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Denver Health helps launch statewide Colorado Alcohol Impacts Coalition

Multi-partner effort aims to reduce alcohol-related harms through policy, education and care

DENVER (Oct. 22, 2025)— Denver Health announced today its participation in the Colorado Alcohol Impacts Coalition (CAIC), a new statewide initiative formed in partnership with the Colorado School of Public Health, the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention, Healthier Colorado and the Steadman Group.

The coalition brings together leaders in health care, research, public health and advocacy to address the growing public health crisis caused by alcohol-related harm. The goal is to reduce deaths and long-term illness through coordinated efforts that improve policy, raise awareness and expand access to care.

As Colorado's primary safety-net health system and the city's only Level One Trauma Center, Denver Health sees the impacts of alcohol every day — from emergency room visits and injuries to chronic disease and behavioral health crises.

"Alcohol remains the leading cause of substance-related death and disability in Colorado, yet it often receives less attention and fewer resources than other substance use issues," said Bill Burman, MD, infectious disease physician with the Public Health Institute at Denver Health. "The launch of this coalition represents an opportunity to finally take a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to tackling this long-standing issue."

Each year, more than 2,000 Coloradans die from alcohol-related causes — many at a young age and from preventable conditions. In 2022, hospitalizations for alcohol-related illnesses and injuries alone cost the state \$351 million — a 47% increase since 2014.

The CAIC will focus on four key initiatives:

- **Driving Public Education** - Raising awareness of alcohol's health impacts and shifting harmful cultural norms around drinking.
- **Advancing Policy Reform** - Improving policies and systems so they better reflect current needs, address gaps, and create lasting positive change.



- **Expanding Access to Care** - Increasing the availability of residential and outpatient treatment, peer recovery support, and mental health services across Colorado.
- **Strengthening Data & Evaluation** - Using local and statewide data to model the impact of proposed changes and measure outcomes over time.

“The science is clear: Colorado can save thousands of lives and hundreds of millions of dollars by taking action to reduce excessive alcohol use,” said Glen P. Mays, PhD, MPH, of the Colorado School of Public Health. “This coalition will help our state implement those solutions.”

JK Costello, MD, MPH of The Steadman Group, who is also a person in long-term recovery, added: “I helped start this coalition so our state can begin to build a healthier, more realistic relationship with alcohol.”

Denver Health is proud to join the CAIC in creating safer, healthier communities across Colorado. For more information or to get involved, contact Samantha Strobing at samanthastrobing@steadmangroup.com.

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About Denver Health

Denver Health is a comprehensive health and hospital system that provides high-quality care and proudly serves as the city’s safety-net hospital. For more than 160 years, Denver Health has been guided by its mission to serve the people of Denver, to educate the next generation of health care professionals and to engage in research and community partnerships to better deliver the health care needs of our patients while strengthening our community.

About Colorado Alcohol Impacts Coalition

The Colorado Alcohol Impacts Coalition (CAIC) is a statewide, multi-sector coalition that seeks to reduce alcohol-related harms through data-driven strategies, public awareness, and policy collaboration. CAIC brings together leaders from healthcare, research, public health, and community organizations to improve health and safety across Colorado.