Almost overnight, life seemed to stop for many local residents. The threat of coronavirus, and a series of county and state measures aimed at preventing COVID-19 from overwhelming hospitals, drastically changed nearly everyone’s work or social routine.

But while many things did stop, local health-care needs continued. And some needs even grew more critical. Here’s how some Health District programs rushed to make changes to provide the community with a variety of services that can help people through these challenging times.

Help looks different during PANDEMIC

Larimer Health Connect • 970-472-0444 • 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., M-F

It started March 16 with a governor’s order for restaurants to end dine-in service and for many other businesses, including theaters and bars, to close. As more non-essential businesses were temporarily shuttered to help slow the spread of coronavirus, layoffs grew.

Along with their jobs, many people lost their health insurance or a means to pay for the health coverage they had.

Suddenly phones were ringing at Larimer Health Connect, the Health District program that provides free help signing up for lower cost health coverage from Health First Colorado (Medicaid) and Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+), as well as private plans from the Connect for Health Colorado marketplace that offer financial assistance.

The program now faced a crush of newly unemployed residents seeking health insurance. But new rules for social distancing made it impossible for staff to provide their usual one-on-one appointments.

A system was soon set up to funnel incoming calls to Health Coverage Specialists working from home. Staff are now able to help people get enrolled in Medicaid, CHP+ or Connect for Health Colorado plans entirely by phone appointment or videoconferencing. If a person requires a videoconference for their assistance but lacks a computer or internet access, Larimer Health Connect offers in-person office appointments that allow people to videoconference with staff from a separate room, still maintaining a safe distance.

A lapse in health coverage leaves people financially vulnerable while risks from coronavirus persist, so Larimer Health Connect recommends people seek out new insurance quickly, especially if they want a plan from the Connect for Health Colorado marketplace.

“For anyone looking at a marketplace plan, it’s very important they act quickly after losing their employment,” says Rosie Duran, team supervisor at Larimer Health Connect. “There is a 60-day window during which they can enroll in a new plan. Otherwise, they’ll need to wait for open enrollment in the fall.”

In addition, Connect for Health Colorado has extended until April 30 a special enrollment period. Coloradans who are currently uninsured or about to lose coverage due to COVID-19 are able to get health insurance for 2020.

continued on page 6
When you don’t HAVE a place to ‘Stay at Home’

by julie estlick

The shelter served over 480 people in March alone. “It’s a containment strategy, and it’s allowed us to slow this thing down a little bit at the very least,” Rout says.

Homeward 2020 Director Holly LeMasurier, interim project manager for the COVID-19 Homelessness Response in Fort Collins, says, “We’re working hard to identify and separate those with a risk of spreading infection and protecting the most vulnerable populations at risk of severe disease.”

LeMasurier is coordinating the partner coalition’s implementation of recommended health protocols across the city’s shelter system, to flatten the curve, or spread out the number of cases over a period of time so hospitals and healthcare workers aren’t overwhelmed. LeMasurier says, “Our goal is to achieve the best possible outcomes for all the guests, staff members, and the general community.”

When the governor issues a stay-at-home order to slow the spread of a deadly virus, where do you go if there isn’t a home for you to stay in? For those who are experiencing homelessness in Larimer County, it’s a frightening dilemma during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“A significant number of our clients have underlying health conditions and many are seniors, so when this virus became a global health crisis it was clear that the unhoused population would be most vulnerable with no options to be home and avoid people,” says Homeward Alliance Executive Director David Rout, whose organization oversees the Murphy Center for Hope.

Then, the City of Fort Collins stepped up and offered the closed Northside Aztlan Community Center (NACC) as a temporary 24/7 shelter. Quickly, community partners Homeward Alliance, Homeward 2020, Health District of Northern Larimer County, SummitStone Health Partners, Catholic Charities of Larimer County, and Fort Collins Rescue Mission sprang into action to create a centralized operations center at NACC.

The large gym provides space for improved social distancing and SummitStone Health Partners is offering mental health support. Health District Medical Director Dr. James Stewart created a triage system at visitor check-in to funnel those with symptoms that could be related to coronavirus to a recovery center in another part of the building. There guests can rest and be monitored in isolation. Six people were in isolation at the end of March. Those with more severe symptoms are evaluated by EMTs for a trip to the hospital.

Due to COVID-19, board meetings may be held remotely. Details are included on the agenda posted to healthdistrict.org/board-meeting-schedule or call 970-224-5209 for more information.

© 2020 Health District of Northern Larimer County
Information in this publication is not a substitute for medical attention from your health-care provider.
Once every 10 years, each person living in the United States and its territories is counted. The 2020 census counts where you lived on April 1, 2020. These numbers are used to determine federal funding of essential and popular programs including Health First Colorado/Medicaid for the next decade. Larimer County receives $800 million a year to help pay for things like child care assistance, services for aging adults, public health services, housing, education, employment, and road and bridge repairs.

Colorado even stands to gain an additional seat in the House of Representatives after this count, according to U.S. Census Bureau population estimates.

Most households will receive invitations to fill out the short questionnaire by phone, mail, or—for the first time—online. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ever-changing situation, if you need help filling out the census you can call 1-844-330-2020 or go to 2020census.gov for more language guides.

“Estamos realmente enfocados en el crecimiento tremendo en el condado de Larimer y en asegurarnos de que a todos cuenta,” dice Heather O’Hayre, directora de Larimer County Department of Human Services.

Need more motivation to be counted?

Top 10 Reasons to Participate in the 2020 Census:

1. **It’s the Law.** Everyone living in the United States is required to complete the census.
2. **Census data is safe and secure.** There is no citizenship question on the 2020 Census. Your personal information is protected—each household form has a special code. And federal law prohibits using any information against you.
3. **It’s fast.** There are only 10 questions and it takes about 10 minutes to complete.
4. **It’s convenient.** You can complete the census online or call 1-844-330-2020 on your schedule. Call centers are staffed 9 a.m.-4 p.m. MST, but you may have a longer wait time due to limits on the number of employees allowed to work together during the health crisis.
5. **Help is available!** Once government stay-at-home orders are lifted and public libraries reopen, some area libraries can assist you in filling out the census questionnaire. Special outreach events around the community may be rescheduled.

You can complete the census online or call 1-844-468-2020 for español en su horario. Los censores de llamadas cuentan con personal de 9 a.m. a 4 p.m. MST, pero es posible que tenga un tiempo de espera más largo debido a la cantidad de empleados que pueden trabajar juntos durante la crisis de salud.

Check here for updates: Larimer.org/census-outreach-calendar.

6. **Access to computers is easy.** In the current health crisis, it may take a while for libraries to re-open to the public. When they do, you won’t need a library card or ID to use a public library computer. Census workers or librarians can help you complete the questionnaire online. Laptops will be provided at some regional events if they are rescheduled. (See resources.)

7. **It’s not just for English speakers.** Paper forms are also available in Spanish. Phone assistance is provided in 13 languages. Web pages, videos guides, and word glossaries are available in 59 languages, large print, and braille. (See resource list.)

8. **Money for essential community programs is at stake.** An accurate count means we get the federal dollars we need to keep our county safe, healthy, and thriving.

9. **Fair representation at the federal level.** Colorado’s population has exploded since 2010, according to the State Demography Office. Census counts are used to determine how many seats each state gets in Congress, and an additional representative in Washington would increase the Centennial State’s political power.

10. **EVERYONE deserves to be counted.** In the past, infants, people living in rural areas, unhoused people, and people of color have been undercounted. Just a 1 percent undercount in Larimer County could mean losing $80 million in federal funds over the next 10 years!

Sources: Counting for Dollars 2020: Colorado (George Washington/University Study), Larimer County Budget Office, Larimer County Department of Human Services, NoCoCounts, U.S. Census Bureau Denver Regional Office

**Resources**

- [2020census.gov](http://2020census.gov) — language guides and general information
- [Denver Regional Census Center](http://1-800-852-6159) — questions or concerns; Denver.Regional.Office@census.gov
- [NoCoCounts](http://ourcity.fcgov.com) — Ourcity.fcg.com; census videos, news, and fact sheets
- [Larimer.org/census-outreach-calender](http://Larimer.org/census-outreach-calender) — regional events held around the community to help residents complete the census

**Recursos**

- [2020census.gov](http://2020census.gov) — guías de idiomas e información general
- [Centro Regional del Censo de Denver](http://1-800-852-6159) — preguntas o inquietudes; Denver.Regional.Office@census.gov
- [NoCoCounts](http://ourcity.fcgov.com) — Ourcity.fcg.com; videos del censo, noticias y hojas informativas
- [Larimer.org/census-outreach-calender](http://Larimer.org/census-outreach-calender) — eventos regionales que se realizaran alrededor de la comunidad para ayudar a los residentes a completar el censo
**Health District Board Election – May 5, 2020**

Chrisy Bush
Age: 48
Occupation: Business owner for a custom-design build firm in Fort Collins. Formerly worked in the film industry in California (including 3 years with Larimer County government), Maine, and Alaska.

Education: Master of Fine Arts in Film Production, University of Southern Maine, Portland.

Family: Married, mother of two children ages 18 and 12.

Why are you running for the Health District board of directors?

Our community is fortunate to have a special tax district to address unmet community health needs. I want to serve as a connector between our community and our government by engaging in conversations about health-related issues and translating that into comprehensive, thoughtful, and reasonable, actionable, and fair plans.

What special skills or qualifications will you bring to the board?

As a former member of the Fort Collins City Council and a citywide staff member for the Health District, I have a deep understanding of the broad health issues our community faces and how to address them within the constraints of a special tax district.

What is the most pressing health-related issue facing our community?

While COVID-19 has been a dominant issue in recent months, I believe the affordable, accessible healthcare that our community needs is more pressing. This issue can’t be addressed without broad community input and support.

What do you hope to accomplish?

I hope to create a truly comprehensive and community-informed plan that prioritizes the health needs of all residents, including those who are traditionally marginalized.

Lisha Pappan
Age: 51
Occupation: Executive Director of Crossroads Health

Education: B.A. in English, University of Northern Colorado.

Family: Partner Tom Ehlers; son Alex Pop; daughter Halle Marascia; son-in-law Gary Marascia.

Why are you running for the Health District board of directors?

As an executive director who also served as an elected board member, I have experience maximizing organizational effectiveness and will work with fellow board members to set a clear and achievable strategic direction for the Health District that addresses the needs of the community.

What special skills or qualifications will you bring to the board?

My background in health care administration and my experience working with the Health District have provided me with a strong foundation in understanding the needs of the community and how to address them.

What is the most pressing health-related issue facing our community?

Affordable and accessible health care is the most pressing issue facing Fort Collins. We have seen a significant increase in the number of people going without health insurance, and many are struggling to afford the cost of care.

What do you hope to accomplish?

I hope to create a more equitable healthcare system that provides access to quality care for all residents, regardless of their ability to pay.

H. Faraz Naqvi, M.D.
Age: 54
Occupation: Physician, businesswoman, educator

Education: M.D., Harvard Medical School; M.S., Massachusetts Institute of Technology; M.B.A., Cambridge University; B.A., Colorado College.

Family: Married; two children.

Why are you running for the Health District board of directors?

I am running for the Health District board of directors to help oversee the transition from the leadership of the previous board to the new board. As a community health champion, I want to ensure that the Health District continues to provide high-quality healthcare services to all residents.

What special skills or qualifications will you bring to the board?

I bring a unique skill set to the board, having worked in both the public and private sectors. My experience in healthcare administration and leadership will be invaluable in guiding the Health District through this transition.

What is the most pressing health-related issue facing our community?

The most pressing health-related issue facing our community is the need for affordable, accessible healthcare. Many residents are struggling to afford the cost of healthcare, and this is causing significant distress.

What do you hope to accomplish?

I hope to work towards creating a more equitable healthcare system that is accessible to all residents, regardless of their financial situation.

Johanna Ulloa Girón
Age: 40
Occupation: Community Services Manager at Poulsbo Public River Parks District

Education: Master of Social Work

Why are you running for the Health District board of directors?

I am running for the Health District board of directors because I believe it is important to have a board that is knowledgeable and connected to the needs of the community.

What special skills or qualifications will you bring to the board?

I bring a passion for community outreach and program development to the board. I have experience in working with diverse populations and in creating programs that meet the needs of all community members.

What is the most pressing health-related issue facing our community?

The most pressing health-related issue facing our community is access to quality healthcare. Many residents are struggling to afford the cost of healthcare and are not receiving the care they need.

What do you hope to accomplish?

I hope to work towards creating a more equitable healthcare system that is accessible to all residents, regardless of their financial situation.

Daniel L. Sapienza
Age: 39
Occupation: Lawyer

Education: B.A., Colorado State University; Juris Doctor, George Mason University School of Law.

Family: Wife Vanessa Lowell; son Emmett, 13 months.

Why are you running for the Health District board of directors?

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What do you hope to accomplish?

I hope to work towards creating a more equitable healthcare system that is accessible to all residents, regardless of their financial situation.

Erin Hottenstein
Age: 46
Occupation: Communications corporate trainer and coach

Education: Bachelor’s degree from Colorado State University.

Family: Married; son, daughter.

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What do you hope to accomplish?

I hope to work towards creating a more equitable healthcare system that is accessible to all residents, regardless of their financial situation.

Celeste Holder King
Age: 62
Occupation: Attorney/Mediator

Education: J.D., University of Kansas Law School; B.A. in Economics, Davidson College.

Family: Husband; 2 children.

Why are you running for the Health District board of directors?

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What special skills or qualifications will you bring to the board?

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The most pressing health-related issue facing our community is access to quality healthcare. Many residents are struggling to afford the cost of healthcare and are not receiving the care they need.
Mental health & substance use issues support

Connections Adult Team and CAYAC • 970-221-5551 • 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., 7 days a week (Temporary hours during the pandemic)
SummitStone Crisis Support, 970-494-4200, ext. 4

One of the biggest impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic may be invisible. Many will struggle to cope emotionally as they live through a completely unprecedented time. For those already struggling with mental health or substance use issues, the challenge may be especially difficult.

Fortunately, Larimer County has a collaborative Mental Health Disaster Response system already put to the test by the High Park Fire in 2012 and the flood of 2013. It is ready for the challenge of COVID-19.

The Connections program at the Health District is designated as the community resource for non-crisis behavioral support. The program has an Adult Team and a Child, Adolescent, and Young Adult Connections (CAYAC) Team that serves youth up to age 24 and their families.

“These are challenging times as we all adjust to this new ‘normal,’” says Kristen Cochran-Ward, director of behavioral health services. “We understand that people are struggling with increased anxiety, depression, and significant loneliness. These reactions are completely normal in an abnormal time. Our Adult Team and CAYAC Team are here to help.”

Accustomed to serving people by phone, appointment, and walk-in visits, Connections also turned to a remote model. Staff working from home field calls from an anxious public, answering questions, providing support, giving referrals, and doing brief therapy sessions via telehealth. There is no charge for pandemic-related support services. If needed, the Connections Team response can expand with the help of the Crisis Counseling and Resilience Enhancement (CARE) Team which includes community mental health providers trained in disaster response.

SummitStone Health Partners is meeting the community’s crisis support needs by phone at 970-494-4200, ext. 4, and through its Crisis Services Center at 1217 Riverside Avenue.

People don’t have to face the challenges alone; help is a phone call away.

Prescription assistance
970-416-6519 • 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., M-F

Filling prescriptions is a challenge for many local residents during ordinary times. Almost one in 10 residents of the Health District skips medications because they can’t afford it, according to the most recent Community Health Survey.

With many more people now likely to lose health coverage at least temporarily, the Health District’s Prescription Assistance program is available to help people get the medicine they need to stay healthy.

When affordability is a barrier, the program helps people get their medications at reduced cost/free when possible. Often times people are not aware of other options that are available that may help to reduce the cost of their prescriptions. Staff can help people of all incomes to see if they can find lower-cost options for their prescriptions. Financial assistance may also be available for district residents with limited incomes and without health insurance, or whose medications are not covered by insurance.

By phone and mail delivery, the program aims to keep filling this critical health-care gap.

Emergency dental needs
Family Dental Clinic • 970-416-5331
By appointment • 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., M-F

There is never a good time to have a dental emergency, but they happen—even during a pandemic.

To reduce possible spread of coronavirus, the Health District’s Family Dental Clinic suspended routine dental care in mid-March. It remains open by appointment to see patients who have a dental emergency—including pain, swelling, or bleeding—and who do not have acute respiratory symptoms or a fever.

Normally, the clinic provides a full range of acute, preventive, and restorative dental services to Health District residents who lack dental insurance, have limited income, or are covered by Medicaid, CHP+ or the state senior dental plan.

While the clinic is open to treat true dental emergencies, staff have been able to triage many more patients over the phone, minimizing unnecessary trips to the clinic. It also gives patients a chance to speak directly to a dentist, get their questions answered, receive expert advice, and gain some peace of mind during uncertain time.

“We hope to get back to serving all of our patients’ needs as soon as we can,” says Dana Turner, director of the clinic. “Once we’re fully operational again, patients with highest priority dental treatments will be rescheduled so they can be completed with as little delay as possible.”

COVID-19 Information and Resources

Larimer County Department of Health and Environment
- larimer.org/health
  (Follow the link for COVID-19 Information)
- Joint Information Center
  970-498-5500
  9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., M-F
- Text questions to: 970-999-1770
  Response typically received within 4 hours during the day.
- Get texts with the latest information related to COVID-19 in Larimer County:
  Text COVID19LC to 888777

United Way of Larimer County
- uwaylc.org – Includes local information on family resources, food assistance, medical assistance, mental health resources, senior support, small business support, unemployment resources, and utilities/rent assistance

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
- covid19.colorado.gov

Tips for coping with COVID-19
- cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping
To do so, IF YOU HAVEN’T ALREADY RECEIVED A BALLOT YOU WILL NEED TO REQUEST ONE. See information below.

The Health District Board of Directors election was scheduled as a polling-place election before the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of this publication, by law, we must still make in-person voting available. We also are not permitted to cancel or postpone the election.

However, we are asking everyone who can to please vote by mail for their health, safety, and convenience.

Because Special District election regulations are different than other elections, those who have not previously requested to be on the Health District’s permanent absentee voter list will not automatically receive a ballot in the mail, even if they normally vote by mail in all other local elections.

You must use an absentee ballot, even if you plan to be in town during the election. This is the only way to vote by mail.

If you voted by mail in a previous Health District Board of Directors election, AND you requested to be on the permanent absentee voter list, the Health District will automatically send you a ballot for this and all future Board of Directors elections. If you haven’t already received a ballot by the time of this publication, you will need to request one for this election by completing and submitting an Application for Absentee Ballot. If you don’t have access to a computer and need another absentee ballot application, call 970-224-5209.

1. Clip and complete the Application for Absentee Ballot at right or download an application from healthdistrict.org/2020-election. For questions call 970-224-5209.

2. Sign and return the application to the Health District by Tuesday, April 28.
You may return your application by mail to Chris Sheafor, at 120 Bristlecone Dr., Fort Collins, CO 80524; by fax at 970-221-7165; or by email (as a scanned attachment) to kfagan@healthdistrict.org.

3. Mail your completed ballot. Or drop it off in the lobby ballot box at the Family Dental Clinic, 202 Bristlecone Dr., Fort Collins, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., M-F.
Your ballot must be received at the Health District by 7 p.m. on Election Day, May 5, 2020, in order to be counted.

APPLICATION FOR ABSENTEE BALLOT

I, __________________________, whose date of birth is ____________, 19____, am requesting an absentee ballot on behalf of (select one):

☐ myself; or

☐ ______________________________ (enter name), a family member related by blood, marriage, civil union or adoption to the applicant who is an eligible elector of the Health District of Northern Larimer County, State of Colorado, eligible by virtue of:

☐ Being a resident of the District, with an elector residence address of:

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Or

☐ Ownership (or spouse or civil union partner) of the taxable real or personal property (described below) situated within the boundaries of the District, or a person who is obligated to pay taxes under a contract to purchase taxable property within the District

Physical address or description of property:

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<th>(ZIP)</th>
<th>(County)</th>
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Mail elector’s absentee ballot to this address:

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<th>(City)</th>
<th>(State)</th>
<th>(ZIP)</th>
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I am applying for an absentee ballot for use by me or the person noted above per §1-13.5-1002(1)(a)(I)(II) in voting at the District’s regular election to be held on the 5th day of May, 2020.

Signature

Name Printed

Date

*Witnessed By

*In case of elector’s inability to sign her/his name, the elector’s mark shall be witnessed by another person.

C.R.S. 1-13.5-1001, et seq; SD31 Division of Local Government – Department of Local Affairs – 2020 Election (Revised 9/11/19)
We’re still here to help, although the Family Dental Clinic is currently seeing only patients who have a dental emergency (pain, swelling, bleeding) and no acute respiratory symptoms or fever. We hope to be back serving the rest of your dental needs soon.

Call us for an appointment, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., M-F. We’re sorry, but walk-ins are not being taken at this time.

970-416-5331
healthdistrict.org/dental

Patients must live in the Health District, have no private dental insurance, and meet income guidelines.

Lost job? No health insurance?

We can help you enroll in lower-cost health coverage, including Medicaid, CHP+ and private health plans from the Connect for Health Colorado marketplace that offer financial assistance.

If you’ve lost your health insurance, you have 60 days to enroll in a marketplace plan.

Connect for Health Colorado also has a special enrollment period until April 30 that allows Coloradans who are currently uninsured or about to lose coverage due to COVID-19 to get health insurance for 2020.

Call for an appointment and get covered now.

970-472-0444
larimerhealthconnect.org

What’s your plan?

Talk to your loved ones before you or they become ill.

Larimer Advance Care Planning is a free service that provides guidance in completing your advance directives so your preferences for medical care are honored if you are unable to speak for yourself.

Call 970-482-1909 or 970-278-6812 for a phone or web consultation.

healthdistrict.org/quitsmoking

970-224-5209

Dental Emergency?

We’re still here to help you quit tobacco, with counseling by phone and free nicotine patches, gum, or lozenges by mail.

➢ Experienced tobacco treatment specialists
➢ Positive, supportive approach
➢ Sliding fees for those who qualify
➢ Covered benefit for Health First Colorado (Medicaid) enrollees

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