

Thursday, November 16, 2023

## HITeam members receive Ebola vaccine

The **Denver Health High-risk Infection Team (HITeam)** is the first among **Regional Emerging Special Pathogens Treatment Centers (RESPTC)** in the U.S. to offer the **Ebola vaccine** to its team members. **Paramedic Frank Warren** (pictured, right) and **surgical ICU nurse Ben Comden** were the first HITeam members to receive the vaccine, on Nov. 7. The HITeam has about 50 members from various departments across Denver Health.



The vaccine is only approved and recommended for use among health care workers with a risk of exposure to the Ebola virus, though there is currently no threat of an outbreak in the U.S. The vaccine is voluntary, but many HITeam members have expressed interest in getting it.

"This vaccination drive is just one example of how the Denver Health HITeam is continuously working behind the scenes to ensure that we are prepared for the next special pathogen outbreak," said **Jacob Wiersch, program manager, region 8 RESPTC**.

Individuals interested in joining or learning more about the HITeam can reach out to [HIteam@dhha.org](mailto:HIteam@dhha.org).

## Peer recovery coach role expanded

Denver Health recently expanded the peer recovery coach position into peer recovery coach I, peer recovery coach II and peer recovery coach supervisor. Peer recovery coaches are individuals with lived experience of substance use and/or mental health challenges who have been successful in the recovery process and have shown effectiveness in helping others experiencing similar situations. The expansion of this role is intended to better recognize the value of peer recovery coaches, further develop our workforce and retain our staff with lived experience.



This peer recovery coach job ladder was made possible by the **Center for Addiction Medicine** in consultation with members of **Outpatient Behavioral Health Services** as well as the grant-funded project **Utilizing Peers for Linkage, Innovation, and to Foster Thriving**.

When asked what this means to **Bob Schulz**, a current peer recovery coach supporting the UPLIFT program, he said, "It warms my heart to see Denver Health allowing us to grow and define the role for the peer support position. Knowing that I can progress in my career at Denver Health while being able to continue to use my lived experience as an asset gives me a sense of purpose and direction."

Keep an eye on Workday for open positions on the peer recovery coach team, and if you know of a candidate for these positions, you can refer them and take advantage of the "Catch That Star" incentive bonus. The candidate must apply via a special link for the referral to be recognized. Updated instructions are linked in the [policy](#) and available [here on the Workday Resources Hub](#).

Pictured from left are peer recovery coaches **Kerry Belford, Bob Schulz** and **Tanya Gershmel**.

# RECOGNIZING YOU

## Winner crowned at Eastside clinic's annual 'Chili Throwdown'

The Bernard F. Gipson Sr. Eastside Family Health Center recently held its annual "Chili Throwdown" featuring chili dishes from 16 employees. The winner of the cook-off was **Trina Duran, MA**. Participants were asked to bring a crockpot with their chili to be judged by the Eastside staff, who voted for their top five chilis. Staff who didn't make chili brought desserts, sodas, chips and other side dishes to share. This has been a tradition at Eastside for the past 15 years.



Denver Health would like to feature more of our family health and urgent care centers and their staff. If you have something you'd like to share in the 411, send it to [DenverHealth411@dhha.org](mailto:DenverHealth411@dhha.org).

# STAY INFORMED

## Sunday anniversary of Colorado Springs shooting

**Sunday, Nov. 19**, marks the one-year anniversary of the Club Q shooting in Colorado Springs. Denver Health stands with our LGBTQ+ community in remembrance of those who lost their lives that night.

Denver Health is here for anyone in need of support. We encourage you to use the resources available through our RESTORE program. **RESTORE peer responders are available 24/7 to provide immediate, confidential peer-to-peer support to all Denver Health personnel.**

Call 303-436-7473 or [visit the Pulse](#) for more information on RESTORE, virtual support groups and additional resources.

## CEO speaks during Integrated Behavioral Health meeting

**CEO Donna Lynne** spoke to a packed room of behavioral health providers plus additional staff at the quarterly **Integrated Behavioral Health (IBH)** meeting Nov. 1.



**Interim Director Matt Hoag** asked Lynne to share an overview of Denver Health and to recognize the hard work and success of the IBH team, which has grown from 10 to 60 providers in just a few years. IBH providers offer outpatient behavioral health support across Denver Health and at our community centers. Last year the team facilitated 40,000 visits.

"Your work touches nearly every corner of Denver Health, and I will continue to champion your efforts everywhere I go," Lynne told the group.

The message was important to hear for a team that still feels burned out from the pandemic, is in transition after the departure of longtime director Jen Grody, and is worn down from the demands of on-the-spot patient visits. Many providers have also experienced their fair share of workplace violence.

Lynne reiterated the message that providers need to take care of themselves at the same time as they are caring for patients. She wanted the entire team to know how committed she is to behavioral health across the health care system.

"You bring great value to how Denver Health is perceived in the community; when we talk about ROI, it isn't always the investment that matters, it's the impact," Lynne said. "Please know that you make a big impact within our organization and among the communities we serve."

# OUR RATINGS & REVIEWS



## Mother thanks physician for improving son's quality of life

Hearing from patients who have received outstanding care at Denver Health is incredibly rewarding, and we want to share feedback with staff on a regular basis in the 411. Today we have comments from a family member who emailed to thank **physician Barry Martin, MD**, and the Adult Down Syndrome Clinic.

"Dr. Martin, I wanted to thank you for your work with adults with Down syndrome and specifically the recommendations you provided to help increase my son's quality of life. Unfortunately, the leukemia returned, and he died in May 2023. We were able to bring him home and all our family members were here providing a comfortable and loving passing. Again, many thanks for the work you do!"

Do you have great feedback you'd like to share with staff? Send it to [DenverHealth411@dhha.org](mailto:DenverHealth411@dhha.org). We will remove personal information before publishing.

# GET INVOLVED

## Join seminar on improving care for patients experiencing homelessness

Please join us from **noon-1 p.m. Friday, Dec. 1**, for "Improving Care for Patients Experiencing Homelessness: A Community-Driven Learning Health Systems Approach." This seminar, presented by the **Office of Research**, will be in the Sabin classroom in Pavilion C, or if you would like to join via Webex, please contact [officeofresearch@dhha.org](mailto:officeofresearch@dhha.org). For more information, please [click here](#).

## Join Transgender Day of Remembrancepanel discussion Nov. 20

In honor of Transgender Day of Remembrance, **LGBTQ+ Health Services** is hosting a panel discussion with Denver Health patients on the current landscape of transgender health, the role of medicine in reducing violence and discrimination, and visions for the future of transgender health. The meeting will be held at **noon Monday, Nov. 20**, on Webex. You can [join using the link here](#).



## Take survey to help inform firearm safety initiatives

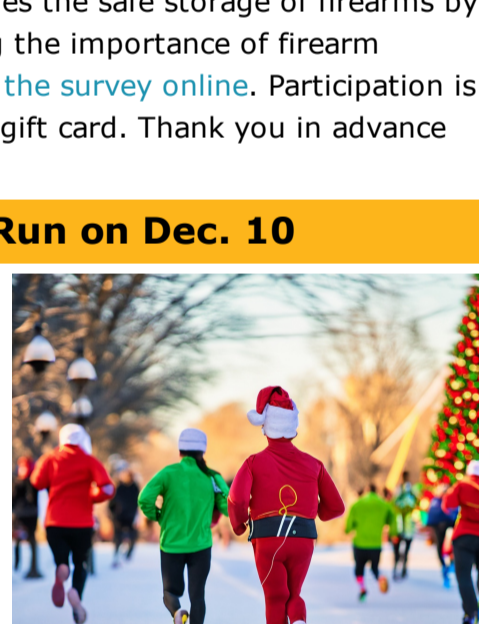
The Firearm Injury Prevention Committee, part of **Denver Health's Firearm Safety Collaborative**, is interested in obtaining your feedback on firearm injury in our workplaces and in our community. They've launched a **Healthcare Workers Survey** and hope you will take less than five minutes to share your opinions on a number of key issues relating to firearm safety education and what measures Denver Health can take to address this public health issue.



The survey is part of the SAFER project, which promotes and encourages the safe storage of firearms by increasing education and health care worker preparedness in discussing the importance of firearm storage to reduce the number of firearm-related injuries. You can [take the survey online](#). Participation is anonymous, but participants may choose to enter a drawing for a \$50 gift card. Thank you in advance for sharing your thoughts on this issue.

## Join Denver Health team for Jingle Bell Run on Dec. 10

This year's **Jingle Bell Run** to support the Arthritis Foundation is set for **9 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 10**, at Washington Park. Denver Health employees and their families are encouraged to [join our team, Denver Healthies \(LOPer\)s](#), or to donate to help reach the team goal of \$2,500 raised. Arthritis is the top cause of disability in the U.S., affecting nearly 60 million people. You can register as an individual or bring a group to run, walk or roll and spread good cheer to support research for treatment and a cure for arthritis. Wear your favorite holiday attire and be there with bells on. Got questions? Email **Denver Health family medicine physician/team captain Patricia Meyer, DO**, at [Patricia.Meyer@dhha.org](mailto:Patricia.Meyer@dhha.org)

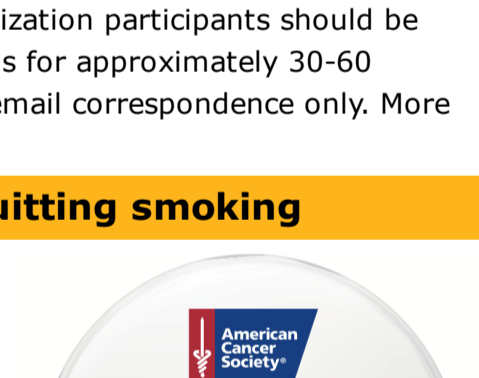


## Participate in the 2024-26 Strategic Plan as a 'Voice of the Organization'

The 2024-26 Strategy Steering Committee has launched workgroups to help conduct the next level of development for the three-year organizational plan for Denver Health. Those workgroups need participants to offer feedback as the "Voice of the Organization." If you wish to participate, please get your manager's approval, then [submit your interest on this form](#) by **Thursday, Nov. 30**. You can select one of nine workgroups that interest you the most. Voice of the Organization participants should be available to their chosen workgroup to offer input and answer questions for approximately 30-60 minutes total during the next two months. Engagement will occur by email correspondence only. More information is available [here on the Pulse](#).

## Great American Smokeout encourages quitting smoking

Today, **Nov. 16**, is the American Cancer Society's (ACS) annual Great American Smokeout, which encourages people who smoke to commit to healthy, smoke-free lives. Denver Health encourages our community members who smoke to quit today or to make a plan to quit. Smoking is the largest preventable cause of death and illness in the world, according to the ACS, resulting in nearly a half-million deaths a year. The ACS website has [tips and resources](#) to help people quit smoking. The Public Health Institute at Denver Health also has [tips to help you stop smoking](#).



**Becky Bloedow, advanced practice provider at the Westwood Family Health Center**, is the director of the Tobacco Cessation Clinic at Denver Health, and she is working with community partners to help decrease smoking rates and second-hand smoke exposure within our patient population.

"We should express a sense of urgency to our patients regarding the importance of quitting smoking and remind them that quitting at any age can reduce the risk of adverse health effects," she said.

Denver Health offers one-on-one tobacco cessation telehealth visits that can be scheduled via MyChart or the Denver Health appointment center at 303-436-4949.

# PERKS & DISCOUNTS

## Enter drawing to win free massage from RESTORE on Nov. 22

The Denver Health RESTORE Support Center, on the first floor of Pavilion B, will offer Denver Health staff free 15-minute chair massages with a Zeel massage therapist from **noon-4 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 22**. [Click here to enter a drawing](#) for your chance to win a massage. Winners will be contacted by phone and email on Monday, Nov. 20, and offered time slots. Names on the sign-up list and the winners will be kept confidential. Email questions to [RESTORE@dhha.org](mailto:RESTORE@dhha.org).



## Denver Health in the media

### CDC reports childhood vaccination exemptions hit highest rate ever

**Nov. 10, 9News**  
A new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found a record number of parents and caregivers are opting their kids out of those routine vaccinations. "We know vaccines work really well to prevent outbreaks from happening. So when we see a dip, we do get worried," said **Dr. Sonja O'Leary, director of outpatient general pediatrics with Denver Health**.

### Cases of chickenpox reported among children in Denver migrant shelters

**Nov. 12, Fox31**  
**Denver Health** elaborated on its treatment of the migrants, saying some cases of chickenpox have been diagnosed among children. The health care provider is working with the city to begin immunizing folks in the migrant population.

### Denver Health's STEP program provides substance use treatment to adolescents

**Nov. 15, Denver Post**  
Sofya Hawrylyshyn has been sober since March — a milestone the 19-year-old attributes to Denver Health's adolescent substance abuse treatment program, which she joined last year. STEP provides substance use treatment to adolescents and is in at least 10 school-based health clinics in Denver Public Schools, said **Crystal Potter Rivera, executive director of the Denver Health Foundation**.

### \$17M in unpaid claims later, Colorado regulators don't expect another Friday Health debacle

**Nov. 13, Denver Business Journal (subscription required)**  
**Greg McCarthy, chief executive officer of Denver Health Medical Plan (DHMP)**, said DHMP will expand from serving four to 13 counties in Colorado and expects to grow by up to 10% next year, McCarthy said. Currently, the carrier has about 9,000 enrollees.

### DPS is helping its migrant students catch up on required vaccinations

**Nov. 15, 9News**  
DPS has hosted six vaccination clinics so far this year to help families and kids get their required vaccinations. They're also partnering with Denver Health to get families and families caught up on their shots. On Sunday, Nov. 19, Denver Health will host a free vaccine clinic to help migrant children get vaccinated against chickenpox, as well as offering COVID-19 and flu shots for the whole family.

## November | December

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Nov. 17:</b> RESTORE Group Support: Distress &amp; Burnout</li> <li><b>Nov. 20:</b> Transgender Day of Remembrance panel</li> <li><b>Nov. 20:</b> Winners announced for free messages</li> <li><b>Nov. 22:</b> RESTORE Group Support: Leaders</li> <li><b>Nov. 27:</b> Deadline to apply for medical assistant training</li> <li><b>Nov. 29:</b> Freshservice help portal virtual training</li> <li><b>Nov. 30:</b> Criminal law legal clinic</li> <li><b>Nov. 30:</b> "Voice of the organization" interest deadline</li> <li><b>Dec. 1:</b> Seminar: Improving care</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Dec. 1:</b> RESTORE Group Support: Leaders</li> <li><b>Dec. 2:</b> Parade of Lights</li> <li><b>Dec. 5:</b> Freshservice help portal goes live</li> <li><b>Dec. 6:</b> RESTORE Support Center is closed</li> <li><b>Dec. 6:</b> Employee Holiday Brunch</li> <li><b>Dec. 7:</b> Zscaler web security program goes live</li> <li><b>Dec. 7:</b> Civil law legal clinic</li> <li><b>Dec. 10:</b> Jungle bell run</li> <li><b>Dec. 15:</b> RESTORE Group Support: Distress &amp; Burnout</li> </ul> |
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## CLICK HERE FOR A PRINTABLE VERSION OF THIS MESSAGE.

**SUBMIT A REQUEST TO THE WEEKLY 411**

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, where, when, 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.

