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Media contact: Deydra Bringas
303-520-9591
denverhealthmedia@dhha.org

Denver Health honored by AMA for commitment to well-being of clinicians

(Oct. 7, 2026) — Denver Health has earned silver-level recognition from the American Medical Association (AMA) as a Joy in Medicine organization.

The prestigious recognition from the country's leading physician association honors health systems, hospitals and medical groups that prioritize proven methods to reduce burnout and enhance the professional fulfillment of doctors that comes from patient care. Organizations that meet the rigorous criteria of the [Joy in Medicine Health System Recognition Program](#) are leaders in the national effort to transform healthcare work systems and address the root causes of burnout among care teams.

"Being recognized by the AMA's Joy in Medicine program is an honor and reflects many years of work," said Read Pierce, MD, chief medical officer at Denver Health. "We believe that creating a professionally fulfilling work environment for those who provide care is essential to delivering the high-quality, compassionate care our community deserves. When our physicians, advanced practice providers and care team members feel supported, valued and able to engage in improving the experience of clinical care for our workforce, they have lower rates of burnout and are more likely to stay in long-term careers at our safety-net institution. This recognition affirms our ongoing commitment to creating a culture where our people can find purpose in their work, thrive professionally and continue to show up fully for the patients and communities who count on us."

Burnout rates continue to decline, yet U.S. physicians remain at [higher risk for burnout relative to other U.S. workers](#), according to the Mayo Clinic Proceedings. Systemic drivers such as administrative burden, staffing shortages and stigma around mental health continue to plague the physician experience and contribute to the day-to-day stressors. Continued efforts are essential to ensure doctors receive the support they need to thrive and achieve national health goals.

"Supporting physician well-being helps create better care for everyone," said AMA President Willie Underwood III, MD, MSc, MPH. "Studies show that when physicians are supported, patients benefit from safer care, higher quality and a better overall experience. Organizations



recognized by the Joy in Medicine program are leading the way by investing in workplaces that support physicians and help them deliver compassionate, high-quality care. The AMA is proud to honor these leaders for their commitment to physician well-being and healthier communities.”

“Here at Denver Health that means investing in the resources, systems and culture that allow our physicians and advanced practice providers to thrive — from listening to our medical staff through our annual experience survey, to engaging RESTORE, our 24/7 wellness and peer support program and to making provider well-being a strategic measure of our organization’s success,” said Jessica Wallace, PA and well-being officer for care teams at Denver Health. “We are also working to remove the barriers that too often detract from patient care, including reducing documentation burden through tools such as Nabla. This recognition from the AMA is meaningful because it reflects not just what we have accomplished so far, but our ongoing commitment to creating a healthier, safer and more supportive environment for the people who care for Denver.”

Since 2019, the AMA Joy in Medicine Health program has recognized more than 250 organizations across the country. Recognition levels are valid for two years. This year, 92 health organizations nationwide earned recognition with documented efforts to reduce system-level drivers of work-related burnout and demonstrated competencies in commitment, assessment, leadership, efficiency of practice environment, teamwork and support. Organizations that earned 2026-27 recognition join a strong group of currently recognized organizations from the 2025-26 program, bringing the currently recognized cohort to 194 recognized organizations.

Learn more about the AMA Joy in Medicine Health System Recognition Program at ama-assn.org/joyinmedicine

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 165 years, Denver Health has been guided by its mission to serve the people of Denver, to educate the next generation of healthcare professionals and to engage in research and community partnerships to better deliver the services that meet our patients’ healthcare needs while strengthening our community.