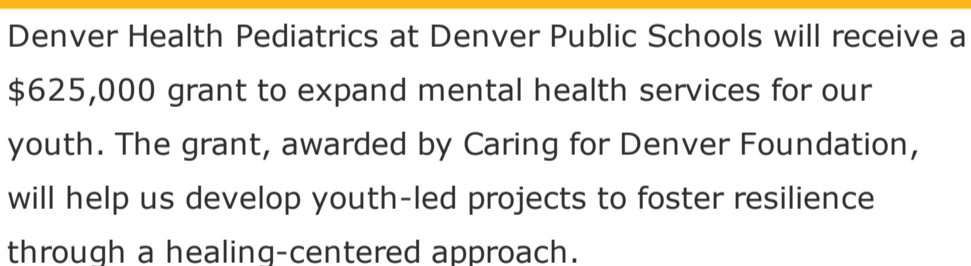


Denver Health's Afghan Refugee Response Team has screened more than 450 evacuees since it opened in November after the U.S. ended military operations in Afghanistan. Pictured right, Noorulah Alokkzai, who worked as a chef in Afghanistan, recently came to the Denver Health Afghan Refugee Clinic with his daughter Sideeqa, 3, and son Rohullah, 10. The clinic is held every Saturday at the Peña Southwest Family Health Center.



Watch videos

\$625,000 Grant to Expand Mental Health Services for Youth



See how

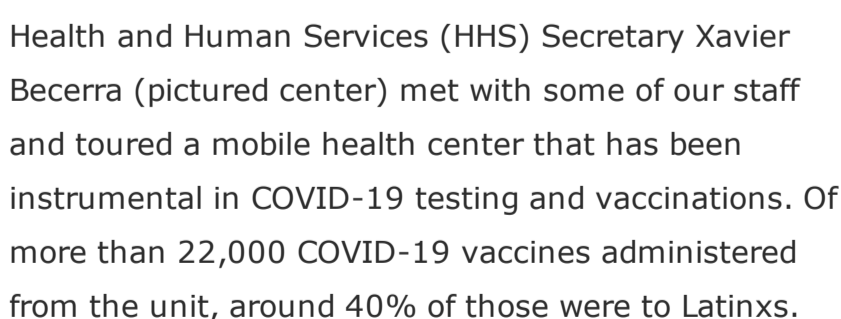
A horizontal row of five stylized illustrations of healthcare professionals. From left to right: a woman with dark hair in a white lab coat, a man with a white beard and glasses in a white lab coat, a woman with dark skin and short black hair in a blue lab coat, a man with a beard and glasses in a white lab coat, and a woman with short pink hair in a blue lab coat. Each professional is holding a large, bright yellow five-pointed star above their head with both hands. The background is a solid blue color.

Root Canal at Westside Dental 'as Relaxing as a Massage'

[Read reviews](#)

Telehealth Success in Latinxs Highlighted at White House Summit

The White House Initiative Latino Economic Summit, held Saturday in Denver, highlighted Denver Health's success in caring for the city's Latinx population during the pandemic through our expanded telehealth program.



[Learn more](#)

Important Dates — April 2022

April 27: Managing Unexpected Events Financial Webinar



Submit content for consideration in the Weekly 411 through the employee outreach request form [here](#). Accuracy and quality matter, so please *provide all material as early as possible*. Your submission should detail who, what, when, where, why and how, with correct spelling and explanation of acronyms. We encourage you to include photos and any links or attachments that may help to communicate your message. Content received after noon on Tuesday will be considered for the following week's edition.





RMPDS Director to Support Ukraine



One of our colleagues at Rocky Mountain Poison & Drug Safety (RMPDS) is getting ready for a three-month mission to help refugees fleeing Ukraine. Laura Hoganson, director of Information Technology (IT) at RMPDS, will depart for Romania May 1 to get urgent medications and supplies to hospitals across Ukraine and neighboring countries.

An Air Force veteran with experience in combat communications, Hoganson will join forces with global health and humanitarian relief organization Project HOPE. "I can't sit back watching the atrocities in Ukraine knowing I have the knowledge, skill and experience to help. I feel compelled to step up and do the right thing," Hoganson said.

[Read more](#)


'Response and Restoration' Artwork Moves to Montbello

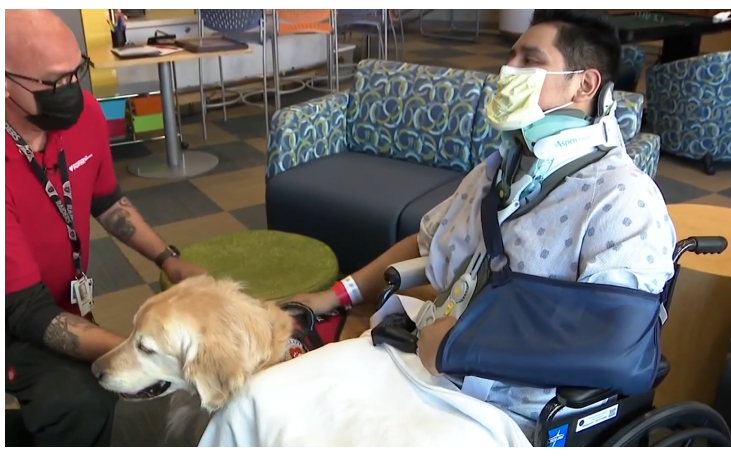


The one-of-a-kind display created by Denver Health staff in a cathartic art project has a new home. In its first stop on a tour of primary care clinics across Denver Health, "Response and Restoration" showed up yesterday at Montbello Family Health Center.

Employees decorated unusable masks that were collected and sterilized during pandemic supply shortages. The meaningful masterpiece, which represents the struggles endured through COVID-19, will brighten Montbello's lobby for several weeks before moving to another location.

[See photos](#)

Patients Helped Heal Pet Therapy Dog Remy



When Pet Therapy dog Remy started walking the halls of Denver Health seven years ago, he needed the patients just as much as they needed him. A local news station featured Remy and his owner, Eric Hoff, on Sunday as everyday heroes.

[Watch video](#)

STAY INFORMED

Days of Celebration to Honor Staff June 20-24



Plans are underway for Denver Health's 2022 Days of Celebration, which will take place June 20-24. The theme for this year's celebration is "Belonging." We'll kick off the week-long event with a Juneteenth commemoration. Our annual Days of Celebration honors you – our incredible staff – and celebrates the commitment, hard work and compassion you show to our patients and each other every day.

Activities will include a community art project, an ice cream social, and social and wellness activities. The week will close with a barbecue, music, events and vendors as we launch into Pride weekend. We'll also shine a light on employees who embody the values and mission of Denver Health with a Living Our Values Awards ceremony. Start thinking about colleagues you'd like to nominate and keep a look out on the Pulse homepage for an award nomination form opening next week. Pulling off an amazing celebration requires volunteers.

If you're interested in helping, please reach out to Erin Howard, director of Organizational Development.

[Volunteer](#)

Costumes and Shout-Outs Encouraged for National Superhero Day



Do you have a superhero colleague? Send a shout-out to recognize their amazing, everyday actions.

[Submit Shout-Out](#)

Culture of Safety Survey Open Now through May 1

Denver Health's senior management team wants to know what you think about progress we've made in our culture of safety; employee engagement; provider alignment; and diversity, equity and inclusion.



The 2022 Denver Health Culture of Safety Survey is open now through May 1 and takes about one minute to complete. All responses are anonymous.

[Take survey](#)

Deadline to Apply for Fall 2022 Medical Assistant Program: May 29

If you're interested in becoming a medical assistant, now is your chance to apply to the National Institute for Medical Assistant Advancement (NIMAA) with no application fee.



Today only, the \$25 fee to apply for the program's fall 2022 session is waived. The eight-month, grant-funded program combines online curriculum with 240 hours of hands-on clinical experience in the primary health care setting. A flexible schedule will allow you to continue working at Denver Health while learning.

A 12-month employment agreement in a benefit-eligible position of 20 hours or more per week is required upon graduation. The application deadline is May 29.

[Apply](#)

Denver Health Ups Efforts in Recruitment and Hiring



Staffing shortages across Colorado and the United States are taking a toll on hospitals – and Denver Health is no exception. The shortages are impacting workload and patient care in many of our departments. In response, Denver Health is upping our recruitment and hiring efforts.

[See how](#)

HEART OF DENVER HEALTH

Residency Program Launching Long-lasting Careers in Primary Care



As a learning institution, Denver Health is passionate about training the next generation of primary care physicians. There may be no better example of that than Dr. Yasmin Sacro, program director of the University of Colorado Internal Medicine Primary Care Track at Denver Health.

[Be inspired](#)

April

April 27: [Loan Forgiveness Information Session](#)
 April 27: [Managing Unexpected Events Webinar](#)
 April 28: [Retirement Committee Form](#) Deadline

May

May 1: [Culture of Safety Survey](#) Closes
 May 6–12: [Denver Health Nurses Week](#)
 May 10: [Paramedics Awards Celebration](#)
 May 13: [LEAP & Anosognosia Training](#)
 May 13: [Rockies' Healthcare Appreciation](#)
 May 24: [Financial Webinar: Five Money Musts](#)
 May 29: [MA Program Application](#) Deadline



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GOING GREEN

Energy Performance Contract to Save \$800,000 Annually



An upgrade to Denver Health's energy infrastructure will save the organization \$800,000 per year. The upgrade project, which began last month, will replace old air conditioning equipment, increase cooling capacity and add a robust digital building analytics tracking platform that helps predict issues before they happen.



Through an energy performance contract (EPC), we're able to use guaranteed future energy savings to pay for the much needed infrastructure and utility upgrades. It's the latest step in Denver Health's sustainability initiative that began in 2019 with an organization-wide energy evaluation identifying measures to save money and boost performance. Kicking off our growing list of green practices, Denver Health's Facilities Management team replaced incandescent light bulbs throughout the hospital with light-emitting diode (LED) products to help the environment and our bottom line. In addition to the annual savings, Denver Health captured a one-time rebate of \$540,000.

Other accomplishments so far include installing rooftop solar panels at Eastside Family Health Center and the South Employee Parking Garage to collect rays that offset costs. As a major energy consumer and critical safety net health care institution, the efforts position Denver Health to become a leader in sustainability, showing that energy conservation doesn't diminish resiliency and performance – it improves them. We'll also have a head start on goals set by the State of Colorado and the City and County of Denver to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



To view a PowerPoint [presentation on the EPC](#) and learn more about our other strides in sustainability, visit the [Engineering site](#) on the Pulse.

[Back to 411](#)

Medical Plan Call Center Manager Leaves No Stone Unturned



Staff in our hospital and clinics work hard to give the best health care to our patients. But their experience paying their bill and understanding their insurance benefits is just as important as the services they receive. [Jeffery Cole](#), health plan manager for the Denver Health Medical Plan (DHMP), is making sure that process is as seamless as their care.

Denver Health recognized him with a [2021 Values Award](#) for the relentlessness he demonstrates every day. “If I get approached with a situation and the team or a patient is having a challenging time, I won't leave any stone unturned,” Cole said. “I want people to feel like I'm dropping everything for them to get the information they need.”

Overseeing the 20 representatives who handle the 11,000 calls that come into the medical plan's call center each month, when an issue gets to Cole, it's usually not an easy one to resolve. Sometimes, patients want to know why their insurance didn't fully cover a treatment or why they owe the amount on the bill. Cole goes the extra mile to get to the bottom of every issue and treats customers the way he would want to be treated. “It's important for them to feel they've been heard,” he said.

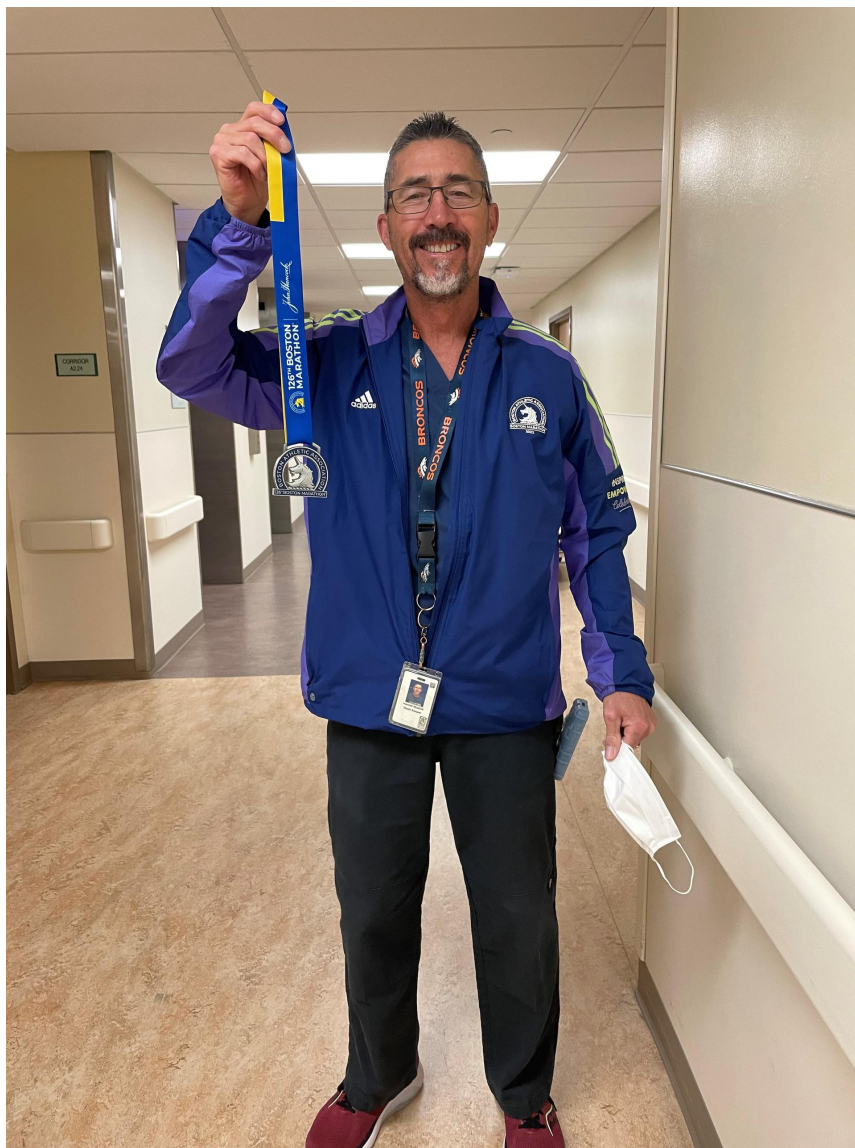


His passion for managed care stems from decades of experience on the other side of the coin working in hospital revenue cycle management. Denver Health's mission to care for all, regardless of ability to pay, is a big part of what keeps him here. “Denver Health supports the community and serves the underserved. That's what we do at DHMP, too. We have a strong presence in our community, and when people are contacting the medical plan, they're probably contacting their neighbor,” Cole said.

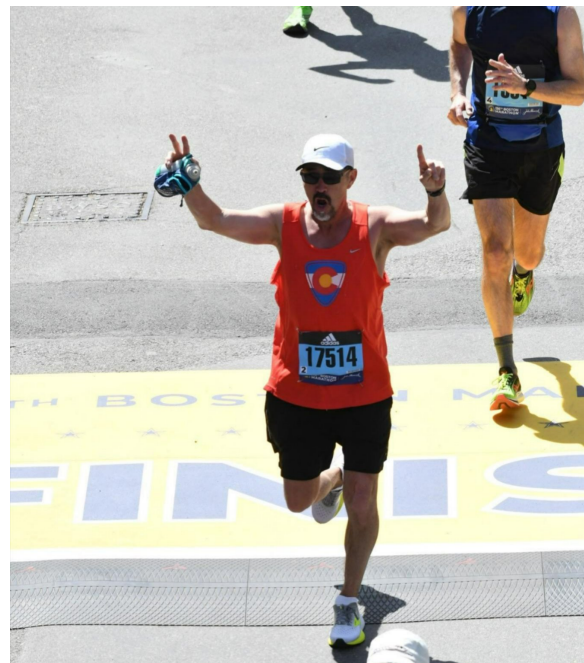
Thank you to Jeffery Cole and all of our inspiring employees for being the heart of Denver Health.

60-year-old Stock Keeper Runs in World's Most Coveted Marathon

Fifteen years after setting out to compete in the most coveted race in the world, a 60-year-old Denver Health stock keeper beat the odds and ran in the Boston Marathon.



Up against setbacks that might have thrown others off track, Harold Madrid never lost sight of the finish line and is sharing his incredible story.



Be inspired

Thursday, July 7, 2022



Interview: Shooting Survivor Grateful for Denver Health



A Denver man shot by a stranger with an AK-47 is sharing his story and gratitude for the Denver Health team who saved his life and got him walking again. Darian Simon was walking his dog outside his apartment near Coors Field two years ago when 24 rounds flew at him and his girlfriend, Bella Thallas. Bullets shattered Simon's right femur and ended Thallas' life.

Simon remembers arriving at Denver Health fearing the worst of his catastrophic injuries. "I remember asking someone in the elevator, 'am I going to lose my leg?' She said, 'not at Denver Health.'" Dr. Cyril Mauffrey, director of Orthopedics, rebuilt Simon's femur with metal hardware, mesh cages and bone graft. "There were 9-10 inches of unreconstructable bone," Dr. Mauffrey said. Simon expressed his amazement and appreciation for Denver Health in a television news story that aired yesterday on 9News. Reporters don't have enough air time to include all of the interview in their stories, but the station allowed us to share Simon's uplifting comments about Denver Health with you.

[See interview clip](#)

Delaware Garage Closure: Upkeep and Upgrades

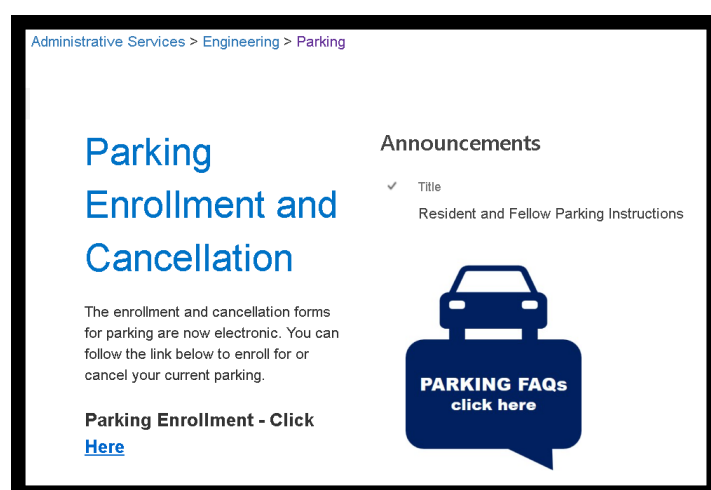


The Delaware Garage will close a total of eight days this month for maintenance and upgrades. The garage, located at Sixth Avenue and Delaware Street, will close at 3 p.m. on Friday, July 15 for power washing and will reopen at 8 a.m. on Monday, July 18.



During the closure, patients and visitors should park in the Outpatient Medical Center (OMC) Parking Garage. The small group of staff members who are registered for overnight parking in the Delaware Garage will receive temporary access to the employee garage on Sixth Avenue and Bannock Street.

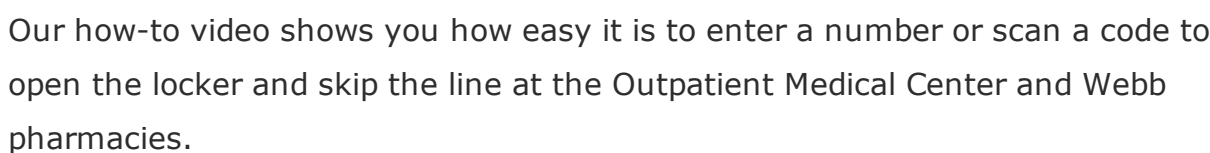
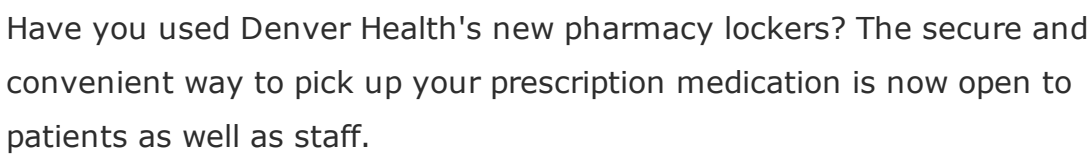
As a reminder, the Delaware and OMC garages are designated solely for our patients and visitors. It's important that we provide parking to our patients so they can access care. Parking is available to all Denver Health staff in the South Employee Parking Garage on the southeast corner of Sixth Avenue and Acoma Street. All staff who wish to park on campus are required to register with the Denver Health Parking Department.



[Learn more](#)

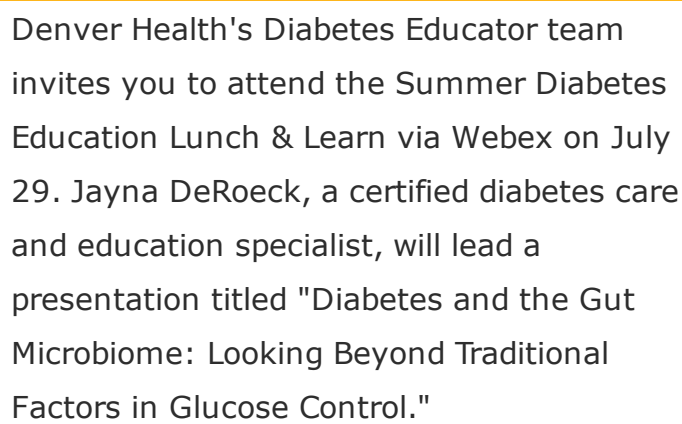
STAY INFORMED

Pharmacy Lockers Now Available to Patients



Watch video

Lunch & Learn: Diabetes and the Gut Microbiome

[Get details](#)

July | August

July 10: [Donor Dash Registration Deadline](#)
 July 28: [Financial Webinar: Own Your Future](#)
 July 29: [Lunch & Learn: Diabetes and Gut Microbiome](#)

Aug. 1-4: [Trauma & Emergency Medicine Conference](#)
 Aug. 27: [NightShine Foundation Gala](#)

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Denver Health Scores Leader Status in Health Care Equality

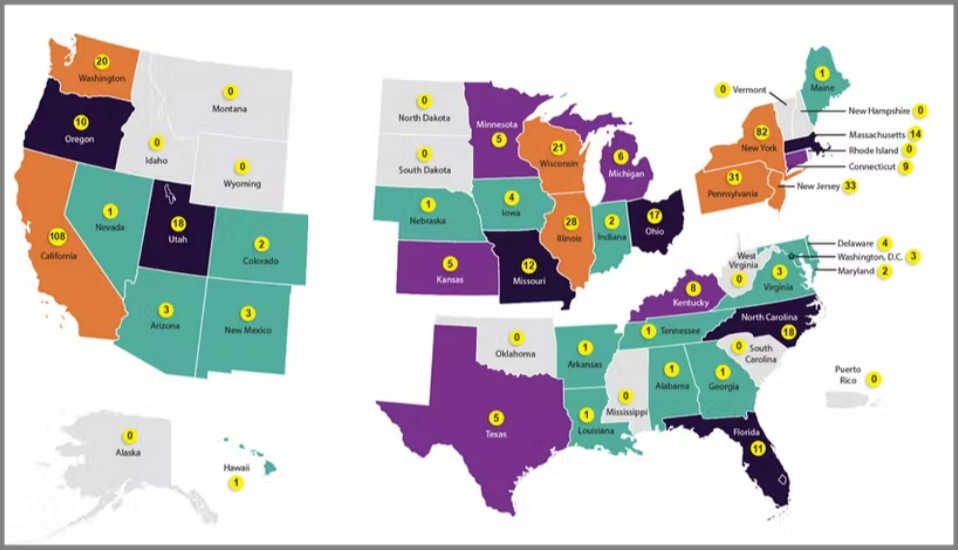


We also earned points for requiring yearly staff-wide training on LGBTQ+ patient-centered care as part of Denver Health’s annual education and offering additional training on affirming care through our full-time LGBTQ+ education trainer.

The non-profit LGBTQ+ advocacy organization Human Rights Campaign has designated Denver Health as a leader in health care equality. We’re one of only two hospitals in Colorado to receive the 2022 recognition, marked by our 100-point score on the Healthcare Equality Index (HEI).

The national benchmarking tool evaluates health care facilities’ policies and practices related to the equity and inclusion of patients, visitors and employees who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer plus (LGBTQ+). Denver Health earned the [highest scores possible](#) in all four areas measured: non-discrimination and staff training, patient services and support, employee benefits and policies, and patient and community engagement.

Our renewed leader status mirrors Denver Health’s accomplishments in providing safe and affirming health care to all. Top score highlights include our transgender-specific clinical services, procedures and treatments; LGBTQ+ patient navigation and advocacy program; non-discrimination policies protecting the sexual orientation and gender identity of patients and staff; and equal visitation policy allowing for patients’ visitors of choice.



The designation reflects our equal benefits offered to employees with domestic partners, including health insurance, family and medical leave, and bereavement. We provide employee medical coverage that includes medically necessary health services for transgender people, including transition-related treatment. We participate in events that support our LGBTQ+ community, host our own events to promote pride within our workforce and contribute to LGBTQ+ health-related research.



On top of our previously existing milestones, important strides over the past year demonstrate Denver Health’s continued commitment to serve every LGBTQ+ patient with open, excellent and affirming care. We updated organizational policy allowing patients, visitors and staff to use the restroom that aligns with their gender identity. We’ve begun the process of replacing restroom signage throughout campus to reflect the revised policy, including making all single-stall restrooms gender neutral. We improved our electronic health records (EHR) system to capture patients’ current gender identity when it differs from the sex assigned at birth, diverse family structures such as same-sex parents of pediatric patients, and the option to provide sexual orientation. The updated system also captures and prominently displays pronouns and preferred names of transgender and nonbinary patients. We’ve expanded services for LGBTQ+ youth, including the addition of puberty blocker implants. We’ve also improved access to some types of gender-affirming surgery for patients with a Body Mass Index (BMI) over 35. We’ve adjusted Denver Health’s Human Resources (HR) information system to collect more affirming and comprehensive demographics about our personnel. Also new to Denver Health, the [LGBTQ+ Employee Council](#) connects employees and allies with social and professional support, advocacy, resources, and community engagement. Staff members interested in learning more about the council are encouraged to email LGBTQ+@dhha.org.

“Human Rights Campaign is widely known as one of the nation’s biggest LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations. Our score on the Healthcare Equality Index lets the community know that Denver Health is a safe and affirming place to get health care,” said Tracy Scott, administrative director of [LGBTQ+ Health Services at Denver Health](#). “We know we have more work to do in the months and years ahead,” she added.

Upcoming initiatives include adding a third, nonbinary gender marker option in Epic; continuing to move away from gendered language in clinical names, services and policies; and further growing our LGBTQ+ training program by identifying champion staff and providers throughout the organization.



DENVER HEALTH'S WEEKLY 411

The week's most critical information delivered to your inbox.

Thursday, July 14, 2022



Denver Health Scores Leader Status in Health Care Equality





DENVER HEALTH

est. 1860

OUR SCORES

Non-Discrimination & Staff Training:
40/40

Patient Services & Support:
30/30

Employee Benefits & Policies:
20/20

Patient & Community Engagement:
10/10

Denver Health 2022 Total Score:
100

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Denver Health's renewed leader status reflects our accomplishments in providing safe and affirming health care to all.

[Read how](#)

STAR Program Success Inspires Bill to Expand Community Policing



On the heels of the Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) Program's successful first two years, Colorado U.S. Senator Michael Bennet introduced a bill yesterday that would expand funding for community policing. The STAR Program pairs a Denver Health paramedic with a WellPower (formerly Mental Health Center of Denver) clinician to respond to non-violent, low-level emergencies instead of a police officer.

The alternative 911 response unit has rolled up to nearly 5,000 calls since its June 2020 launch – none of which required police backup.



[See bill](#)

"Mobile crisis teams, co-responder units, and case managers engage people experiencing crises related to mental health, poverty, homelessness, or substance use disorders to de-escalate challenging situations. This reduces the strain on law enforcement and allows officers to focus on violent crimes," Sen. Bennet said. He'll visit Denver Health tomorrow to discuss the bill in a press conference alongside Chief Executive Officer Robin Wittenstein and Paramedic Dustin Yancy.

Lorena Zimmer Named Among Top 25 Most Powerful Women in Business



The Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce named Denver Health Chief Impact Officer Lorena Zimmer as one of the state's Top 25 Most Powerful Women in Business. The chamber announced the 2022 honorees on social media late last Thursday. Zimmer, who joined Denver Health May 16 to fulfill a role new to the organization, will lead our Center for Equity, Diversity and Opportunity (CEDO).



A fierce advocate for economic opportunity and a champion of underserved communities, the accolade highlights the impact of Zimmer's accomplishments so far and the work that lies ahead. "Putting Denver Health's Anchor Institution strategy in action, our goal for the CEDO is to create greater economic mobility for our patients, our staff and our community," Zimmer said.

[View nomination](#)

In her nomination, former colleagues describe Zimmer as a life-changing mentor, an unrelenting advocate for equity and a passionate visionary for change.

July | August

July 17: Denver Health to Run in [Donor Dash](#)
July 20: [Trauma Lecture: Dynamic Shock Resuscitation](#)
July 28: [Financial Webinar: Own Your Future](#)

July 29: [Lunch & Learn: Diabetes and Gut Microbiome](#)
Aug. 1-4: [Trauma & Emergency Medicine Conference](#)
Aug. 27: [NightShine Foundation Gala](#)



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Thursday, August 25, 2022

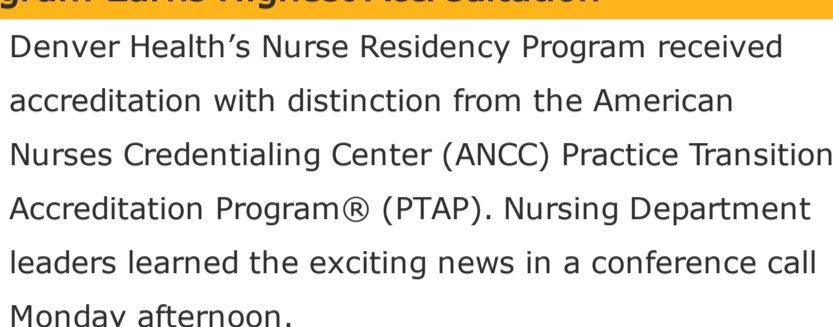


87 Monkeypox Cases Diagnosed at Denver Health



Denver Health has diagnosed 87 cases of monkeypox. The charts show we've tested 286 patients and administered 705 vaccines against the viral infection. "It's spreading faster than we expected," said Dr. Sarah Rowan, infectious disease physician at Denver Health. In an interview with a local news outlet, Dr. Rowan discussed who's at risk and what you can do to protect yourself.

Nurse Residency Program Earns Highest Accreditation

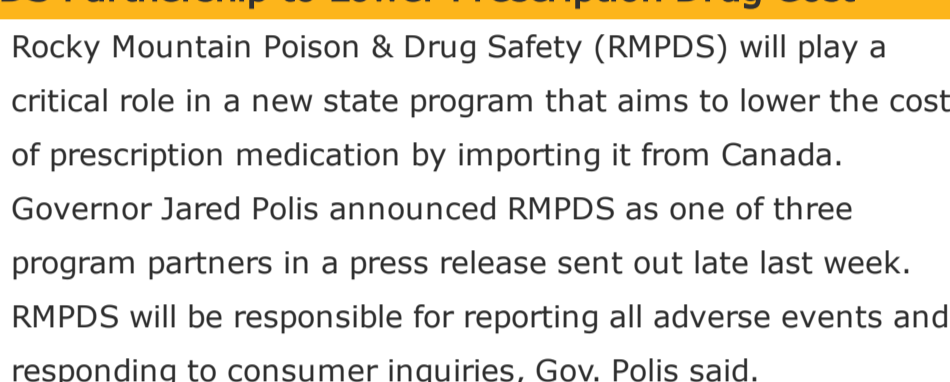


The ANCC PTAP sets the global standard for nurse residency programs that transition graduate nurses into professional practice. Our program is the only nurse residency program in the Denver metro area to achieve the accreditation.

Learn more



Governor Polis: RMPDS Partnership to Lower Prescription Drug Costs

[Read press release](#)

STAY INFORMED

School-based Health Centers Open for School Year

The 2022-23 school year has officially begun and along with it, so has Denver Health Pediatrics at Denver Public Schools, School-based Health. We provide physical and mental health services at no cost for all Denver Public School (DPS) students in 19 school-based health centers on campuses across the city.



Did you know we also provide dental care at four school locations? Our Health Education team offers one-on-one, patient-centered sexual and reproductive health care for students as well. Kids can sign themselves up for confidential care. Our Outreach & Enrollment team is available to answer questions on who's eligible for health care programs and how to enroll in them.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Follow-up to Your Feedback: An Update on Hiring Initiatives



Over the past couple of years, you've told us you want to see improvements in staffing levels and how Denver Health fills open positions – especially those in critical roles. Ahead of the organization's 2022 Employee Engagement Survey, which opens September 28, a series of stories is highlighting Denver Health's progress and achievements since the previous survey in 2020. Denver Health leaders want you to know that your voice matters and the feedback you provide leads to real changes. This week's story looks at how Denver Health is addressing staffing and hiring initiatives.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Dental Residency Program Recruiting with Diversity in Mind



Denver Health's Dental General Practice Residency program created a recruitment model that's led to more diverse candidates. Program leaders say the effort benefits patients, providers and dentistry overall. You can read about it in this month's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Council update.

A horizontal banner featuring five stylized illustrations of healthcare professionals (two women and three men) of various ethnicities, all holding up large yellow stars against a blue background.

Virtual Urgent Care Experience Among 'Most Competent' Ever



David Wolf got sick this month while visiting Denver from out of state. A call to our Virtual Urgent Care turned into 'one of the most competent' health care experiences of his life. He was so impressed that he wrote a five-star review on Google. Positive reviews like Wolf's inspire others to get their care with Denver Health too.

August | September

Aug. 27: [Denver Health Foundation NightShine Gala](#)
Aug. 31: [Overdose Awareness Day](#)

Sept. 9: Brain Injury Panel for Spanish Speakers

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