Jan. 11, 2020

Community Reach Center visits the Statehouse to ask legislators to increase access

(Westminster, Colorado – Jan 10, 2020) – Community Reach Center will be at the state Capitol building on Wednesday, Jan. 15, for Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council (CBHC) annual Lobby Day at the Capitol.

This signature day for CBHC highlights the importance of Colorado’s community behavioral health system of which Community Reach Center is a part of. During meetings with legislators, Community Reach Center will discuss mental health and substance use disorder needs with the hope of gaining support for local efforts geared toward creating better direct care opportunities for all Coloradans. This year, Community Reach Center, which is a critical component of Colorado’s behavioral health safety-net system, will be focusing on the severe need to strengthen the system’s workforce through increased reimbursement, salaries, and retention strategies such as student loan forgiveness.

Over the past 21 years, community provider inflationary increases have fallen so far behind that providers have lost more than 36.7 percent of their spending power as compared to the inflation rate across our state. Additionally, compared to state employee salary survey increases, community providers have lagged by 33.5 percent.

As this issue has continued to worsen over the years, it has caused a shortage of behavioral health providers who serve our most vulnerable populations as safety-net providers cannot adequately compete with the broader healthcare industry. It is crucial that efforts be taken to close this funding gap.

Community Reach Center will also be lobbying to increase opportunities to expand Mental Health First Aid, an eight-hour course which teaches the signs and symptoms of someone in a behavioral health crisis. Proposed legislation would appropriate funding to the Colorado Department of Education to contract for a train-the-trainer program designed to increase behavioral health training opportunities for K-12 educators and faculty. Community Reach Center is very pleased that this legislation will be a top priority as the bill, SB20-001, was the first to be introduced in the Senate in 2020.
Community Reach Center looks forward to engaging with legislators during the first days of the 2020 legislative session to ensure that all Coloradans, including those in Adams and Broomfield counties can access excellent and affordable behavioral health care across our great state.

Community Reach Center is a top-tier behavioral health and wellness provider serving people of all ages at seven outpatient offices and more than 100 community-based sites throughout Adams County, Colorado. The Center has worked diligently to preserve and promote a commitment to excellence, professionalism and integrity within our community healthcare system for 60 years – currently serving more than 22,000 people annually. We employ about 600 highly trained professionals committed to health and wellness. Community Reach Center is a leading integrated care partner in Colorado – meaning that mental healthcare, primary medical care and dental services are provided in one location at clinics throughout the north Denver metro area.