

CCMU NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2005

CCMU IS COMMITTED TO ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, TIMELY, QUALITY HEALTH CARE FOR EVERYONE IN COLORADO

CCMU MEMBER MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 13

On Wednesday, July 13, CCMU will hold its bi-monthly Member Meeting. This month's meeting will feature discussion about Referenda C & D and what role CCMU members can play in that effort. Sheila MacDonald, Campaign Director for *Vote Yes On C&D*, will address our group. There will be plenty of time for networking and for discussion about this important issue. The meeting will be held in the First Floor Conference Room at the Copic Companies Building at 7351 Lowry Blvd. A time for networking and light refreshments will begin at 3:00 p.m. The program will begin at 3:30 p.m. Please plan to attend this important meeting. RSVP by calling 303-832-7727 or e-mailing barbara@ccmu.org

CCMU MEMBERS ELECT NEW BOARD MEMBERS

CCMU members recently voted on new board members. Recently elected board members are:

Clark Clark, CEO, Mental Health Center of Denver
Ned Calonge, Chief Medical Officer, CO Dept. Public Health and Environment
Dave Dennis, Dennis & Company
John Gardner, Principal Consultant, PSI Arista
Mindy Klowden Development Officer, Jefferson Center for Mental Health
Dayna Matthew, Assoc. Dean Academic Affairs, CU Law School
Michael Severns, CEO, Mountain States Employers Council.

These join re-elected board member Debbie Welle-Powell, Vice President of Managed Care at Exempla Healthcare and continuing board members Gary VanderArk of the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Mark Earnest of the American College of Physicians, Chet Seward from the Colorado Medical Society, Larry Kieft from the Poudre Valley Prenatal Program, Gerry Niederman from Faegre & Benson, Ralph Pollock from the Business Council on Healthcare Competition, and Larry Wolk, Chief Medical Officer from HMS HealthCare.

On June 2, the board elected these officers: Dr. Gary VanderArk, President; Dr. Mark Earnest, Vice President; Chet Seward, Secretary; and Dave Dennis, Treasurer.

CCMU HEALTH POLICY COMMITTEE

The CCMU Health Policy Committee continues to meet under the dual leadership of co-chairs Debbie Welle-Powell and Dr. David Downs. A final bill review from the 2005 legislative session has been posted to the CCMU web site at www.ccmu.org

The Committee commends contract lobbyist Jennifer Miles for her extraordinary efforts during this past sessions and extends best wishes for the expected new baby.

This committee reviews selected legislation and makes recommendations to the CCMU board if a particular position is sought. To join this important committee or for more information about its work, contact Executive Director Molly Markert at 303-832-7727 or MollyMarkert@comcast.net

INFORMATION ON HEALTH CARE LEGISLATIVE INTERIM ACTIVITIES

The following legislative committees and activities will take place during the 2005 interim:

Health Insurance Interim Committee

SJR05-26 – Sen. Hagedorn (D-Aurora) and Rep. Boyd (D-Lakewood). Appointments made by July 1 to include 10 legislators: 5 Senators (3 Ds, 2 Rs) and 5 Representatives (3 Ds, 2 Rs) and is required to meet at least 4 times between now and 10/15/05 when its report is due to the Legislative Council. If approved it will be introduced in the next legislative session.

Opportunities for CCMU: While the impact of this committee on the medically underserved may be minimal, changes to health insurance policies can have a tremendous impact on the number of uninsured by including more or less Coloradans in the private insurance market. CCMU will be represented, determine CCMU's role in providing information from previous CCMU studies or the latest research, and actively monitor, and possibly influence, any proposed legislation.

Task Force for Study of Alternative Health Programs

HR1017 – Rep. McGihon (D-Denver). Creates a 12 member task force, with 2 Representatives (1 Dem. Chair, 1 Rep. Vice Chair) and 10 recognized health care experts, scholars specializing in health care policy and administration, and individuals with practical experience in health care. The 10 non-legislators will be appointed by Speaker of the House Andrew Romanoff (D-Denver). They “shall, to the extent possible, possess the knowledge and ability to take a broad, impartial view of all proposed health plans, not limited by the perspective of any special interest.”

The task force is required to survey existing research, show how the research applies to Colorado, and make its recommendations to the General Assembly in the form of proposed legislative changes. The task force shall meet “as necessary” during the interim and is charged with seeking volunteers for any administrative support, as it will not have staff support of the Legislature.

Opportunities for CCMU:

- 1) CCMU has submitted recommendations for two non-legislators to serve on this task force.
- 2) CCMU will offer administrative support, meeting space, refreshments, and other support to this Task Force.

Health Care Task Force

SB227 – Sen. Hagedorn and Rep. Marshall (D-Denver). Reestablishes the Health Care Task Force as a standing interim committee through 2010. Committee will include 10 legislators, 5 Senators (3 Ds, 2 Rs) and 5 Representatives (3 Ds, 2 Rs). Appointments made by July 1 and the committee must meet at least 4 but not more than 6 times each year. Permits the creation of subcommittees chaired by a legislator, but consisting of stakeholders and interest group members. It continues the Commission on Mandated Health Insurance Benefits to assess costs and benefits of adding or removing each mandated health insurance benefit included in any legislation.

Opportunities for CCMU: CCMU will be represented at each meeting, determine if there is a role for CCMU to provide information to the committee or its individual members, and actively monitor, and possibly influence, any proposed legislation.

HIFA Waiver Legislative Hearings

SB221 – Sen. Hagedorn and Rep. Buescher (D-Grand Junction). Establishes a legislative overview and approval process for any HIFA waiver proposal prepared by Colorado for submission to the federal government. Colorado's proposed HIFA waiver will combine the Medicaid and CHP+ programs for low-income children and adults.

The Joint Senate and HHS Committees are required to hold at least 4 public hearings with public testimony on the proposed HIFA waiver. One hearing will be held in the Denver metro area, one west of the Continental Divide, one in northern Colorado, and one in Southern Colorado. The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing will submit certain information to the Joint Committees. The Joint HHS Committees must approve the waiver, the Joint Budget Committee must also approve it, and has the option of holding another public hearing.

Opportunities for CCMU: CCMU will be represented at each legislative hearing, and will notify members hearing dates, times, and locations. CCMU will continue to participate in the HIFA Waiver Coalition to analyze and respond to the state's HIFA waiver proposal.

EXPANDED REPORT IS AVAILABLE ON THE CMMU WEB SITE: WWW.CCMU.ORG

YES ON C & D: MOVE COLORADO FORWARD

CCMU is one of a number of groups and coalitions that has endorsed Referenda C and D and made a commitment to enlist additional support prior to November when Colorado voters will be asked to choose to create a better Colorado by passage of these referenda.

Referendum C gives the state permission to retain all tax revenues for the next five years. These revenues will be used specifically for health care, transportation and education. Referenda C & D will help the state address growing needs in the health care system as well as create new programs to counteract the problem of our state's uninsured.

For more information, visit the following websites:

Bell Action Network, Ballot Questions C& D and the Bipartisan Budget Compromise:
<http://www.thebell.org/pdf/C&DFacts.pdf>

Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute, Colorado Economic Recovery Act, Referendum C:
<http://www.cclponline.org/pubs/RefC6-08-05.pdf>

Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute, Colorado Economic Recovery Act, Referendum D:
<http://www.cclponline.org/pubs/RefD6-08-05.pdf>

Here are some things you can do to support the Yes On C and D Campaign:

1. **Sign Up:** Endorse Referenda C & D today either as an individual or as an organization! Contact MollyMarkert@comcast.net for more information.
2. **Speak Out:** Organize a speakers' training on Referenda C & D for your members, clients, board members, etc. Contact MollyMarkert@comcast.net for more information.
3. **Show Your Support:** Request a yard sign. Contact MollyMarkert@comcast.net for more information.
4. **Recruit Your Friends:** Join "5 for Colorado" and commit to finding 5 friends to put up yard signs. Or, upgrade to "20 for Colorado" and find 20 friends to put up signs.

***COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS ANNOUNCES NEW
PUBLIC HEALTH RESOURCE FOR STATE OFFICIALS***

The Council of State Governments has recently announced its Healthy States initiative to help state leaders make informed decision on public health issues. GSC is partnership with the National Black Caucus of State Legislators and the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators on the initiative. This initiative enables information sharing between state legislators, policy makers and experts on critical public health issues, including prevention of obesity, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, and sexually transmitted diseases, as well as vaccines, environmental public health, health disparities, school health, and emergency preparedness and response.

At the Healthy States website at www.healthystates.csg.org you can sign up for a free weekly electronic newsletter with the latest public health news, resources, reports and events, receive a free quarterly newsletter covering public health legislative and policy trends, and innovative best practices from the executive and legislative branches. There is also information on web conferences, forums, and other publications. The Council of State Governments is the premier organization in forecasting policy trends for state leaders – executive, legislative and judicial decision makers.

***SENATOR SALAZAR CALLS THE PLIGHT OF THE
UNINSURED A CRISIS***

At a news conference held as a part of Cover the Uninsured Week, Senator Ken Salazar pointed to the plight of several Coloradoans who are representative of the more than 45 million uninsured Americans and called their plight a crisis. Salazar said that “The health care crisis in America is bankrupting America’s businesses and families.”

While census data indicates that over 45 million Americans are uninsured, experts say the Census Bureau may undercount the number of people who have insurance by at least nine million by ignoring people who go on and off Medicaid. CEO of Denver Health Medical Center, Dr. Patricia Gabow, who said her facility's cost of caring for the uninsured has increased from \$200 million in 2000 to \$285 million in 2004 also indicated that "This rate of growth cannot be sustained by any of us."

It is estimated that nearly half of all uninsured individuals suffer from chronic conditions such as heart disease, hypertension, arthritis and diabetes. Gabow said, "We all know these untreated conditions in the uninsured are time bombs, and costly ones, for the uninsured and society."

Following a recent poll of 400 Coloradans found that access to affordable health care and insurance topped all issues as voters' number one domestic policy issue, Senator Salazar called on the government to create a commission – much like the 9/11 commission – to study the problems of the uninsured.

CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Coming together with a theme of "Building A Strong Public Health System in Colorado," this conference is a joint program of the Colorado Public Health Association, Colorado Minority Health Forum, Public Health Nurses Association of Colorado, and Colorado Society for Public Health Education. Participants are invited to share what their programs or research have accomplished in these areas:

- Monitoring Coloradoans health status
- Diagnosing and investigating health problems
- Educating and empowering people about health issues
- Mobilizing community partnerships
- Developing policies and plans to support communities health improvement efforts
- Enforcing laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety
- Assuring the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable
- Assuring a competent public health and healthcare workforce
- Evaluating the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services, and
- Researching for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

Contact Judy McCree Carrington, Program Coordinator, Office of Health Disparities at CDPHE for more information. Phone 303-692-2094 or e-mail judy.mccree-carrington@state.co.us

SAVE THE DATE – SAVE THE DATE – SAVE THE DATE

CCMU's Annual Conference will be held Friday, September 23, at the Radisson Hotel SE at the intersection of I-225 and Parker Road. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the issue of the medically underserved in Colorado and work with others to identify solutions. Watch the CCMU web site for more information as details are finalized.

Confirmed speakers include Emily Friedman and Tom Garvey. Emily Friedman is an Independent Health Policy and Ethics Analyst from Chicago. In April, 2005, *Modern Healthcare* named her one of the "Top 25 Women in Healthcare." Tom Garvey is Chairman of the Board of The Center for Health Care Policy Research and Analysis.

The Annual Conference, always rated the Best in Networking opportunities, will be a full-day of great presentations, awards, and learning opportunities. Volunteers are needed to help plan the conference and input on workshop subjects are always welcome. If you have ideas to share, contact Molly Markert (MollyMarkert@comcast.net) or Barbara Shaw barbara@ccmu.org

MEMBERS ARE OUR STRENGTH

It is important that CCMU continues to grow by adding new members who want to become involved with the organization as it works to assure access to quality medical care to everyone in Colorado. Please feel free to pass this newsletter along to others who might be interested or call 303-832-7727 and ask us to send a copy to someone.

Joining CCMU is easy - individuals can join for as little as \$45/year; nonprofit agencies and other organizations for \$100/year; small corporations for \$500/year; and larger corporations for \$1,000/year. A membership application is included with this newsletter and is also on the CCMU web site at www.ccmu.org. Please return your membership application form to CCMU, P. O. Box 18877, Denver, CO 80218.

Current CCMU members can renew their memberships by using the same membership application. Your ongoing membership enables CCMU to continue to reach out with efforts toward advocacy, education, and facilitations of issues important to expanding health care to all those who live in Colorado.

WHAT TO DO? WHAT TO DO?

Although almost everyone has enough meetings to attend, CCMU tries to keep you informed of activities that are important to our vision of access to health care in Colorado. CCMU members with e-mail addresses often receive information on upcoming meetings. Here are other opportunities for you to become involved:

Colorado for Health Care is offering two internships. The internships are full-time and pay \$440/week plus mileage. The interns will sign up Health Care Voters this summer at community events and through some canvassing up and down the Front Range. For more information, contact Sara Lu at 303-489-3983 or Saralu@imahealthcare.org.

*The CCMU Executive Committee meets the third Tuesday of each month.
The CCMU Board of Directors meets the first Thursday of each month.*

Member Meetings are scheduled every other month during 2005. In the opposite months, CCMU members receive an electronic newsletter.

**Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved (CCMU)
P. O. Box 18877
Denver, CO 80218
Molly Markert, Executive Director
Office location - 1600 Sherman St.
303-832-7727**

**COLORADO COALITION FOR THE MEDICALLY
UNDERSERVED (CCMU)**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Organization/Agency/Corporation: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Suggested donation: _____ \$45 (individual) _____ \$100 (organization) _____ \$500
(small corporation) _____ \$1,000 (large corporation) _____ \$10 (student/other)

Amount enclosed: _____

May we list your business affiliation in our materials? _____ Yes _____ No

Vision:

CCMU is committed to access to affordable, timely, quality health care for everyone in Colorado.

Mission:

CCMU will achieve the vision of access to affordable, timely, quality health care for everyone in Colorado through education, advocacy, and facilitation of collaborative actions.

Principles:

1. Health care coverage should be universal, continuous, and affordable to individuals and families.
2. Only a comprehensive solution will ensure health care for all while controlling costs and promoting quality care.
3. In the absence of a comprehensive solution, we will embrace policies and programs that improve access to quality care, expand existing health care access, and protect and strengthen the medical safety net.
4. We seek solutions that are sound, sustainable, and keep the needs of patients first.

Mail completed application with check to CCMU, P. O. Box 18877, Denver, CO 80218

