

## our services by the numbers

**3,866**

Dental patients served at the Family  
Dental Clinic (in 10,663 visits)

**19,161**

Number of one-month prescriptions  
supplied to clients through Prescription  
Assistance

**\$2.6 million**

Combined value of prescriptions  
(donated, discounted and  
Health District–purchased)

**1,468**

People receiving blood pressure checks

**1,384**

People receiving cholesterol checks

**1,132**

Stop-smoking counseling sessions held

**1,307**

People receiving flu shots

**76**

Percentage of Healthy Weighs participants  
who reported eating more fruits and  
vegetables after taking the class

**3,541**

People receiving mental-health or  
substance-abuse help from Connections

**\$157,142**

Value of donated/discounted services by  
local therapists and psychiatrists through  
Connections

**289,861**

“Hits” to provider pages on  
HealthInfoSource.com

**10,168**

Meningococcal immunizations provided  
in two days by a coalition of community  
health agencies, including the Health  
District

**\$560,345**

Raised in grants and donations, including  
\$171,416 to expand local dental care

# Health District

OF NORTHERN LARIMER COUNTY

## 2010 Annual Report

# Navigating Life

*“Life is all about choices. On every journey you take, you face choices. At every fork in the road, you make a choice. And it is those decisions that shape our lives.”*

– Mike DeWine

*All* of us have times in our lives when we face decisions that can make a huge difference in our future. Some choices are simple; some are agonizing.

When it comes to health, it is important that we periodically examine the choices we make. They literally can spell the difference between life and death.

With its mission of “improving the health of our community,” the Health District doesn’t make choices lightly.

Our board of directors has set a standard that we periodically evaluate our priorities and services and make changes for greater impact when needed. Every three years, the Health District takes a comprehensive look at factors that influence the health of our community. We gather input through our Community Health Survey and accompanying discussion groups, as well as consider statistics, trends and projections at the local, state and national levels.

In some cases, our decision is to stay the course. Tobacco use steals a great deal of health, so one of our priorities since 1995 has been to assist in smoking cessation. We are thrilled to see that adult cigarette smoking rates have decreased ever since, from 18 percent in 1995 to 11 percent in 2010.

Sometimes change is evolutionary, as when gaps in local mental-health services motivated us to partner with the Larimer Center for Mental Health and establish



the Connections program to work on community-wide service changes. Other times it is rapidly thrust upon us, as it was last year when we quickly joined with the state and county health departments and Colorado State University in providing thousands of immunizations against a deadly and contagious strain of meningococcal disease that threatened our community.

We all tend to take our health for granted, forgetting the undesirable alternative. Yet conscious decisions about health can make huge differences.

I challenge you to do as the Health District does — to pause occasionally and ponder the value of your health, remembering just how much our decisions shape our lives. Then see if there is anything you could do differently to hold on to the precious health that you have.



*Carol Block*

Executive Director

# Affordable Health Insurance for Families

*Stacy Alms*, a Fort Collins mom, would prefer to work and pay the bills herself. But paying healthcare bills for herself and her family can be challenging.

“Being self-employed, my husband and I don’t have access to group health insurance,” Alms says.

When the couple’s two youngest children both needed tonsillectomies and ear tubes at the same time, they were relieved to learn that the Health District’s Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) and Medicaid Outreach Project could help.

Even with two incomes, the Alms family qualified for CHP+, an affordable health insurance plan for Colorado children and pregnant women. They paid a \$35 annual enrollment fee and a nominal copay that enabled their children to receive the care they needed without plunging the family into long-term debt.

11% of local children in lower income households are uninsured

Duran helps clients complete the necessary application, and then follows it through until it gets processed. Applicants who do not qualify for Medicaid will automatically be considered for CHP+. A family of four can earn up to \$55,800 a year and still qualify for CHP+. Children and pregnant women covered by Family Medicaid have no copays, while those covered by CHP+ have a copay up to \$10.

CHP+ and Medicaid are state- and federally funded insurance programs that make quality healthcare affordable for children and pregnant women who are uninsured or underinsured.

Rosie Duran, coordinator of the Health District’s CHP+ and Medicaid Outreach Project, makes applying for help easy.

“To get started, it’s best if people call me,” says Duran. “We can usually get them in that same day, or we’ll do a home visit or go to their office, if they can’t get off work.”

Services covered by both plans include checkups and shots, dental care, prescriptions, hospitalization, mental-health services, eyeglasses and more.

“The CHP+ coverage we receive is strictly for our children,” says Alms. “It alleviates that extra stress and frees you up to take care of your own medical needs.”

The CHP+ and Medicaid Outreach Project is part of the Health District’s clinical services, which include the Connections mental-health program, Prescription Assistance, Integrated Care and the Family Dental Clinic.



Helping kids is at the heart of Rosie Duran’s work.

# Teaching Skills to Improve Mental Health

*When* local counselors indicated a need for a different kind of mental-health therapy group in the community, Laura Burlingame-Lee stepped up to the plate.

Burlingame-Lee, who has a Ph.D. in counseling psychology, offered to start a DBT Skills Training group to help keep people with borderline personality disorder out of the hospital and teach them skills to lead more productive lives.

DBT Skills Training is a program of Connections, a partnership of the Health District and Larimer Center for Mental Health that provides services to deal with a broad spectrum of mental-health issues in the community.

Burlingame-Lee co-facilitates the DBT Skills Training group with Susan Jacobs, a mental-health specialist at Connections. The group started in summer 2010.

“It’s very much a team-oriented therapy,” says Burlingame-Lee. Each member of the DBT group receives weekly one-on-one counseling with a therapist while also participating in weekly skills group meetings.

DBT, or dialectical behavior therapy, is a comprehensive cognitive-behavioral treatment for individuals who have learned maladaptive and often inadequate emotion regulation strategies.

The treatment model comprises four major modules: mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation and interpersonal effectiveness. DBT’s mindfulness component borrows from Buddhist meditative practice, Burlingame-Lee explains, and involves “an increased and more sensitive awareness of what’s going on both inside and outside of you,” she says.

Burlingame-Lee’s interest in DBT was sparked while she was in graduate school and working with patients who were suicidal. Using DBT, she’s seen dramatic improvements in her patients’ ability to regulate emotions.

“I do see a lot of positive results, people moving in the right

direction,” Burlingame-Lee says. “One young woman came to the support group with severe anger issues,” she says. By using DBT skills, “she went from having two or three outbreaks a month to just one every six months or so.”

In addition to Connections, the Health District’s mental-health programs include the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Partnership and the Community Dual Disorders Team. These services are designed to help local residents find effective, affordable services to improve their mental health and well-being while also reducing the burden on hospital emergency rooms and crisis intervention programs.

25% of Health District residents report putting off a mental-health visit because of cost



Susan Jacobs (L) and Laura Burlingame-Lee team up to provide DBT Skills Training.

# Prescription for Well-being

*When* Barbara Heller of Fort Collins stepped into the Health District's Prescription Assistance office, she got more than she bargained for.

On her first visit in 2008, Heller not only found the assistance she needed to obtain medications for her health issues, but she also received a big dose of positive thinking.

"Everyone in Prescription Assistance is very kind and helpful," Heller says. "You always feel welcome."



The Prescription Assistance program is open to residents of Fort Collins and northern Larimer County who meet household financial guidelines and who don't have insurance for prescriptions. People who live in the rest of Larimer County may use the program if they have a physician with Poudre Valley Health System.

**13% of local residents report being unable to fill a prescription because of cost**

The program has helped Heller obtain the medications she needs for health issues that include high blood pressure, migraine headaches and diabetes.

"My experience with Prescription Assistance has been extremely valuable," Heller says. "The staff make it easy to fill out all the paperwork and access manufacturers' assistance programs."

Heller's situation is fairly typical of the clients who use Prescription Assistance — people dealing with chronic health problems that require one or more medications that are simply too expensive to afford on their income.

"It's like detective work," says Ann Martin, the program's lead prescription advocate. "It doesn't matter what kind of medication a client needs or how many medications they need, we go on a mission to discover exactly how we can best help them," she says.

"We've learned how to navigate the pharmaceutical system and are able to help people in a way that makes a big impact," Martin adds.

Martin has been able to provide Heller with vouchers for local pharmacies and support from a manufacturer's assistance program. Heller also receives diabetes monitoring supplies through a Health District program supported by funding from the Fort Collins Lions Club.

"I would be in dire straits without Prescription Assistance," Heller says. "I wouldn't be able to buy my prescriptions at all."

Ann Martin knows how to navigate the pharmaceutical system to find the best benefits.

## Step Free, Breathe Easy

*Fort Collins* resident Peg Stewart had tried acupuncture, hypnosis, will-power and prescription drugs to try and quit her 25-year, pack-a-day smoking habit. But only the Health District's "Step Free From Tobacco" program helped her succeed and get rid of a cough that had been annoying her for years.

Norma Pomerleau and Bear Gebhardt are the Health District's stop-smoking coaches who teach the six-session Step Free class and provide counseling sessions for individuals, couples and groups. Both are former smokers who understand the "smoker identity." With this background, they can coach clients through potential problems they may encounter in their first days, weeks and months of quitting.

The Step Free From Tobacco program is part of Health Promotion Services, which uses proven techniques to help Health District residents improve their health through heart-health screenings, stop-smoking counseling, nutrition and weight management counseling, and flu immunization services.

Pomerleau and Gebhardt employ an entertain-

ing, straightforward, supportive approach to help people kick the habit. They also help clients understand that tobacco use is a biological addiction compounded by deeply engrained associations between smoking and countless daily activities and social situations.

"We provide our clients with a smorgasbord of proven tools and strategies they can use to help them stop smoking and stay quit," explains

Pomerleau. "They can pick and choose the ones that work the best for them in any given situation." Examples include deep breathing exercises, relaxation, visualization,

affirmations and many more.

Free nicotine patches, gum and lozenges are available to help clients manage their nicotine withdrawal.

Stewart found a simple waiting tool to be most powerful for her. "When I really wanted a cigarette, I would wait 60 seconds, and then the urge would pass," she says.

Early in the class, clients create a list of "I will" statements to visualize and describe how their lives will be better once they quit using tobacco,

such as being able to breathe better and having more energy.

The benefits of being tobacco-free prove to be their own reward, notes Stewart. "I stopped coughing about two weeks after I quit."

Stewart says she is now "a clean-air breather." She wants others to know that they can be free from nicotine, too.

"I've told every smoker I know about this program and the fact that it works," she says. "If you want to quit, and you go into each class with the intention of quitting, the instructors will give you the tools to be successful."



**11% of Health District residents reported smoking cigarettes in 2010, compared to 18% in 1995**

Norma Pomerleau brings a calming presence to her stop-smoking classes.

# Health District

OF NORTHERN LARIMER COUNTY

120 Bristlecone Drive • Fort Collins, CO 80524  
(970) 224-5209 • fax (970) 221-7165 • www.healthdistrict.org

Our services are open to those who live within the Health District, including Fort Collins, LaPorte, Wellington, Livermore, Red Feather Lakes and Timnath. The Health District serves residents of all incomes, though some services are specifically for families who have low incomes and no health insurance. Most services have a fee, but sliding fees are available to make good health affordable for all.

## with thanks

A heartfelt "thank you" to the individuals, businesses and organizations that gave generously to the Health District in 2010. Our special programs included enrolling more families and children in insurance programs and improving access to dental care, especially for those with certain disabilities. We continue to seek community support for the Tooth Fairy Fund, for the efforts of the Dental Health Partnership of Larimer County and for the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Partnership. For information or to make a donation, contact Jim Becker at [jbecker@healthdistrict.org](mailto:jbecker@healthdistrict.org) or (970) 224-5209.

### Corporations and Foundations

Bohemian Foundation	Denver Foundation
Caring for Colorado Foundation	First Presbyterian Church
Colorado Financial Management	Fort Collins Lions Club Foundation
The Colorado Trust	Intel

### Individuals

Stacey Arnold	Carla Conrardy	Ray Jenkins	Steven Thorson, MD
Jim Becker	Harold Dripps	Celeste Kling	Lin Wilder
Walter Biedermann	Erin Eulenfeld	Tom Linnell	Kristan Williams
Bernard Birnbaum, MD	Michael Felix	Susan McFaddin	
Marjorie Boehner	Sue Hewitt	Carol Plock	

### Ongoing Project Partners

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Larimer County Criminal Justice Plan
City of Fort Collins	Larimer County Department of Health and Environment
Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing	Larimer County Department of Human Services
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment	Larimer County District Attorney's Office
Colorado State University	Larimer County Office on Aging
Foothills Gateway	Poudre School District
Fort Collins Housing Authority	Poudre Valley Hospital Foundation
Fort Collins Police Department	Project Smile
Homeward 2020	Thompson School District
Larimer Center for Mental Health	United Way of Larimer County

### Sponsors & Partners — HealthInfoSource.com

Associates in Family Medicine  
Centers for Gastroenterology  
Columbine Health Systems  
Eye Center of Northern Colorado  
Larimer County Department of Health and Environment  
Poudre Valley Health System Foundation  
The Women's Clinic of Northern Colorado

## board of directors

The Health District is governed by a publicly elected board of directors. Directors for 2011 are:

**Celeste Kling**  
President

**Bernard Birnbaum, M.D.**  
Vice President

**Timothy O'Neill**  
Secretary

**Steven Thorson, M.D.**  
Treasurer

**Joe Hendrickson**  
Liaison to PVHS

## programs

### Connections

mental health and substance abuse services  
525 W. Oak Street  
221-5551

### Family Dental Clinic

202 Bristlecone Drive  
416-5331

### Dental Connections

202 Bristlecone Drive  
493-3366

### Health Promotion

nutrition counseling, smoking cessation,  
cardiovascular screening, flu shots  
224-5209

### Community Impact Team

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Partnership,  
Dental Health Partnership of Larimer County, policy  
tracking and advocacy, resource development  
224-5209

### Integrated Primary Care/Mental Health Program

224-5209

### Prescription Assistance

416-6519

### Healthcare Matters

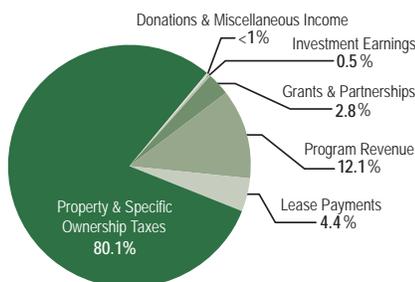
224-5209

### CHP+/Medicaid Outreach Project

472-0444

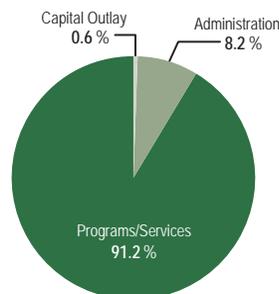
### 2010 revenues, total

\$6,877,742



### 2010 expenditures, total

\$6,576,753



### 2010 expenditures, by program

\$6,002,731

