



# HEALTH MATTERS

Issue 2  
2020

## 2020 - the year we learned how strong we are

Amazing events happen every day, some so indelible in our minds that we look back on them as 'the year that such and such happened'. Surely you've reflected back in time by saying, 'Oh, that 's the year we bought the house' or 'that's the year we went to the Grand Canyon". One event locked in your memory that defined an entire year.

2020 has been a year like no other. It will be difficult to define this year by one event because a series of events and situations have left us scrambling to adapt to ongoing circumstances beyond our control. Despite the circumstances, people have come together to build bridges and networks of support. United across many agencies, community groups, churches and individuals, **we have learned how strong we are** as we seek to meet the needs of others. We check on our neighbors, deliver food and supplies to those in quarantine, publish and share lists of available resources and yes, even teach our children at home.



Rocky Mountain Rural Health Community Health Workers have made over a thousand phone calls to Park County residents since March. The purpose of the calls is to check in on our neighbors offering assistance and informing them of resources available to them. Often times, our CHWs find the greatest need is just for social contact so their call is timely and well received.

As a health advocacy nonprofit, Rocky Mountain Rural Health is concerned with the social determinants of health which include food, shelter, heat, and clothing amongst other things. To date, we have dispersed thousands and thousands of dollars in grant funds to help

Park County residents with rent, utilities, gas and groceries. Assistance in these areas of need has eased stress levels for many.

2020 also saw Rocky Mountain Rural Health having to contact our grantors to explain we had to revise, revamp or totally discard the programs they were supporting in order to meet new and unexpected needs. Every one of our granting agencies gave their blessing to make revisions and redirect funds as we saw fit. **RMRH acknowledges all of our agencies and grantors for their flexibility and for placing their trust in us.** The plans we put in motion we believe reflect not only the intentions of the granting agencies but the needs of Park County residents.

In particular we would like to thank **The Summit Foundation**, the **Anschutz Family Foundation** and **The Robert W. and Susan T. Brown Family Foundation** for their ongoing support and flexibility in allowing us a change in direction in this unprecedented way.



**The Summit Foundation**, in addition to already awarded grant funds, donated an additional amount for COVID relief. Thank you very much!!

### **ANSCHUTZ FAMILY FOUNDATION**

The **Anschutz Family Foundation** allowed RMRH to redirect senior citizen outreach funds to other programs targeting seniors in isolation.

**The Brown Family Foundation** has contributed significant amounts to our Families in Crisis Fund which has been a source of many of our COVID relief funds.

### **THE ROBERT W. AND SUSAN T. BROWN FAMILY FOUNDATION**

#### 2020 & COVID

Whatever your take on this situation, we can all agree that **everyone** has been impacted by it.

Financial **stress** is only one issue. The effects of isolation are proving to be **stress** factors too.

Financial or isolation stress has a **direct effect** on physical and mental health.

# Stay Connected with Connect for Health Colorado

**Open enrollment for health insurance through Colorado's Marketplace, Connect for Health Colorado, runs from November 1st to January 15th.** It's that time of year to review your coverage and determine if you need to make any changes or adjustments to your current health insurance policy.

If you are happy with your plan and the insurance carrier continues to offer it, you need to do nothing. If you'd like to shop for another plan, you will be able to see all available plans beginning on November 1st at [www.connectforhealthco.com](http://www.connectforhealthco.com).

**Not sure what to do or how to do it?**

**Rocky Mountain Rural Health has certified Health Coverage Guides to assist you.**

**Call 719-836-2169 for an appointment.**



## FREE FALLING IN THE YEAR OF COVID



**How fast can your car go from 0 to 60?** Have you put your vehicle to the test? At Rocky Mountain Rural Health, **we are interested in another type of phenomenon – the speed at which a life can go from 60 to 0** because of COVID and its repercussions.

We have seen the adverse effects of this pandemic in many of our clients. First comes the financial impact (from 60 to 0) and if not mitigated, then fallout to physical and mental well-being. At the time of this writing, the Park County Sheriff's Office is reporting record numbers of domestic violence calls. Isolation and financial stressors due to COVID may well be contributing factors.

RMRH continues to reach out to our neighbors offering assistance and resources with social determinants of health as our prime concern. One family contacted had a cupboard nearly bare. The primary breadwinner had been a key figure in an organization forced to close the doors due to COVID. We were able to provide food assistance which enabled them to dedicate their remaining funds toward shelter and heat.

One of our Community Health Workers came across a single mother of three that lost her job due to COVID and was behind on her rent and utility bills. RMRH was able to step in and cover the arrears with the landlord and utility companies.

Sometimes the assistance is just a gas card but for a dad trying to get to work to provide for his family it was just the ticket to see them through until pay day. Time and again we have seen people get back on their feet, find suitable employment and gain momentum once again.

**We have seen our efforts reverse the negative effects of free falling!**

**COVID FALLOUT GOT YOU in a DOWNWARD SPIRAL?**

**CALL ROCKY MOUNTAIN RURAL HEALTH and ask to speak to one of our Community Health Workers. We can help stop the free fall.**

**719-836-2169**

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARK COUNTY MEDICAID SUBSCRIBERS

**The Medicaid Nonemergency Medical Transportation mileage reimbursement program for Park County is now being administered by Envida.**

### FOR MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

Prior to your appointment, obtain the appropriate Mileage Reimbursement Verification Form from **Envida**. Forms can be mailed or emailed to you **or** you can print them from the **Envida** website ([www.envidacares.org](http://www.envidacares.org)).

Take the form to your Medicaid approved provider to be completed or you may complete the form and have the provider sign it.

Mail the form to: **Envida, 5660 N. Academy Blvd., Colorado Springs, CO 80918.**

**Please note: Forms are accepted by MAIL ONLY.**

Questions? **Call Envida at 719-633-4677.**

### FOR A RIDE TO A MEDICAL APPOINTMENT

**Envida** provides rides to Medicaid approved provider appointments for Park County Medicaid Subscribers in

**Florissant, Lake George and Hartsel ONLY.**

Appointments **Must Be** in the **Woodland Park or Colorado Springs Area.**

**IF** this is you, call **Envida** at **719-633-4677** to schedule a ride.

**IF** this is **NOT** you, continue to call **Intelliride** at 303-398-2155 or 855-489-4999 to schedule a ride.

Questions? **Call Envida at 719-633-4677.**

# AUTUMN...

Many refer to autumn as their favorite time of the year. The air is crisp and leaves turn a brilliant color. The excitement of picking out your pumpkin while sipping on apple cider. Friday night lights and the start of football season. People are found cuddling up by the fire with a book or loved one. Autumn also brings the dreaded time change; when one "falls back" they may experience a depressed state with the added hours of darkness. You may find yourself not feeling similar joy to others around you. Increased stress may creep up, perhaps due to the busy holiday season, anticipated tense family gatherings or current job demands.



Now, we have a bigger worry: Covid. This year brings unprecedented stressors. **Covid-19 has not only brought physical symptoms, but also mental distress due to isolation, generalized fear, and prevalent community anxiety.** Researchers have now formalized a definition of the long-term mental illnesses associated with the pandemic, collectively deeming them "**coronaphobia.**"<sup>1</sup> (Watson, 2020)

How can we prepare ourselves and push back against the individual and communal anxiety?

Stress affects our immune system and its response. While some things are out of our control, it is important to make sure that our body's defense mechanism is strong. We can increase our defense by exercising regularly, eating a healthy diet, getting quality sleep, smoking cessation, drinking alcohol in moderation, reducing stress, and taking steps to prevent infection. These steps include washing your hands, wearing a mask, and distancing. In addition it is important to achieve and maintain good nutritional status. **Modest amounts of these 5 essential vitamins and minerals will aid in your immune's boost: Vitamin D, E, A, C, and zinc.** (\*Recommended daily allowance listed below)



**Stress is a normal psychological and physical reaction to the demands of life.** It is important for us to recognize what is typical in this pandemic and what is not. Having depression does not mean that you will not be able to cope with the stressors that lie ahead. Also, even if you do not have a diagnosis of depression, this does not mean it cannot develop.



Despite our best efforts we may find ourselves feeling down, hopeless, and depressed. **If you find these symptoms lasting longer than 2 consecutive weeks, it is time to ask for help.** There are psychotherapies, medications, acupuncture, and meditation techniques that can provide significant benefit. It is important to reach out to your primary care provider or psychiatrist to find out what is best for you.

Implementing community-based strategies to support emotionally susceptible individuals during the COVID-19 crisis is important for any community. **Rocky Mountain Rural Health is here to facilitate ongoing medical services for Park County. We can be reached at 719-836-2169.**

If there are others you are concerned about who may be experiencing depression like symptoms please encourage them to reach out. We are all in this together.

Contributed by: *Julie Thornton PA-C, RMRH Board member at large.*

<sup>1</sup> Watson, Jason "COVID-19's Psychological Impact Gets a Name" Medscape Medical News. September 29th, 2020

\*Recommended daily allowance: Vit A (1000ug/day; Max 3000ug) Vit D (5000 iu/day) Vit E (22 IU/day) Vit C (90 mg/day; Max 2000mg/day) and Zinc (10mg daily)

## HELP FOR PARENTS

**Stress and mental health issues affect people of all ages.** The well-being of children and youth will be addressed in an upcoming class conducted by instructors from Rocky Mountain Rural Health who are certified to teach Mental Health First Aid for Youth by The National Council for Behavioral Health. The class is for parents, educators, caregivers or any adult wanting to learn more about mental health needs of children and youth. **The class will emphasize how to identify, understand and respond to a mental health crisis in a young person.**

The course will be conducted in two phases. The first part is a two hour self-paced study online followed by six hours of instruction using 'Zoom' as an interactive classroom experience. **Participants completing the class will receive a Mental Health First Aid certificate. The class is FREE.**

The 'Zoom' portion of the class will be conducted on November 11, 2020.

**The only investment you will make is your time but the reward of helping a young person in need is priceless.**

**Call Rocky Mountain Rural Health at 719-836-2169 to register.**



### Colorado Crisis Services

**CALL: 1-844-493-TALK (8255) AVAILABLE 24/7**

**TEXT: "TALK" to 38255 AVAILABLE 24/7**

**LIVE CHAT: [www.coloradocrisisservices.org](http://www.coloradocrisisservices.org) (4PM TO MIDNIGHT)**

**The National Suicide Prevention Hotline:**

**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN RURAL HEALTH** is a 501(c)3 organization that helps people of Park County get the healthcare they need. We are not a government agency. We depend upon grants and donations to continue our mission of improving access to healthcare in our county. There is an ongoing need for our services many of which are not available through any other agency or group.

**Please send your generous donation to:  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN RURAL HEALTH (RMRH)  
PO BOX 1600  
FAIRPLAY CO 80440**

Please use my contribution for:

- Breast Health assisting with education, diagnosis and treatment
- COVID Relief Fund
- Emergency Assistance for those going through a medical crisis
- Mileage Reimbursement for travel to medical appointments
- General Operations to help us continue to serve Park County

**THANK YOU!** Your donation is tax deductible to the full amount allowed by law.

Contact us by phone at 719-836-2169 Find us on the web at [www.rmrh.org](http://www.rmrh.org) Like us on Facebook

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RURAL HEALTH  
PO Box 1600  
FAIRPLAY CO 80440

