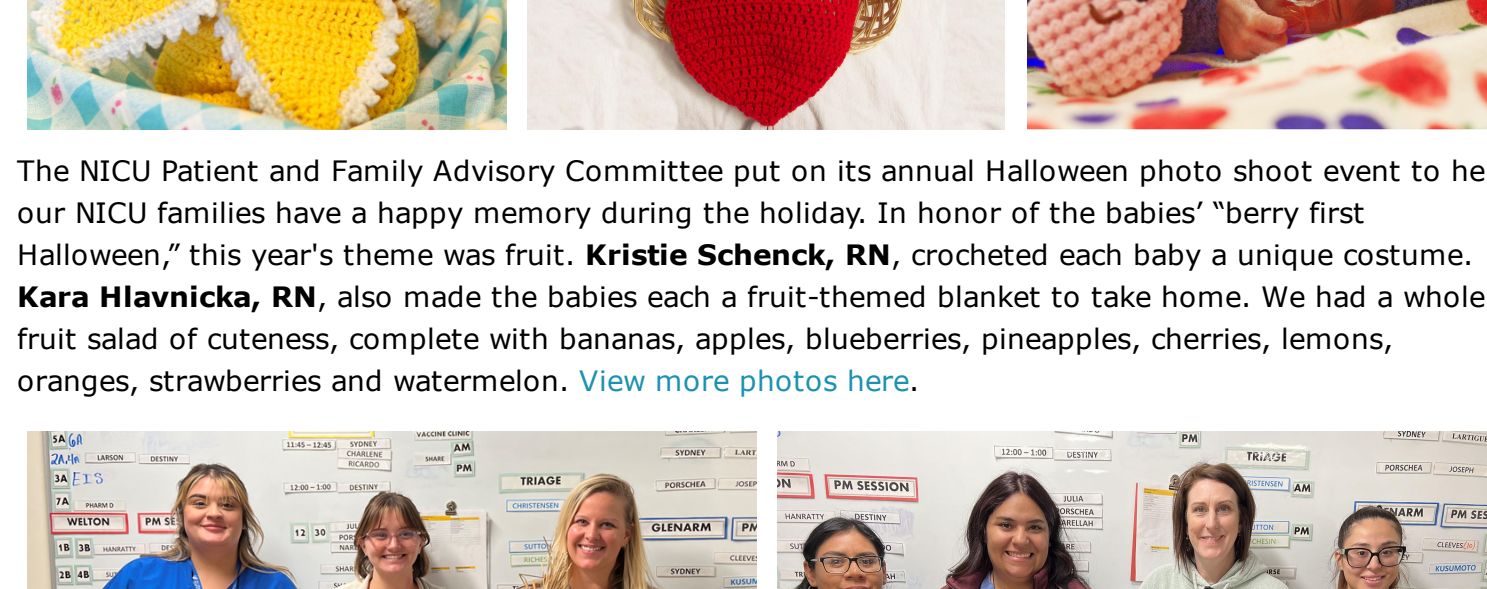
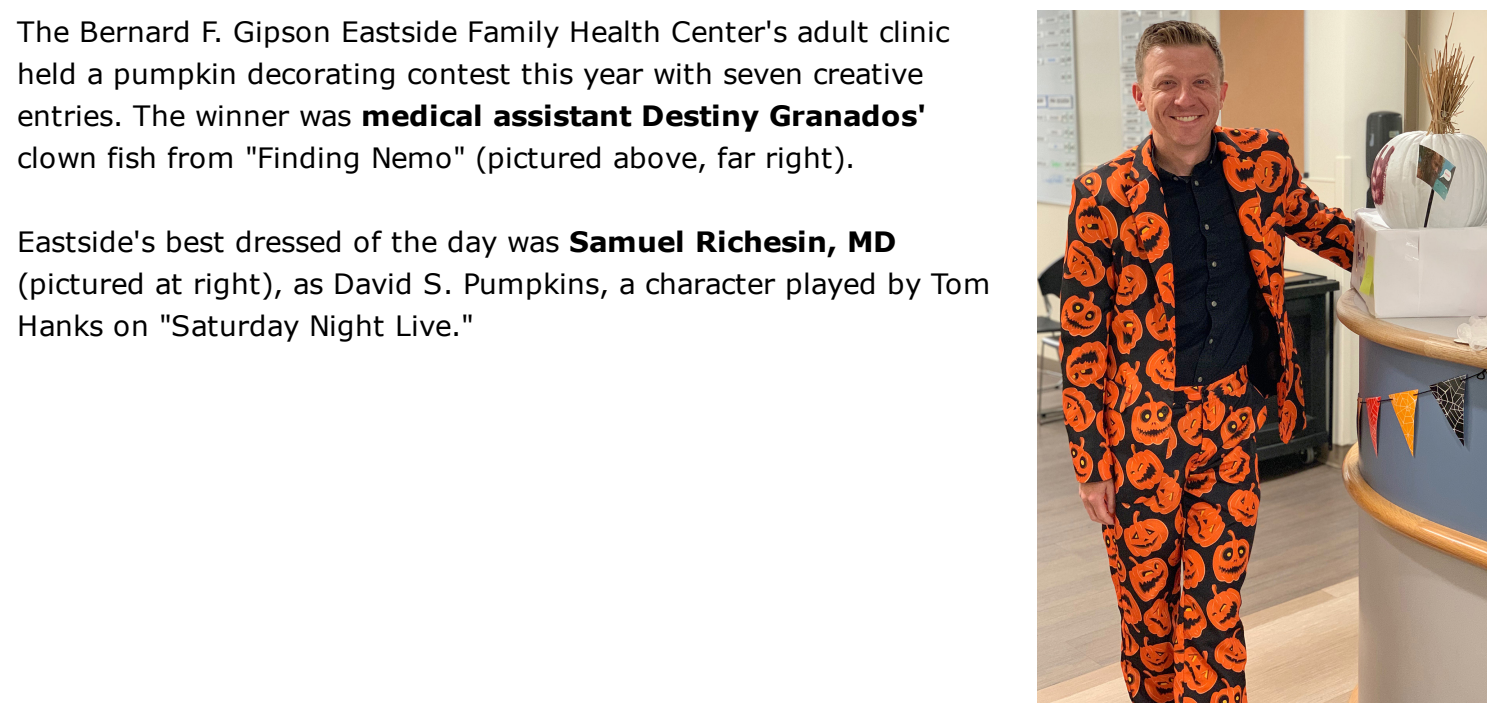


Denver Health staff, patients celebrate Halloween in style

Denver Health employees and patients were full of spirit this Halloween, and they showed it by dressing up in costumes, decorating pumpkins and giving gifts to pediatric patients.

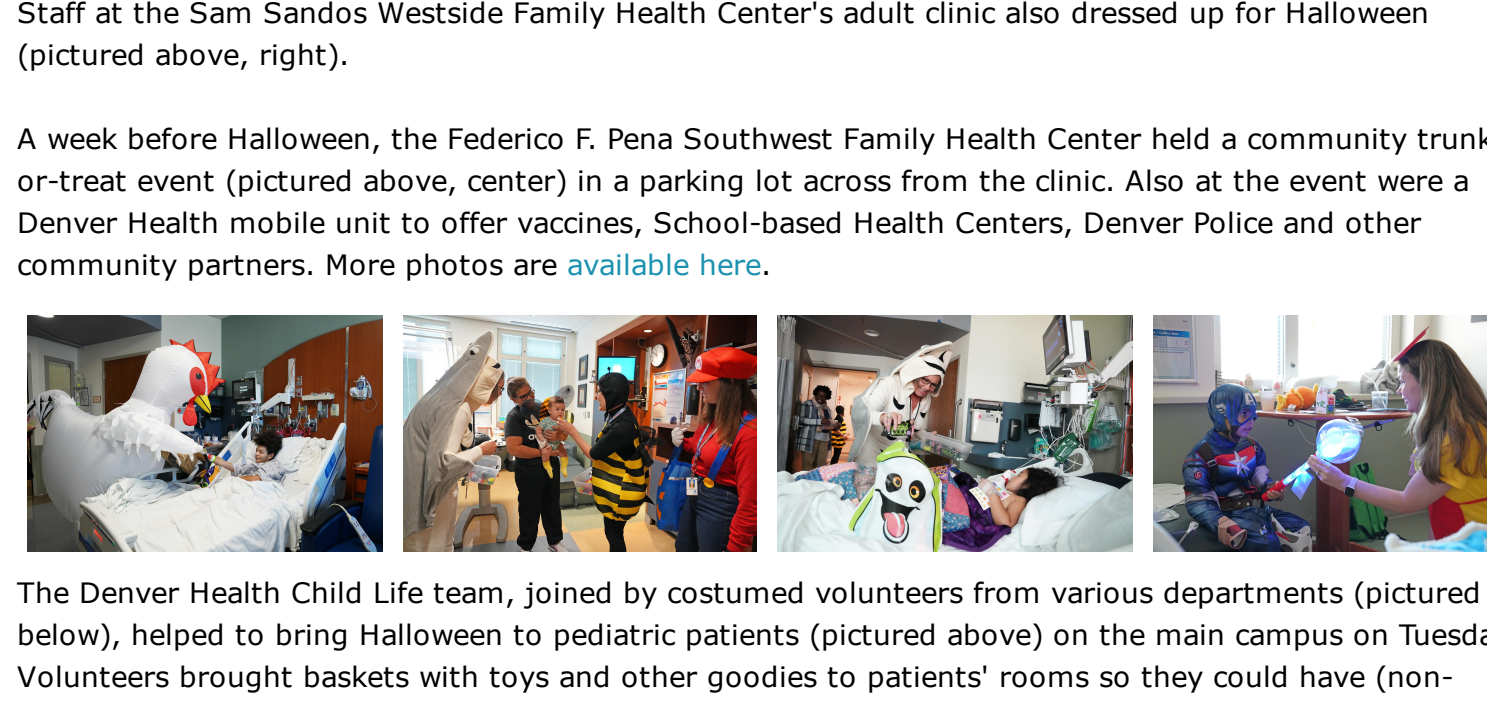


The NICU Patient and Family Advisory Committee put on its annual Halloween photo shoot event to help the NICU families have a happy memory during the holiday. In honor of the babies' "berry first Halloween," this year's theme was fruit. **Kristie Schenck, RN**, crocheted each baby a unique costume. **Kara Hlavnicka, RN**, also made the babies each a fruit-themed blanket to take home. We had a whole fruit salad of cuteness, complete with bananas, apples, blueberries, pineapples, cherries, lemons, oranges, strawberries and watermelon. [View more photos here.](#)



The Bernard F. Gipson Eastside Family Health Center's adult clinic held a pumpkin decorating contest this year with seven creative entries. The winner was **medical assistant Destiny Granaos**' clown fish from "Finding Nemo" (pictured above, far right).

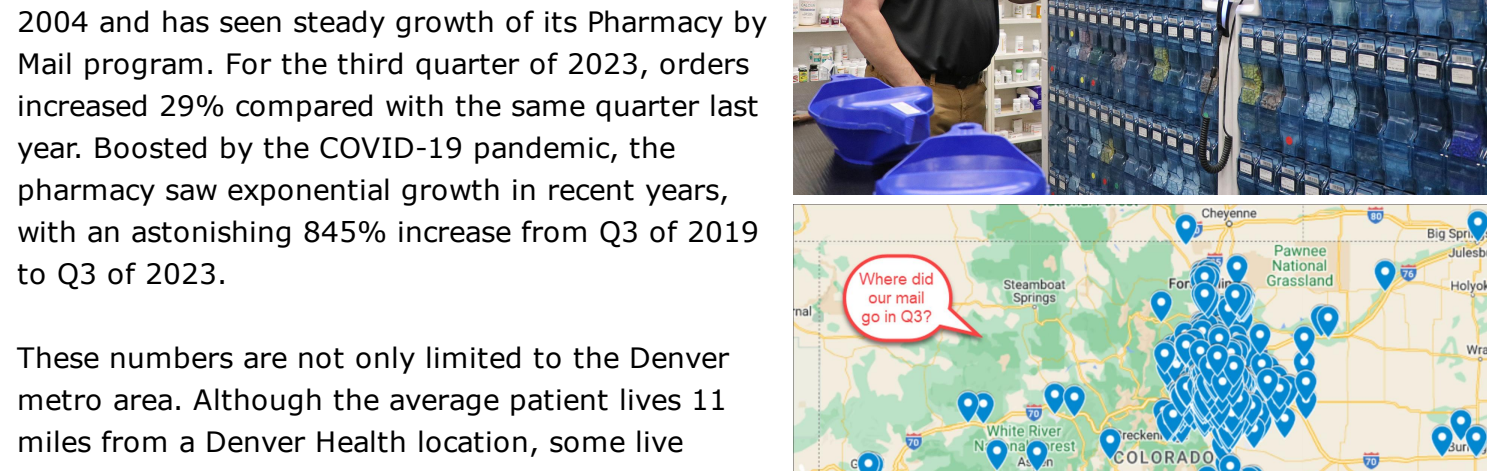
Eastside's best dressed of the day was **Jumpkins Richesin, MD** (pictured at right), as David S. Jumpkins, a character played by Tom Hanks in "The Denver Health Tre..."



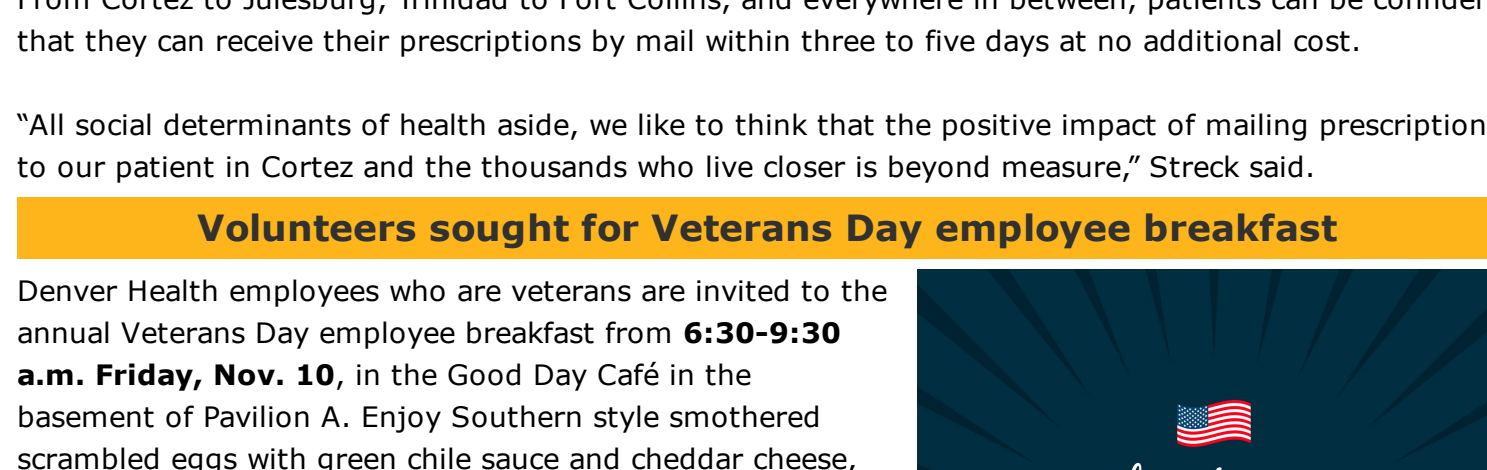
Other Denver Health clinics got in on the fun as well. Hematology and oncology physician **Michael McLaughlin, MD**, is beloved by patients and clearly by those on his team. Staff at the oncology clinic dressed up as Dr. McLaughlin (pictured above, left) for Halloween and even wore custom badges.

Staff at the Sam Sandos Westside Family Health Center's adult clinic also dressed up for Halloween (pictured above, right).

A week before Halloween, the Federico F. Pena Southwest Family Health Center held a community trunk-or-treat event (pictured above, center) in a parking lot across from the clinic. Also at the event were a Denver Health mobile unit to offer vaccines, School-based Health Centers, Denver Police and other community partners. [More photos are available here.](#)



The Denver Health Child Life team, joined by costumed volunteers from various departments (pictured below), helped to bring Halloween to pediatric patients (pictured above) on the main campus on Tuesday. Volunteers brought baskets with toys and other goodies to patients' rooms so they could have (non-dairy) treats while they spent Halloween in the hospital.



Pharmacy by Mail sees continued growth

In a post-pandemic world, access to quality health care and medication is more vital than ever. Denver Health's Central Fill Pharmacy plays a critical role in ensuring our community has convenient access to necessary medication.

The Central Fill Pharmacy, 500 Quivas St., opened in 2004 and has seen steady growth of its Pharmacy by Mail program. For the third quarter of 2023, orders increased 29% compared with the same quarter last year. Boosted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the pharmacy saw exponential growth in recent years, with an astonishing 84% increase from Q3 of 2019 to Q3 of 2023.

These numbers are not only limited to the Denver metro area. Although the average patient lives 11 miles from a Denver Health location, some live much farther (see map).

"In Q3, we mailed prescriptions to our most distant patient, in Cortez, Colorado, 380 miles away, or a drive of nearly seven hours and weather," said **Warren Stréck, BSPharm, MS, PharmD, BCACP, manager of the Central Fill Pharmacy** (pictured).

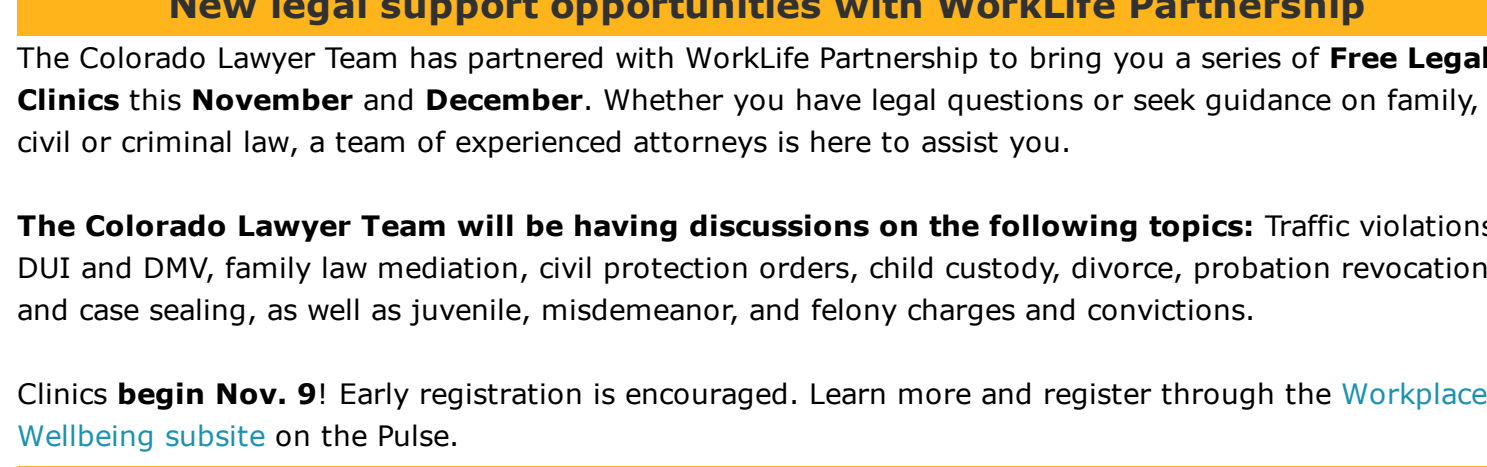
From Cortez to Julesburg, Trinidad to Fort Collins, and everywhere in between, patients can be confident they can receive their prescriptions by mail within a three to five day set no additional cost.

"All social determinants of health aside, we like to think that the positive impact of mailing prescriptions to our patient in Cortez and the thousands who live closer is beyond measure," Stréck said.

Volunteers sought for Veterans Day employee breakfast

Denver Health employees who are veterans are invited to the annual Veterans Day employee breakfast from **6:30-9:30 a.m. Friday, Nov. 10**, in the Good Day Café in the basement of Pavilion A. Enjoy Southern style smothered scrambled eggs with green chile sauce and cheddar cheese, jumbo biscuits with sausage gravy, smoked country bacon and sausage patties.

The Food and Nutrition and Patient Experience departments are looking for volunteers for 30-minute shifts to help serve the veterans. You can [sign up](#) using the [link here](#). Please join us in celebrating our amazing veteran employees!



RECOGNIZING YOU

Medical Staff Awards honor employees' outstanding care, service

The annual Medical Staff Awards were held Oct. 25 at the Denver Athletic Club, and many board members, executive staff and clinical and nursing Leaders attended to support our medical staff. Awards were granted for the following categories: Outstanding Clinician, Outstanding Teacher, Academic Excellence, Community Service and Career Service. Congratulations to our awardees, and a huge thanks to the Medical Staff Office for organizing the celebration.

Outstanding Clinician

Physician
Michael Frank, MD
Ana Flores, MD

APP
Paisley Johnson, DNP
Annie Clark, FNP
Chad Utterson, CRNA

Outstanding Teacher

Physician
Jennie Buchanan, MD

APP
Melody Zwakenberg, NP

Academic Excellence

Scott Simpson, MD
Taylor McCormick, MD

Bill Burman Community Service

Judy Shiy, MD

Career Service

Nell Dobson, PAC
Carol Okada, MD
Michael Biel, MD

Denver Health team changes lives during Honduras trip

Katie Sutton became the first student registered nurse anesthetist (SRNA) to join the World Surgical Foundation on its annual surgical brigade to a hospital in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, Sept. 24-29. Sutton, who is training at Denver Health, had the opportunity to work alongside a diverse team of some of the world's top surgeons and physicians from an array of specialties including neurosurgery, general surgery, pediatrics, gastroenterology, orthopedics, plastics, oncology and trauma.

The hospital, Mario Catarino Rivas, serves the indigenous population not only from around the city, but from villages hundreds of miles away. Patients had traumatic orthopedic injuries, many as a result of violence and major car accidents. These patients were brought to walk with green crutches to receive treatment due to a lack of resources. Upon arriving, the team was able to collaborate with local surgical teams to open additional operating rooms in the hospital overnight.

The team consisted of three other certified registered nurse anesthetists, **Adol Wold, CRNA**, **Clay Dobronyi, CRNA**, and **Yael Macaulay, CRNA**, all trained at Denver Health. Together, the team (pictured, from left, are Wold, Dobronyi, Sutton and Macaulay) successfully performed 130 surgeries and anesthetics, including 42 operations on pediatric patients. Denver Health's collaboration and knowledge sharing during this mission trip will help the local practice in Honduras to implement additional regional anesthesia in the future.

"We made lasting connections with the local providers that will benefit patients for years to come. I personally learned a great deal from the local anesthesia providers who were a wealth of knowledge, ingenuity and compassion," Sutton said. "Furthermore, I want to thank World Surgical Foundation and everyone at Denver Health who has supported me along the way."

PERKS & DISCOUNTS

New legal support opportunities with WorkLife Partnership

The Colorado Lawyer Team has partnered with WorkLife Partnership to bring you a series of **Free Legal Clinics** this **November and December**. Whether you have legal questions or seek assistance on family, civil or criminal law, a team of experienced attorneys is here to assist you.

The Colorado Lawyer Team will be having discussions on the following topics: Traffic violations, DUI and DMV, family law mediation, civil protection orders, child custody, divorce, probation revocation and case sealing, as well as juvenile, misdemeanor, and felony charges and convictions.

Clinics begin **Nov. 9**. Early registration is encouraged. Learn more and register through the [Workplace Wellbeing](#) website on the Pulse.

Enter drawing to win free massage from RESTORE on Nov. 8

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. 8**. [Click here](#) to enter a drawing for your chance to win a massage. Winners will be contacted by phone and email on Monday, Nov. 6, and offered time slots. Names on the sign-up list and the winners will be kept confidential. Email questions to RESTORE@dhha.org.

GET INVOLVED

Sign up to be a Secret Pal, nominate colleagues in need by Nov. 9

The Secret Pal program is a Denver Health tradition that matches nominated employees in need with a team's member eager to help supply toys, clothes, experiences or gift cards for the holidays! There are two ways to participate:

- **Nominate an employee** in need to receive holiday gifts for their family from the "Secret Pals." A nomination form must be completed and returned to Kristin.Ellis@dhha.org by **Thursday, Nov. 9**. Nominations will be kept 100% confidential and anonymous.
- **Volunteer your team/unit to be a Secret Pal** and purchase gifts, experiences or gift cards for a family needing assistance. Please complete this [application form](#) by **Thursday, Nov. 9**. Cards will then match your team/unit to a specific (but anonymous) family and provide you with a list of items the family is needing. **You and your team/unit will then shop for these items and turn in wrapped and labeled gifts** to the Volunteer Service Zone (first floor, Pavilion C) on **Friday, Dec. 8** — a specific drop-off window will be assigned.

Questions? Email Kristin.Ellis@dhha.org or visit the [Pulse](#).

Self-appraisal process starts Nov. 8 in Workday

Denver Health's 2023-24 performance review and self-appraisal process **begins Nov. 8 and ends Feb. 29**. Recognizing the importance of this process as a best practice that gives employees a voice in their professional development, Human Resources has created a robust toolkit with resources and training activities. Please share the resources that are free in the [Workday Resources Hub](#) (navigate to "For all employees/Talent - Performance"). Also feel free to email DHAcademy@dhha.org with questions, concerns or requests for support.

Last chance to support Employee Giving Campaign

Denver Health Foundation's 2023 Employee Giving Campaign (EGC) ends in less than a week! Remember that your gift to the Foundation will be matched dollar-for-dollar by Kaiser Permanente as part of its \$3 million matching grant.

All donors who give \$5 or more per paycheck, or a one-time gift of \$130, will also receive a limited-edition Denver Health lanyard. The EGC runs **through Wednesday, Nov. 8**. You can donate to the EGC through [Workday](#) until **December**. Whether you have legal questions or seek assistance, you'll need [this](#) link. Got questions? Email Nancy.Tamborini@dhha.org.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Safety improvements coming to Emergency Department

Our efforts to improve the safety and security of our workplaces continues with some changes to the Emergency Department (ED). Along with implementing safety checks at the main hospital, running a trial of a safety checkpoint at the Adult Urgent Care Center, increasing security rounding in the garages, and piloting the De-escalation Activation Response Team (DART), we also are adjusting the entry point into our Emergency Department to one safety check station.

The move frees up the security guard at the entrance to the Pediatric Emergency Department and Urgent Care Center (PEUC). The guard will now be available to support all areas of the ED. Patients who arrive on their own will all begin at a single point of entry in Pavilion A.

After patients are screened, they will be registered. Our pediatric patients will be directed to their own waiting room where they will be triaged and treated in the PEUC. A new door has been added to aid in the flow of patients. Adult patients will continue to be triaged to the adult waiting room and treated in the adult ED.

This change will allow us to maintain a greater security presence in the waiting rooms and increase guard rounds in the ED and is intended to increase our ability to respond more promptly to incidents by now having up to two officers rounding in the department.

The PEUC change is the latest move by leadership to support Denver Health's focus on making necessary adjustments to ensure the organization's overall safety. The Workplace Safety and Violence Prevention Committee continues to review additional ideas and measures that also will advance this critical work.

STAY INFORMED

Prepare for end of Daylight Saving Time on Sunday

It's that time of the year again to fall back! Daylight Saving Time ends on **Sunday, Nov. 5**, at 1:59 a.m. Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour. Epic will not be down again this year, so all inpatient staff working overnight refer to the fall daylight saving [tip sheet](#) here as well as the infographics linked [here](#) to help avoid any issues.

Health insurance open enrollment season may bring questions your way

Patients often turn to their providers with health insurance questions. It's that time of year when patients with the Denver Health Medical Plan need to enroll for health insurance for 2024. Should a patient ask you for your advice on the various plans, know you can direct them to our Enrollment Services. All plans on the Exchange for DHMP have been rebranded as Elevate Health Plans; a plan comparison chart is [available here](#).

It also may be helpful to know some of the key highlights of the 2024 Elevate plan that our patients have.

- DHMP has the lowest premiums for any plan on the marketplace.
- Dental and vision coverage was removed from all plans for 2024.
- \$0 copays for preventive visits

DHMP offers a [provider resource page](#) with helpful tools to access information, send secure messages, check claim status, view authorizations and more. You can also let patients with Elevate know that a licensed agent is available via phone call or in-person appointment at no cost by calling 303-602-2999.

Take survey to help inform firearm safety initiatives

The Firearm Injury Prevention Committee, part of **DENVER HEALTH 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.

Bites from 'Big Easy' coming to Denver Health on Wednesday

Local vendor Toby's New Orleans Po'boys is the latest addition to "Food Truck Wednesdays" at Denver Health. Toby's is set to be outside the Outpatient Medical Center from **11 a.m.-2 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 8**. [Click the menu](#) at right to enlarge it. [Click here](#) to read more about Toby's.

Share feedback with **Chief Experience Officer Amy Friedman** at Amy.Friedman@dhha.org.

Volunteers needed for employee Holiday Brunch on Dec. 6

Happy Holidays! The Food and Nutrition Services team is looking for volunteers to serve at the 2023 Holiday Brunch in the Good Day Café from **5-10 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 6**, when all employees are encouraged to come by for a free meal. Volunteers will be asked to take 30-minute shifts. Department leaders are encouraged to join executive team members and Food Services staff in celebrating and thanking our amazing employees! Please [sign up here](#) by **5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 1**. For departments with employees who can't make it to the Good Day Café for the brunch, a ["skip the line" sign-up form](#) is available for bulk meal pickup orders for groups of 25 or more.

Epic efficiency training offered to providers, residents, fellows

Denver Health providers, residents and fellows can receive free training on Epic that aims to increase efficiency and help with user satisfaction. You can choose from 17 virtual SmartUser classes. Each hour-long class is eligible for CME credits. Epic, which provides the classes, said physicians reported saving almost an hour per week on average after training. [Click here](#) to register for a class.

Denver Health partners with nonprofit to help parents with substance use

When a parent struggles with addiction, the whole family struggles. **Sesame Workshop**, the nonprofit behind "Sesame Street," is teaming up with Denver Health to develop and implement vital resources within our network. This is thanks to a Foundation for opioid Response Efforts grant provided to leverage existing tools, create new resources, and develop professional training to improve connections between parents, caregivers and young children, leading to family resilience.

"Denver Health is receiving a portion of the grant money to provide feedback on Sesame Workshop materials about parental substance use from staff and patients, including provider trainings, family materials, and use of these materials in behavioral health care," said **Colleen Fischer, PhD, psychologist APP lead**.

Beginning in February, Denver Health will administer surveys, conduct focus groups and utilize the materials, which will be provided through the child and family-oriented Resilience Group and Empowerment (ERUGE) outpatient teams. Following the initial study, these efforts will expand to other pediatric settings in the hospital.

These tools will provide an invaluable resource to families of parents struggling with substance misuse, allowing children and parents to gain the understanding and sense of security necessary to rebuild trust, which is needed for a healthy upbringing.

"We are honored to partner with an organization committed to 'help children grow smarter, stronger, and kinder,' especially those in families with substance misuse. We are excited to elevate the voices of our staff and families in this endeavor," Fischer said.

Tips to help you stay safe when traveling around the holidays

Holiday safety is an issue that burns brightest from late November to mid-January, when families gather, parties are scheduled and travel spikes. Traveling by car during the holidays has the highest fatality rate of any major form of transportation based on fatalities per passenger mile. In 2020, it is estimated 163 people died on New Year's Day, 485 on Thanksgiving Day, and for Christmas Day, it is estimated 340 lost their lives, according to the National Safety Council. The Denver Health Trauma and Injury Prevention Program has a [blog with travel safety tips](#) to ensure you and your loved ones stay safe during the holidays.

National awareness and recognitions

Día de los Muertos, celebrated Wednesday and today, is a holiday to remember and honor those who have passed. Also called the Day of the Dead, the holiday originated in Mexico and has spread around the world as a time for people to mourn the loss of family and friends and to celebrate and remember their lives. Many people make altars, or "ofrendas," in their homes with pictures and special items.

The Denver Health Latino Employee Resource Group (ERG) held its monthly meeting on Wednesday and celebrated Día de los Muertos by creating art together, sharing tamales from local restaurant La Casita, and learning more about colleagues in the community.

If you would like to become a member of the Latino ERG please reach out to Stephanie.Syner@dhha.org.

Also, November is American Diabetes Month, Bladder Health Month, COPD Awareness Month, Lung Cancer Awareness Month, Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, Epilepsy Awareness Month, Family Caregivers Month, Health Skin Month, Stomach Cancer Awareness month and Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month.

Is there a department that you'd like us to recognize during a special week or month? Let us know in an [Employee Outreach Request form](#) and we'll spotlight them in the 411.

Denver Health in the media

One city's surprising tactic to reduce gun violence: solving more nonfatal shootings
 Oct. 30 | USA Today

Historically, Denver's gun murder rate has been about average among large American cities. Minorities have borne a disproportionate share of the violence: **An analysis by the Public Health Institute at Denver Health** found that Black people in Denver were about five times as likely to be murdered with guns as White people between 2011 and 2015.

In a departure from recent years, City Council passes \$17 million in budget amendments
 Oct. 30 | Denverite

During its budget hearing, **Denver Health CEO Donna Lynn** pleaded with City Council and the Mayor's Office for more funding to the safety net hospital, which treats a lot of homeless and uninsured patients. Costs have skyrocketed, while the city's contribution to caring for uninsured patients has stayed steady. The hospital ran a \$32 million deficit in 2022.

Denver City Council sends major rental assistance amendment to Mayor Johnston
 Oct. 31 | The Denver Post

The group also supported identifying another **\$1.8 billion to unfunded care at Denver Health**, the city's safety net hospital, next year. Denver Health officials estimate the institution is facing a \$70 million shortfall in that category. The council earlier this month asked Johnston to budget an additional \$15 million to cover some of that beyond the city's existing \$30 million commitment. He responded with \$3 million before Monday's amendment.

FDA takes first step to protect children from medications that look and taste like candy
 Oct. 31 | NBC News

Is that gummy a vitamin or candy? It can be hard to tell, especially for children. **Dr. Christopher Hoyte, medical director of the Rocky Mountain Poison & Drug Center**, suggested a straightforward definition for candy-like medications. Anything "reasonable that a person would look at it and have a sort of difficult time telling the difference between the two," he said.

Getting Nurses Involved in Street Medicine

The number of people homeless in the Denver metro area has increased nearly 60% between 2016 and 2023, according to the Common Sense Institute. The homeless population is 9,065, compared to 5,728 in 2016. CU Nursing alumni **Kiera Connelly** and **Kellie Thompson** work the night shift as nurses at **Denver Health**. On their days off, they volunteer with a street medicine program walking and driving around providing essential healthcare to people in need.

Migrants in cities across the US may need medical care. It's not that easy to find
 Nov. 2 | The Associated Press

Other cities are trying to manage as best they can, like Denver, where nearly 26,000 migrants have arrived within the last year. **Dr. Steve Federico, Government and Community Affairs Chief at Denver Health**, said the city's process is inadequate. Migrants are asked by shelter staff if they need immediate medical attention. If they say yes, they're either sent to an emergency room or connected by phone with the NurseLine through Denver Health.

November | December

- | | |
|--|---|
| Nov. 31: RESTORE Group Support: Leaders | Nov. 17: RESTORE Group Support: Distress & Burnout |
| Nov. 8: Employee Giving Campaign ends | Nov. 22: RESTORE Group Support: Leaders |
| Nov. 8: Benefits Open Enrollment ends | Nov. 27: Leading to apply for medical assistant training |
| Nov. 8: Faculty educational web workshop | Nov. 30: Criminal law legal clinic |
| Nov. 8: RESTORE messages | Dec. 11: RESTORE Group Support: Leaders |
| Nov. 8: Self-appraisal start in Workday | Dec. 21: Parade of Lights |
| Nov. 8: Toby's New Orleans Po'boys food truck on campus | Dec. 6: RESTORE Support Center is closed |
| Nov. 9: Secret Pal program deadline | Dec. 6: Employee Holiday Brunch |
| Nov. 9: Family law legal clinic | Dec. 7: Civil law legal clinic |
| Nov. 10: Veterans Day employee breakfast | Dec. 15: RESTORE Group Support: Distress & Burnout |
| Nov. 13: Holiday blood drive | |

[CLICK HERE FOR A PDF VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER.](#)

SUBMIT A REQUEST TO THE WEEKLY 411 Submit content for consideration in the Weekly 411 through the employee outreach request form (see above) and quality matter to create provide all content as early as possible. Your submission should detail who, what, when, where, why and how with correct spelling and punctuation of all names. We encourage you to include photos and any links of attachments that may help to personalize your message. Content received after noon on Thursday will not be included in the following week's 411.

