



Help Starts Here



Children's Hospital Colorado

Resource Connect: A partner-based approach to advancing health equity in our community

According to the American Journal of Public Health, 50% of the variables we can modify to impact community health outcomes are either social or environmental – including factors like housing stability and the relative level of safety in a community. Behaviors, such as diet and exercise, make up another 30% of modifiable health factors. That means removing common obstacles to practicing healthy habits can make a big difference in making communities healthier and happier.



In October 2019, Children’s Hospital Colorado opened its new Health Pavilion. On the first three floors are medical clinics with providers, dentists and mental health therapists to treat patients. Patients and families seen who indicate an unmet social need – such as accessing regular meals or uninterrupted electricity at home – are referred to the facility’s fourth floor, **Resource Connect**, where a network of community health navigators and partners are ready to provide wraparound care and support.



Resource Connect comprehensively addresses social needs, including food security, energy assistance, benefits eligibility, legal services, community resource navigation, and more. The services provided through Resource Connect promote equitable access to the resources that all families, including families of color and families with low incomes, need to improve their comprehensive picture of health and well-being. This is all accomplished through robust partnerships between Children’s Colorado and community-based organizations.



Any patient who is seen at the Children’s Colorado Health Pavilion—which had approximately 140,000 visits in its first year of operations—can be referred to Resource Connect by their provider. With the opening of Resource Connect, navigators and clinical social workers take the lead to identify and refer families to partners who are co-located in the Health Pavilion. Patients and families can access Resource Connect the same day and in the same building after their clinic visit. Among the 274 families referred to Resource Connect in 2019, 94% successfully connected with a Resource Connect partner.

Resource Connect anchors the Children’s Colorado’s strategy for population health - delivering healthcare that lasts beyond a clinic visit and enhances our care for patients and families, by creating a centralized place to access their most common social needs. Resource Connect represents Children’s Colorado’s contribution to an ongoing, nationwide shift towards whole child health.

How we got here

Planning for the opening of Resource Connect started by looking at data to identify patients' most common resource needs (financial assistance, benefits and food were top of the list) and what evidence has demonstrated as effective policies and programs that help reduce childhood poverty, a major social determinant health for children.¹ Based on these findings, Children's Colorado met with community partners who helped at the state or local level to propose ideas for collaboration, identify common goals and expectations for the work, and define the scope of services within Resource Connect. Once partners were identified and agreed to the partnership model, formal agreements were executed and partners began seeing patients in the co-located department in early October 2019.

“Population health is a transformational element in our roadmap, and this is where population health is headed. Beyond just co-locating resources in one building or floor, we’re pushing for a level of cooperation between programs that we haven’t really seen yet in pediatrics and medicine before. And that’s unbelievably exciting.”

**HEIDI BASKFIELD, VICE PRESIDENT OF POPULATION HEALTH
AND ADVOCACY**



¹National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2019. A Roadmap to Reducing Child Poverty. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25246>

An Introduction to Our Partners



Healthy Roots Food Clinic

The Healthy Roots Food Clinic is based on the principle of Food as Medicine and the belief that hunger is indeed a health issue. To promote and support the health of patients and their families, the Food Clinic provides nutritious food, guidance on community resources, basic nutrition and safe food education support to Children’s Colorado Health Pavilion patients and their families.

At Healthy Roots Food Clinic, families can stock up on healthy and nutritious foods at no extra cost, including shelf-stable staples such as beans and grains, meat and dairy products, and fresh produce — some of which is sourced from our very own Healthy Roots Garden on the Anschutz Medical Campus. It is the first pediatric food pharmacy in the Rocky Mountain West. Families can also receive dietary advice and cooking lessons.

1 IN 7

Colorado kids don’t always know where their next meal will come from

5,181

Pounds of food have been distributed to patients and their families at the Healthy Roots Food Clinic in total

141

Total referrals from 11 clinics in 2019

485

People served in 115 households in 2019



“The Healthy Roots Food Clinic became a vital source of support for many families facing challenges to provide nutritious and reliable meals. The clinic ensures that not only the patient receives sufficient food, but support is provided to ensure food security for each family.”

CAROLINA RAMIREZ, PREVENTION,
EDUCATION & OUTREACH COORDINATOR,
HEALTHY ROOTS FOOD CLINIC



“I believe the success of Resource Connect is the ability to meet our clients where they go frequently (like their well child check) and provide long-term support with SNAP, medical assistance, benefits assistance and more, with immediate resources, like the Healthy Roots Food Clinic.”

MICHELE HENDERSON, DENVER HUMAN SERVICES

Denver Human Services Eligibility Technician

Denver Human Services envisions a healthy community where people are connected, supported, safe and well.

In Resource Connect, the Public Benefits Eligibility Technician from Denver Human Services helps children, older adults, families and individuals with applying for Medicaid assistance, food assistance and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Denver, Arapahoe and Adams county. The technician assists

families with completing applications and can submit it to the statewide benefit system in the moment with the family.

- **124 referrals for public benefits in 2019**
- **Programs:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, TANF
- **Type of assistance:** applications, recertifications, verifications and Q&A

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

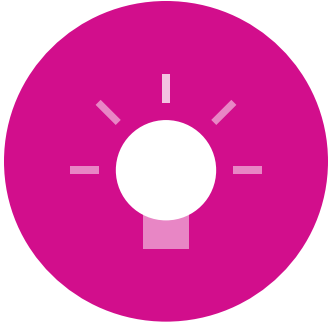
The mission of WIC is to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age five who are at nutrition risk.

Staffed by dietitians from the Tri-County Health Department, WIC provides critical nutritional support to pregnant women, breastfeeding women, postpartum women and children under the age of 5 years. WIC services include enrollment, re-enrollment and breast pump distribution. WIC assists families with nutrition education, access to healthy foods, breastfeeding support and referrals to community organizations.



“Being located at Resource Connect has been beneficial because I am able to easily refer clients to other resources at Resource Connect and know that they will get the help they need. Also, if a client needs a breast pump or special formula from WIC, the doctor can easily send that information to me, which expedites the process for the client.”

MELANIE MORRISON, TRI-COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



Energy Outreach Colorado

Energy Outreach Colorado leads a network of industry, state and local partners to support, stabilize and sustain Coloradans to afford their energy needs. Through Resource Connect, Energy Outreach provides the opportunity for families to access emergency bill payment assistance, Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) support and home weatherization assistance.

- **37 referrals in 2019**
- **Types of assistance:** payment assistance, home weatherization, referral to other Energy Outreach programs like heating system repair or replacement

“The Resource Connect model is so successful and valuable because families are able to access wraparound servings in one location. Families get support in one building versus spending time going to different food banks, nonprofits and government agencies for their needs. Partners are connected and communicating to provide the best support and outcomes for the children and families.”

LAUREN MCCLANAHAN, CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER, ENERGY OUTREACH COLORADO

Colorado Medical-Legal Partnership (CMLP)

The mission of the Colorado Medical-Legal Partnership (CMLP) is to provide better health and welfare outcomes for children and their families served by Children's Hospital Colorado through meaningful access to legal services and social advocacy.

CMLP assists families with legal issues that impact child health. These legal issues range from adult guardianship to housing concerns to educational issues and beyond.



- **13 referrals in 2019**
- **Legal issues CMLP can help with:** Adult guardianship, advance directives, domestic violence/sex assault/crime, victim, education, emancipation, employment, family, housing, immigration, miscellaneous, trusts and estates/probate

“Many families are hesitant to advocate for themselves or don't know where to start. After meeting with CMLP, families have all the tools they need to go forward either on their own or with the help of a legal partner.”

JULIE SELSBERG, ATTORNEY FOR COLORADO MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP

“Having multiple services in one location is an ideal model. It helps to reduce the barriers for families in accessing what they need to raise healthy, happy kids! It reduces one of the most taxing barriers: the time it takes to get connected to and then access services in multiple locations. Additionally, when referrals are made to various types of programs by organizations who are collaborative partners, using “warm-handoffs,” referrals are more likely to be successful and families in turn get what they need.”

LISA JANSEN THOMPSON, ECPAC



Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County

The mission of Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County, or ECPAC, is to build a community where every child and family can reach their full potential. ECPAC is made up of more than 70 Adams County organizations and family partners building a system of early childhood education, health, mental health and family support so every child is healthy and ready for school. ECPAC brings together multiple agencies to ensure that young children's early learning and development is supported in the community and in the home.

ECPAC works to identify and reduce barriers to accessing services through strong partnerships with community service organizations, families and other key stakeholders.

- **24 referrals in 2019**
- **Types of assistance:** parent education, childcare assistance

Community Health Navigators: Pulling It All Together

The community health navigation (CHN) team, formed in 2016, plays a critical role in addressing social needs for patients and families in a variety of clinical and community settings. CHNs work closely with patients and families to reduce barriers that keep them from achieving optimal health. Barriers may be related to transportation, child care, language or ability to effectively navigate the healthcare system.

Over the past four years, CHNs have helped thousands of families in a myriad ways, helping to navigate complex systems, obtain public benefits and services, assist with immediate food or baby supply needs, find transportation to and from appointments, and tackle housing challenges ranging from rent or utilities assistance to finding stable housing.

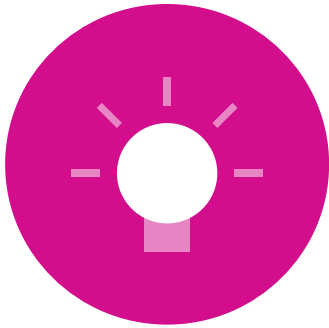
Resource Connect has its own navigator who works closely with referring departments and each Resource Connect partner to ensure a warm hand-off and closed referral loops in a timely manner. The Resource Connect Navigator serves as a liaison between families and Resource Connect partners to facilitate a seamless referral process and ensure families receive the resources needed to reduce barriers and improve health outcomes.

In 2019, navigators served more than 5,000 families whose most common resource needs were financial support, public benefits navigation, food insecurity, and connecting caregivers to a primary care provider.

“The work of population health is preventative wellness. We know that factors like housing insecurity and hunger deeply affect the way kids develop, learn and play. And we've seen how team members like health navigators can improve quality of care.”

HEIDI BASKFIELD, VICE PRESIDENT OF
POPULATION HEALTH AND ADVOCACY

A Family's Story



For the past four years, Lopiso and his family have visited Children's Hospital Colorado to receive primary care and several other health services for their three children, ages 5, 3 and 1 years old. Their care includes everything from well-child checks and vaccinations to therapy, sick visits and lab appointments, as well as visits to the emergency, cardiology and radiology departments.



While Lopiso was familiar with the exceptional clinical care Children's Colorado provided to his children, he was surprised to find the host of other services newly offered through Resource Connect in 2019. Upon his visit to the Children's Colorado Health Pavilion in October of that year, he was referred to benefits assistance and energy assistance after indicating that his family of five was struggling to pay the energy bill and access programs to provide them with health insurance and food stamps.

Having moved to Denver four years ago from Ethiopia, Lopiso primarily speaks Amharic. So one of the biggest challenges he faced in accessing these programs was the language barrier and communication challenge when he called agencies or filled out applications. When the partners in Resource Connect heard more about this, they helped Lopiso's family get the services they needed. This reflects the goal of Resource Connect—collaboration among partners to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.



Energy Outreach assisted Lopiso with an application for the Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) and helped with payments for past-due utility bills. Denver Human Services helped Lopiso apply for Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Tri-County Health Department helped him apply for WIC benefits so their family could purchase food for their children.

To ensure Lopiso and the Resource Connect partners could communicate effectively, Lopiso would relay what his needs were in the language he felt most comfortable, Amharic. Video interpretation, with 99 language capabilities, would then translate between the Resource Connect partner and Lopiso. Patient clinics have access to the video and telephonic interpretation as well.

The Resource Connect partners would then show Lopiso the process for completing applications, check completed forms for errors and provide contact information for additional resources where needed.

Lopiso says their family plans to continue going back to Children's Colorado, so they can receive clinical care for their kids, and, when they may need a little extra help, support for non-medical resources as well — all in the same building.

“I want to thank everyone on the 4th floor for the services and resources they helped us with—starting from the receptionist all the way up. I would like to say that we appreciate what you’re doing and I hope other patients can receive help the way we did.”

LOPISO

Family Feedback

- Piloted semi-structured telephone interviews with 35 families resulted in an average experience rating of **9.4 out of 10** majority positive feedback. Negative feedback mostly had to do with Resource Connect being closed or the family not being able to visit with Resource Connect partner at day of visit.
- Resource Connect continuously adjusts hours to increase patient and family access to Resource Connect partners.



Advocating for kids in public policy

Every year, the Children’s Hospital Colorado Government Affairs team works with healthcare providers, parents and other healthcare advocates to support laws that improve the health of all kids—and defend against those that do not. The team partners closely with the clinicians, health navigators and epidemiologists in the Health Pavilion to determine the areas of greatest child health need across the state, which could be improved through policy and systemic change.

During the 2019 Colorado legislative session, the Government Affairs team advanced a number of policy and advocacy goals with the potential to improve kids’ mental health, food security and access to care, to name a few.

Filling gaps in our behavioral health system for kids

Senate Bill 19-195 moves forward a set of programs including high quality standardized screening and assessment to identify behavioral health needs early, comprehensive “wraparound” care coordination services to get kids the right care at the right time, and blended funding strategies across agencies to better integrate behavioral health services and supports for children.

Protecting and expanding healthcare coverage and access for all children

House Bill 19-1038 ensures that pregnant women who rely on Child Health Plan Plus—Colorado’s version of the Children’s Health Insurance Program—can access oral healthcare services, improving dental health and general wellness for both new moms and their babies.

Promoting healthy eating and active living

A coalition of anti-hunger organizations supported and advanced House Bill 19-1171 to reduce the cost of school lunches for low-income high school students. When students have access to proper nutrition, their health and ability to focus in school improves.

Investment in community

As a nonprofit pediatric hospital, Children's Hospital Colorado uses net earnings to reinvest in the health and wellbeing of children. Our community benefit activities go beyond caring for patients and impact our community at large.

In 2019, we proudly reported more than \$262,138,724 in community benefit activities.

Financial assistance

\$191,025,500 ▶

The Children's Charity Care Program provides Financial Assistance for patients who are uninsured or underinsured and demonstrate financial need. Financial assistance also includes unreimbursed costs of caring for patients enrolled in Medicaid, Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) and other government programs

Subsidized health services

\$11,923,634 ▶

Includes unreimbursed costs from operating programs that meet a community need, such as behavioral health services

Research

\$20,433,984 ▶

Includes laboratory science and applied research, which advances the best care for kids

Health professions education

\$21,255,223 ▶

Includes graduate medical education for residents and fellows, nursing students and other health professionals such as community pediatricians and trauma providers

Community health improvement

\$16,863,357 ▶

Includes activities such as immunization fairs, dental screenings and parent education

Cash and in-kind contributions

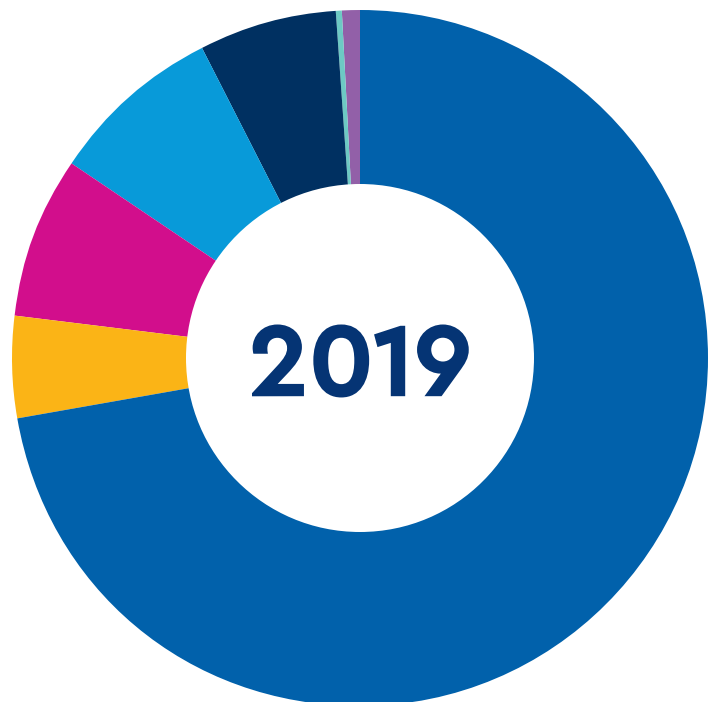
\$637,026 ▶

Includes cash and in-kind donations such as sponsorships of nonprofit events, donation of meeting space and donation of health and safety educational materials

Community-building activities

\$1,590,234 ▶

Includes environmental improvements, workforce development, community health improvement and advocacy efforts



TOTAL = \$262,138,724 in Community benefit activities
 \$1,590,234 in Community building activities

*All financial data is for fiscal year 2019. This report includes amounts expended by Children's Colorado's hospital facilities, as reported on Schedule H of the IRS Form 990. Accordingly, the activities in this Community Benefit Report are greater than the amounts reported in the Children's Colorado Schedule H, which only applies to our hospital facilities. For questions or more information, call Julie Beaubian, Community Health Manager, at 720-777-8780.

