

## **NEWS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

August 31, 2015

### **Wray Community District Hospital Plans for the Future Healthcare Needs of its Community, Concluding Full-Scope Community Health Needs Assessment**

Wray, Colorado – Wray Community District Hospital (WCDH), a 15-bed critical access acute care facility with level IV trauma services, completed a three meeting community health needs assessment of their medical service area earlier this month.

The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC), a member-based association for rural healthcare facilities, facilitated the assessment process. Community leaders ranging from health service providers and emergency medical services, County Department of Human Services, Morgan Community College, and other members of the community participated in the assessment, tasked with identifying the hospital's top areas of need.

The community health needs assessment is an IRS requirement for nonprofit hospitals. This change comes from national healthcare reform – the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act – and was spearheaded by Sen. Chuck Grassley, R, Iowa, in an effort to ensure hospitals are accountable to their communities in earning their nonprofit status.

In addition to complying with federal regulation, CEO, Jennie Sullivan, recognized the importance of developing new, and enhancing established, community benefit programs and services.

Over 100 population health indicators were evaluated and community meetings were held to discuss health, demographic, and economic data associated with the area. Disparities that exist in health status and health risk between those in the highest income levels and the lowest, age differences, as well as between the insured and uninsured were a primary topic of concern.

Aging adults are challenged with access to healthcare within their own community and increased utilization of services. The largest population demographic is currently between the ages of 50-64 making up 20 percent of the population.

At the second community assessment meeting held in June, the leadership group came together to make recommendations regarding how the hospital could better address the community's health needs. These priorities were developed after reviewing the results of nearly 100 community responses to the health needs survey.

The hospital's priorities and individual implementation strategies were presented by WCDH's CEO, Jennie Sullivan later in the month at the final community meeting.

WCDH identified community paramedicine and obesity education as top priorities to address. The needs chosen by the hospital were the most pressing and aligned with the capacity and mission of the facility. WCDH would like to express their appreciation to the community for providing feedback about their highest needs.

**[Enter Wray Community District Hospital organizational information]**

#### **About Colorado Rural Health Center**

Using a model based on the work of the National Center for Rural Health Works in Oklahoma, the Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) works with communities on issues associated with community development, economic development, and local leadership development. CRHC was established in 1991 as Colorado's State Office of Rural Health. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, CRHC serves dual roles as the State Office of Rural Health with the mission of assisting rural communities in addressing healthcare issues; and as the State Rural Health Association, advocating for policy change to ensure that rural Coloradoans have access to comprehensive, affordable healthcare services of the highest quality. For more information visit [www.coruralhealth.org](http://www.coruralhealth.org), call 303-832-7493, or call toll free 800-851-6782 from rural Colorado.

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