



**MENTAL HEALTH
COLORADO**

Your voice for healthier minds across the lifespan for all Coloradans

March 2024

Thank you for joining us for LEAD (Legislative Education & Advocacy Day) 2024!



[Click here to watch the event recording + access presentation materials.](#)

Get Your Tickets Now!

This June, join us for an evening of unmasking discrimination at our 4th Annual Unmasked Masquerade Party! Together, we'll gather with partners and advocates to celebrate community

and raise funds for our mission of ending the discrimination associated with mental health and substance use conditions.

Date: June 8, 2024

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: Haven in the Pines, 463 E. Happy Canyon Rd., Castle Rock, CO

The evening promises to be a vibrant affair filled with music, spotlight speakers, delicious food, and engaging activities. We would be honored to have you and your network join us as we celebrate resilience, raise awareness, and unite to make a positive difference in the lives of those affected by mental health challenges.

[Follow this link to secure your ticket now!](#)

If you have any questions or require further information, please don't hesitate to reach out to Ashley at aperales@mentalhealthcolorado.org.

In The News



The Colorado Sun | 3.13.24

‘Some of the 1,400 patients of a Western Slope clinic are still struggling to find care a month after its abrupt closure’

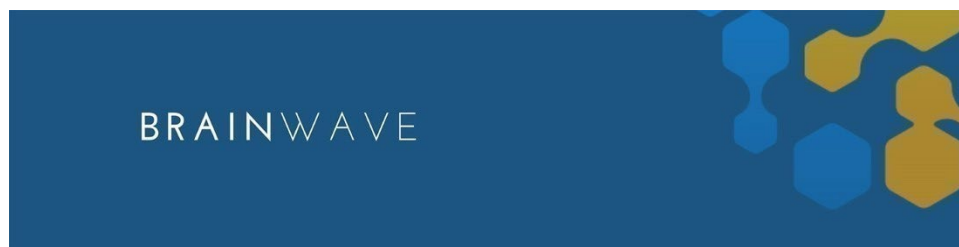
The quality of care in America is such that if a person has health insurance, they can receive care for a physical health condition and leave with a reasonable treatment plan that is consistent with standards of care, said Atchity, CEO at Mental Health Colorado.

“When we’re seeking behavioral health care, that is just not true at all,” he said.

It’s not uncommon for people with behavioral health conditions to wait months to get access to care in rural areas only to find that their provider is young, inexperienced, middle class or wealthy and not able to understand the client’s needs in order to provide supportive care, Atchity said.

[Read More Here](#)

The Brain Wave Policy Corner



What’s Happening in Colorado:

Last week, Dannette Smith, Colorado’s new Commissioner of the Behavioral Health Administration started in her role. We welcome the new commissioner and look forward to working together to improve health in Colorado. [Learn more here.](#)

The Joint Budget Committee approved a spending plan last week for next fiscal year that would invest heavily in state workers and medical services, eliminate Colorado’s K-12 funding shortfall, and limit tuition increases for in-state students. Earlier in the week, the panel faced a potential \$170 million shortfall and had to do a lot of cutting to balance the budget. This will certainly impact the 2024 Legislative Session and the bills that will be passed. [Read more here.](#)

Denver Mayor Mike Johnston announced the opening of the La Paz community in Overland Park, a collection of 60 tiny homes to address unsheltered Coloradans. This micro-community will include wraparound services with a pathway to permanent housing and stability. [Read more here.](#)

A View from Washington, D.C.

President Joe Biden delivered his State of the Union address earlier this month, where he covered a range of issues including the state of politics in our nation, reproductive rights, the mental health crisis, and the economy. [Listen to or read his full remarks here.](#)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announced the availability of nearly \$50 million for HRSA's Rural Opioid Treatment and Recovery Initiative and released the initiative's funding application. Funding will support establishing and expanding comprehensive substance use disorder treatment and recovery services in rural areas, including by increasing access to medications for opioid use disorder, such as buprenorphine. [Read more here.](#)

Last month, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) granted approval to Montana to provide contingency management, tenancy supports, and Reentry Initiative services under its Section 1115 Healing and Ending Addiction through Recovery and Treatment (HEART) Demonstration. This amendment approval builds on the existing HEART Demonstration which provides the State expenditure authority to cover short-term stays at institutions for mental disease (IMDs) for individuals diagnosed with a substance use disorder (SUD). The HEART Demonstration is effective through June 30, 2027. [Read more here.](#)

Last November, Colorado Congressman Ken Buck (R-CO-04) announced he was leaving Congress after 9 years in office. Last week, Rep. Buck concluded his term early saying "This place just keeps going downhill. And I don't need to spend my time here." [Read more about his departure here.](#)

Advocacy Opportunities

- We are over halfway through the 2024 Legislative Session! All three of our agenda bills are waiting in appropriations to get funded:
 - [HB24-1066: Prevent Workplace Violence in Health-Care Settings,](#)
 - [HB24-1217: Sharing of Patient Health-Care Information,](#)
 - [SB24-117: Eating Disorder Treatment & Recovery Programs,](#)
 - If you want to get involved with our agenda or priority bills, be sure to sign up for more [information here.](#)
- The Colorado Behavioral Health Administration seeks individuals to fill vacant positions on two crucial advisory councils: the Family Voice Council (FVC) and the Behavioral Health Administration Advisory Council (BHAAC). Both councils ensure that BHA's initiatives and actions are shaped by the perspectives and input of the communities it serves, underscoring its values of collaboration and community-informed practice. Find more information about each council, and how to apply, on the Behavioral Health Administration's [website here.](#)

Upcoming Events



Behavioral Health Best Practices in our Workplaces and Behavioral Health Design/Construction

April 11, 2024

We're teaming up with the Association of Medical Facility Professionals (AMFP) and the Colorado Association of Healthcare Engineers and Directors (CAHED) for an in-person panel event to engage in meaningful conversation about how leadership can support mental health and well-being in the workplace and in the broader community.

Registration opens March 7th. Follow [this link](#) to secure your seat!

Care Not Cuffs Monthly Dispatch

CARE
NOT CUFFS
MONTHLY
DISPATCH



April Webinar

BEAT Meth: Addressing Methamphetamine Addiction in Colorado Communities

Scott A. Simpson, MD MPH

Director, Division of Community, Population, and Public Mental Health,
University of Colorado School of Medicine and Denver Health

JJ Keller

Peer Recovery Coach, Denver Health

Alia Al-Tayyib, PhD

Senior Research Scientist and BEAT Meth Principal Investigator

Deborah Rinehart, PhD

Senior Research Scientist and BEAT Meth Principal Investigator

Thursday April 25th, 5:00 PM MT

Thank you to all who attended our first Monthly Dispatch webinar this past month, and for your interest in the work of disentangling mental health from criminal justice! If you missed it, recordings of each webinar will be [archived on our website](#). Our next webinar will take place on:

April 25th, 2024 at 5:00 PM MT

BEAT Meth: Addressing Methamphetamine Addiction in Colorado Communities

Scott A. Simpson MD MPH, JJ Keller, Alia Al-Tayyib PhD, and Deborah Rinehart PhD

Register [here!](#)

Do you shop at King Soopers?



If so, CLICK HERE!

Every time you shop at King Soopers, a portion of your purchase can benefit Mental Health Colorado.

Join us for Mental Health Colorado's first Volunteer Night! You can RSVP now at the link in our bio (https://bit.ly/volunteer_mhc).

On Tuesday, April 9th, from 4:00- 6:00 PM, we will gather at The Village in Centennial for an evening of action. Join us to learn about our volunteer opportunities, connect with like-minded individuals, and participate in group projects to help support our mission. Volunteer Night is your chance to make a direct impact. Don't forget to RSVP!