

# COMMUNITY HEALTH ACCESS

*Building elegant solutions for the Roaring Fork Valley and beyond*

## PURPOSE

The purpose of **Community Health Access** is to demonstrate how a number of innovative ideas — from an evidence-based benefit design and quality-driven clinical strategies to local financing options and administration — can reduce costs and increase access to health care and health coverage at the local/regional level. This specific proposal seeks funding for the planning and research phase of the project. To date, we have made progress on or completed work in the following areas:

- Completed an initial assessment of potential community/regional approaches to improving the health insurance / care situation in the region.

(See [www.hmccolorado.org](http://www.hmccolorado.org) for a free copy);

- Developing local and state project partners. To date partners include Pitkin County, the Roaring Fork Community Health Plan, The Colorado Health Institute, and the Kauvar Foundation Evidence-Based Health Insurance Initiative;
- Secured initial funding to explore patient attitudes about an evidence-based insurance package with some local research and coordination funds; and
- Clarified key project components such as:
  - Piloting an evidence-based insurance model to explore if it can help manage costs by offering the information needed for practitioners and consumers to make good health care decisions;
  - Exploring innovative community / regional financing mechanisms to underwrite insurance for uninsured residents or other gaps (i.e., preventive care, mental illness, substance abuse) in the regional system; and,
  - Testing quality-driven clinical strategies and exploring administrative efficiencies (including electronic medical records) to reduce health care and insurance costs.

County	Population	Per Capita Personal Income	Estimated Uninsured
Eagle	45,819	\$ 37,923	14.7%
Garfield	47,441	\$ 27,121	15.9%
Pitkin	16,257	\$ 69,681	17.3%

## PROPOSED OUTCOMES

The research and planning phase of this proposed project will produce the following outcomes:

- 1) Identification of stakeholders and solidification of their interest to participate in the project. Stakeholders will include the HMC target population, providers, hospitals and clinics, foundations, local and state governments and elected officials, insurers, regulatory agencies, and key local and national healthcare experts and leaders.
- 2) Development of a proposal for a community health access plan that answers questions raised in this phase of the project (and others that will arise during the project), validates or modifies assumptions (on key areas such as the role of Oregon's prioritized list), lays out a timetable with tasks and milestones, and details a funding plan for the effort.
- 3) Identification and development of a community health access plan that addresses the following key issues:
  - Regulatory issues
  - Administrative issues
  - Community capacity building and education in order to encourage wise and effective use of health and healthcare resources
  - Purchasing pool options
  - Role of co-payments and coinsurance
  - Target market and geography
  - An assessment of how this approach would interact with current private insurance and public programs.

## **WHY THE ROARING FORK VALLEY?**

The problems of health care and health insurance are significant not only in scope but in complexity. By enabling and encouraging solutions to develop at the community and regional level, we can incubate innovation and test-drive possible solutions at a scale that involves less risk, less resources, and with more citizen involvement than logistically possible at the state or national level.

Community and regional initiatives are the research lab for policy makers seeking interventions (best practices, creative delivery systems, innovative insurance products and financing mechanisms) to make sure the health system works for all Colorado residents.

This region, perhaps because of the challenges it faces, is a unique example of how people, organizations, and communities can collaborate and innovate to tackle some health care and insurance gaps. Efforts such as the Family Visitor Program, Healthy Beginnings, and Roaring Fork Family Resource Centers and most recently, the Mountain Valley Family Health Center and the Roaring Fork Community Health Plan point to significant social capital and community leadership necessary to innovate in the health care arena. Healthy Mountain Communities' experience with regional collaboration in the areas of transportation, affordable housing, financing, and legislation creates an environment ripe for innovation in the area of health care and health insurance.

For more information on this project and HMC visit [www.hmccolorado.org](http://www.hmccolorado.org).