

Thursday, May 11, 2023

National Nurses Week going strong at Denver Health

National Nurses Week kicked off Saturday with Denver Health's Nurses Week Kickball Tournament at Randall Park, where "Flexual Healing," aka 3B Flex (pictured), won the 10-team tournament, topping second-place "Emergency Dept. Wild Tigers."



Nurses Week, which continues through Friday, has celebrated our wonderful nursing staff with several events, including therapy dog snuggles, a [Whisks of Fury Competition](#), a Nursing Awards ceremony, ACS trivia, Schwartz Rounds, a scholarship awards ceremony, a Daisy Foundation visit and more. [Click here](#) for a full schedule of events on the Pulse. Tomorrow's challenge is "Fashionista Friday – Crazy Socks/Shoes/Scrubs Day," when staff are encouraged to send a picture or short video of your unique style for a chance to win a prize courtesy of Denver Health Workplace Well-being. Email entries to Sunni.McMahon@dhsa.org by the end of Friday. Check out next week's 411 for a full recap of Nurses Week.

Dr. Lara Penny appointed new DOS for Family Medicine

Lara Penny, MD, has been named Director of Service for Family Medicine. Dr. Penny began her career at Long Island College Hospital in New York City before moving to Colorado to work at the Clinica Family Health Center north of Denver. In 2006 she joined Denver Health as medical director of the Montbello Family Health Center, a position she held until becoming the interim director of service for Family Medicine last September.

At Montbello, she led the clinic through rapid growth and expansion of services, fostering a diverse, creative and prenatal team. Dr. Penny has led the way trying out innovative new models of care, including group prenatal and early childhood care in partnership with Montbello community nonprofits. Other clinical innovations with roots at Montbello include our infant/family mental health program and our childhood overweight programs MEND and Healthy Lifestyles clinic.

She has published on topics such as connecting patients to mental health and food resources during the pandemic; interventions to improve sexually transmitted infection testing at Denver Health; and toxic stress, resilience and the medical home. Her grant funding includes Gary Community Ventures, Constellation Philanthropy, and the National Center of Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention. Congratulations, Dr. Penny, on your new role as director of service for Family Medicine at Denver Health!

2023 legislative session wrap-up: Health care highlights

The 2023 legislative session of Colorado state lawmakers came to a close this week. Denver Health's **Director of Government Affairs Jackie Zheleznyak** connected with lawmakers on a number of priority issues for our health care delivery system. Highlights of the hospital-related bills include:

HB 23-1215—Limits on Hospitals Facility Fees
 Denver Health worked in opposition to this legislation throughout its trajectory given the negative impact it would have on Denver Health and our patients' ability to access care. Denver Health CEO **Donna Lynne** testified in front of the House Health and Insurance committee on a collaborative hospital effort to mitigate the impact of the policy. The legislation was drastically changed from its introduced state to end up on the Governor's desk as a study on Hospital Facility Fees.

SB 23-002 –Medicaid Reimbursement for Community Health Workers
 Denver Health worked closely with the bill's stakeholder group on the passage of SB 002. The legislation directs the Department of Health Care Policy & Finance to apply for a waiver from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to allow for reimbursement of Community Health workers. The bill defines "community health worker" as a frontline public health worker who serves as a liaison between health care or social service providers and community members to facilitate access to physical, mental or dental health-related services or services to combat social determinants of health. Services provided by community health workers must, at a minimum, include preventive services, screenings, assessments, health coaching and advocacy.

HB 23-1303—Protect Against Insurers Impairment or Insolvency
 A late introduction of legislation critically important to Denver Health and the Denver Health Medical Plan. HB 1303 mandates the inclusion of HMOs into the Guaranty Fund, essentially an insurance fund for insurers. The bill changes the priority of distribution of insurance claims paid from an insurer's estate in the event of the insurer's liquidation. Specifically, class 1 distribution priority payments will include payments that an impaired or insolvent insurer owes to the risk adjustment program that are necessary to prevent another insurer from becoming impaired or insolvent. Both CEO Donna Lynne, and **DHMP CEO Greg McCarthy** testified in front of House Public Health and Human Services Committee as well as the Senate Health and Human Services Committee about the beneficial impact this legislation will have on DHMP and health plan members.

SB 23-252—Medical Price Transparency
 Denver Health worked with the Colorado Hospital Association to ensure that the idea of another layer of Hospital Price Transparency ended up in a way that, while not perfect, is something that is achievable. The bill requires hospitals to make public and post each hospital's Medicare reimbursement rates, in addition to the current public rates that are posted. The legislation also requires the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing to conduct a performance assessment for each hospital to determine its adherence to federal transparency rules and publish the results on its website.

Lawmakers also supported, and the governor signed, two pieces of bipartisan budget legislation that directed a total of \$6 million to Denver Health as recognition of the care we provide to patients who come to our facilities from throughout the state.

Missed the mayoral candidates' forum? Catch it here.

Last week, Denver Health hosted a runoff forum with the two final candidates vying to be Denver's next mayor, **Kelly Brough** and **Mike Johnston** (pictured along with moderator **Steve Federico, MD**, chief of government and community affairs). Both candidates committed to being strong partners to Denver Health and other community health organizations and to work together to improve Denver's health. If you missed the forum, you can [watch it on YouTube](#) or catch the highlights from [this story](#) in Denverite.



DENVER HEALTH SPOTLIGHT
 Denver Health celebrates medical assistants at graduation ceremony

Denver Health's fourth class of National Institute for Medical Assistant Advancement (NIMAA) students recently held a graduation ceremony at 601 Broadway. **Simon Hambidge, MD, PhD**, Denver Health's chief ambulatory care officer and CEO of Denver Community Health Services, gave a speech to the students and their families in attendance and those attending virtually about the importance of Medical Assistants (MAs). They are often the first person a patient sees during an appointment, and they work to make sure a patient's visit goes as smoothly as possible. Pictured are recent Denver Health MA graduates, from left, **Asia Howard, Karina Flores, Ashley Remigio, Angelica Duran, Saral Esquivel** and **Ari Caldwell**.



Are you or someone you know interested in becoming a certified medical assistant? Denver Health has received a grant to fund the training program in partnership with NIMAA for a total of 34 students over the next two years. Applications for the fall cohort, which starts in September and lasts seven months, is open to employees, their families and others in the community at no cost to participants. **Applications are due May 31**, and the \$25 application fee is waived if you apply on free application day, **Thursday May 18**. Visit nimaa.edu for more information and to register.

Center for Addiction Medicine highlights action on Fentanyl Awareness Day

May 9 was National **Fentanyl Awareness Day**, a day of action to raise public awareness about an urgent problem: people are dying at alarming rates due to illegally manufactured Fentanyl, a potent synthetic opioid. Founded by parents who have lost loved ones, National Fentanyl Awareness Day is supported by a coalition of experts, companies and other partners coming together to amplify this critical issue.



The **Center for Addiction Medicine at Denver Health** is taking action on Fentanyl such as providing opioid reversal medications Naloxone and Narcan without a prescription and making Fentanyl test strips available at any of our school-based or federally qualified health centers. Patients do not need to be in treatment to receive test strips. Do you know someone in the community who has questions about treatment or wants to get started in treatment? Have them call our Community Line at **303-436-5711**.

Gutierrez-Ragunath named AHA National Woman of Impact

Denver Health Research Associate **Sylvia Gutierrez-Ragunath** (pictured) has won the prestigious **American Heart Association National Woman of Impact Award** recognizing her work on the Go Red campaign to raise awareness of the threat to women's health posed by heart disease. Gutierrez-Ragunath has been involved with the AHA for nearly 15 years and was instrumental in raising almost \$12,000 in just nine weeks for Vestido Rojo, a free event for low-income Latina women in the Denver area to learn about heart disease. In 2019, more than 600 Latinas attended – the largest event yet.



"Sylvia has a strong passion for equity and community engagement that aligns with our pillars," said **Associate Director of Research Methods Core Debbie Rinehart**. Congratulations, Sylvia, and thank you for your commitment and hard work.

Denver Health neurosurgeon speaks at Epilepsy Foundation retreat

Denver Health neurosurgeon **Fabio Grassia, MD**, a guest speaker at a recent Health neurologist **Marie Collier, MD**, (pictured with a puppet speaker at a recent camp for young adults hosted by the Epilepsy Foundation of Colorado & Wyoming. The Purple Peaks Retreat in Larspur connects people ages 18 to 30 and encourages them to build confidence, friendships and life skills while living with epilepsy. Dr. Grassia took part in an "Ask the Doc" forum with the campers and answered questions about surgical options for epilepsy. Thanks to Dr. Grassia for representing Denver Health at the retreat and for all you do for our patients.



School-based staff lead the way at youth health care conference

Six staff members from Denver Health's school-based health centers presented at last month's **Youth Healthcare Alliance** conference in Golden. Topics included today's marijuana and the adolescent brain, presented by **Allison Hoff, MD** and **Kristie Ladegard, MD**, expanding gender-affirming care services, presented by **Health Educators Lisha Amin** and **Sinead Maguire**, PATCH (Providers and Teens Communicating for Health) for providers presented by **Program Manager Tara Melnikovich** and creating a place for dental services presented by **Dani Ford**, manager of school-based oral health programs. **Sonja O'Leary, MD**, medical director for school-based health centers and interim director of General Pediatrics, was among those honored with the Inspiration Award. In her 10 years as medical director, Dr. O'Leary has overseen tremendous growth for the department, including the expansion of four new school-based service sites.



STAY INFORMED
 Workday resources available on paychecks, retirement plans, FAQs

Denver Health employees are encouraged to use the **Workday Resources Hub** to learn more about the software and how to get started using it. Tip sheets are also available to show you how to read your **pay slip** in Workday and to explain Denver Health's **retirement plans**. You can also access an **FAQ on the May 2 paychecks**.

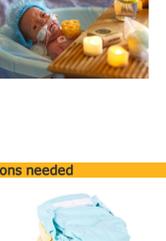
Registration now open for Trauma and Emergency Medicine Conference

Registration is now open for all health care professionals to attend the **49th annual Denver Health Rocky Mountain Trauma and Emergency Medicine Conference June 5 to 8** in Breckenridge. For more information, [visit the conference web site](#).



GET INVOLVED
 Spring Career Fair is coming May 16

Denver Health's **Spring Career Fair** is coming! From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on **Tuesday, May 16** at the Rita Bass Training Center, on-site interviews and offers for external candidates will be available for the following positions: enrollment specialist, food service worker, medical assistant, patient access specialist, nursing new graduate, call center, pharmacy technician and certified nursing assistant. You can also take advantage of the **Catch That Star** employee referral incentive program. If your referral is hired, you could be eligible for a cash payment. To officially refer members of your network, follow these four steps:



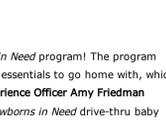
- Log into Workday
- Click on the Careers app
- Click on Refer a Candidate
- Select **R206 – Denver Health Spring Career Fair**

Days of Celebration events and Values Awards nominations

The **2023 Days of Celebration** will be held **June 19-23**, and we are excited to [share the calendar](#) for this year's events! Save the link, and check back often for times, locations and additional details. This year's "Proud" theme celebrates our pride in serving the community, delivering high-quality care, educating the next generation and working at Denver Health.

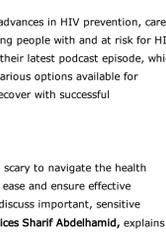


And please remember to nominate an individual colleague or a full team for their incredible work in living our new values (respect, belonging, transparency, accountability). The [nomination form](#) for our annual **Values Awards** is now live and nominations close on **Friday, May 19**. Values Awards winners will be presented during Days of Celebration, and nominations will be shared in the 411 and on the Pulse.



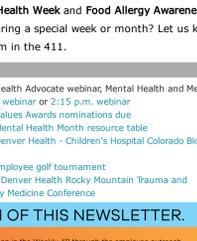
Next week's Mental Health Awareness Month events

As we continue our recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, next week's focus is on healthy communities, **neighborhoods and towns**. Did you know that up to 60% of health is determined by where a person lives? Stop by our table from **11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.** next **Thursday, May 18**, outside the **Good Day Café** or look for our cart rounding the main campus that evening from **8 to 10 p.m.** to learn more and pick up some mental health awareness swag. Please encourage your employees to take advantage of these resources and events as well. [Visit the Pulse subsite](#) for the full schedule of Mental Health Awareness Month events and remember to complete your Mental Health Awareness Month **Calendar Challenge**.



Spa day in NICU to honor Mother's Day

This year our NICU babies and their new moms were treated to a spa day in honor of Mother's Day. The NICU can be rough, and the babies and moms all deserve some pampering. The **NICU Patient and Family Advisory Committee** (PFAC) organized a spa day photo shoot, showing babies (including **Larvin Murphy**, right) getting massages, taking bubble baths, enjoying the sauna, and waiting for treatment with a bottle of lemon water. Each mom was given a framed photo of their baby along with soft washcloths for their baby, an eye mask, and a bath bomb.



Denver throwing a baby shower; donations needed

Join the Denver Health Foundation and CBS Colorado for a drive-thru baby shower in support of **Newborns in Need** from **10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 20**, in the Denver Health Focus parking lot, 637 Delaware St., between 6th and 7th avenues. Suggested baby item donations include bibs and burp cloths, receiving blankets, hats, socks, warm blankets (24" x 36" maximum), onesies, sleepers (size 3 months), hooded towels and wash cloths.



Please note: Donations must be NEW. No bottles, pacifiers or formula, please. More information about the baby shower and Newborns in Need is available [here](#).

Denver Health in the media

Gaping Denver Health budget hole and 'vicious cycle' of costs key issues for mayoral candidates
 May 5, Denverite
 With Denver Health providing \$120 million in uncompensated care last year, Denver mayoral candidates promised to help during a health care-focused debate held in the **Rita Bass Auditorium** on our main campus. Candidates **Mike Johnston** and **Kelly Brough** also touched on life expectancy, health disparities, hospital security and more.

How the tobacco industry made it cool to smoke in Colorado's communities of color
 May 9, CPR
 As part of a series about tobacco in Colorado, this story focuses on how multi-racial residents are all far more likely to smoke than white Coloradans. *"The average life expectancy for people living in some Denver neighborhoods is as much as 12 years lower than that of people living in adjacent neighborhoods," said **Rocio Pereira, MD**, director of health equity at Denver Health.*

Drive-thru baby shower benefits Newborns in Need
 May 9, CBS Colorado
 The **Denver Health Foundation** is celebrating 20 years of its **Newborns in Need** program! The program provides every baby born at Denver Health with a care package of new essentials to go home with, which can include diapers, blankets, bassinets, onesies, and more. **Chief Experience Officer Amy Friedman** appeared on CBS Colorado's 4 p.m. newscast to preview this year's **Newborns in Need** drive-thru baby shower, which will be held later this month in partnership with CBS Colorado.

The Academy Exchange: HIV Today & Tomorrow
 May 10, American Academy of HIV Medicine
 The American Academy of HIV Medicine's podcast discusses the latest advances in HIV prevention, care and treatment, as well as examines the societal and systemic issues facing people with and at risk for HIV. **Hannan Braun, MD**, of **internal and addiction medicine** was featured in their latest podcast episode, which focuses on substance use disorder and HIV. Dr. Braun also covers the various options available for treating a substance use disorder and highlights the ways people can recover with successful intervention.

National Interpreter Appreciation Day - May 3, Fox31
 If English isn't a patient's first language, it can be very challenging and scary to navigate the health system. Medical interpreters play a critical role to put these patients at ease and ensure effective communication between the patient and health care staff, so they can discuss important, sensitive medical information. **Director of Patient Experience and Language Services Sharif Abdelhamid**, explains more in Denver Health's weekly segment on Fox31.

National awareness and recognition

May 11: **National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day**. May 12: **Nurses Day, ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia International Awareness Day**. May 14 - 20: **National Women's Health Week and Food Allergy Awareness Week**. Is there a department that you'd like us to recognize during a special week or month? Let us know in an [Employee Outreach Request form](#) and we'll spotlight them in the 411.

May	June
May 1-31: Mental Health Month Calendar Challenge	May 18: Health Advocate webinar, Mental Health and Me
May 13: Trauma Survivors' SK	8-15 a.m. webinar or 2-15 p.m. webinar
May 13: Colorado Rapids Superhero Night	May 19: Values Awards nominations due
May 16: Denver Health career fair	May 24: Mental Health Month resource table
May 16: All-levels yoga class	May 26: Denver Health - Children's Hospital Colorado Blood Drive
May 17: WorkLife Partnership Virtual Lunch and Learn	June 2: Denver Health golf tournament
May 18: Mental Health Month resource table and cart	June 5-8: Denver Health Rocky Mountain Trauma and Emergency Medicine Conference
May 18, 25: RESTORE Mindful Moments	

CLICK HERE FOR A PDF VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

SUBMIT A REQUEST TO THE WEEKLY 411
 Submit content for consideration in the Weekly 411 through the employee outreach request form [here](#). Accuracy and quality matter, so please provide all material as early as possible. Your submission should detail who, what, when, where, why and how, with correct spelling and explanation of acronyms. We encourage you to include photos and any links or attachments that may help to communicate your message. Content received after noon on Tuesday will be considered for the following week's edition.

