

**NEWS STATEMENT**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 18, 2007

**Safety Net Coalition Remains Committed to Assuring Its Clients  
Are Part of Health Care Reform**  
***208 Commission Narrows List of Reform Proposals***

DENVER— Colorado’s Blue Ribbon Commission for Health Care Reform, known as the 208 Commission, today shortened the list of proposals it will analyze in depth in its next step toward developing its final health care reform recommendation. A coalition of safety net providers and advocates vowed to continue their work to assure the health care of all Coloradans is addressed.

“We are, of course, disappointed that our coalition’s proposal was not selected,” said Annette Kowal, chief executive officer of the Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN). “However, we all have had many conversations with the 208 Commission and we find this group of people to be committed to making real and comprehensive health care reform. They chose high-quality proposals to analyze further and have much hard work still ahead of them. We plan to continue participating in the process.”

The Community of Caring Proposal was submitted by the Colorado Community Health Network, Colorado Children’s Campaign, Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council and Colorado Access.

“Our organizations are committed to developing a culture of health in Colorado, including covering all Coloradans in a family-centered system which is safe, efficient, effective, timely and equitable, explained Megan Ferland, President of the Colorado Children’s Campaign (CCC). “We are encouraged to see that the 208 Commissioners clearly are looking for a culture of health as well.”

“Safety net providers are an integral part of the overall health care system in our state,” said George DelGrosso, executive director of the Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council (CBHC). “The safety net has a long history of working closely in communities across the state with public and private hospitals, private physicians, specialists and other non safety net providers.”

“Our four organizations share a commitment to ensuring access to comprehensive primary, preventive, oral, and mental health care to children and adults in Colorado,” said Gretchen Flanders McGinnis, director of strategic planning and network development for Colorado Access. “The Health Reform Commissioners have worked incredibly hard this year and we look forward to working with them to ensure that the process culminates in health care reform that addresses the issues of uninsurance and health care access in our state.”

Providing access to primary, preventive, oral and mental health care to all individuals living in Colorado is the right thing to do because it:

- Reduces overall health care costs and suffering by preventing unnecessary and expensive emergency room visits and hospitalizations,
- Reduces the incidence of preventable communicable diseases,
- Reduces expenditures in Medicaid and CHP+, and
- Eliminates the “hidden tax” on health care that the insured pay to cover the costs of the uninsured.

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To view a copy of the Community of Caring Proposal, please [click here](#). To view all of the proposals submitted to the Commission, [click here](#).

*To interview a CCHN representative, please contact Maureen Maxwell at (303) 861-5165, Ext. 259, cell (303)913-9078, or [maureen@cchn.org](mailto:maureen@cchn.org).*

*To interview a Colorado Children's Campaign representative, please contact Tara Trujillo at (303) 839-1580, ext. 274.*

*To interview George DeGross at Colorado Behavioral Health Council, please call Doyle Forrestal at (303) 885-4097.*

*To interview Gretchen Flanders McGinnis at Colorado Access, please call (720) 744-5503.*

Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN) is the association for Colorado's 15 Community Health Centers (CHCs). As part of the safety net, Colorado CHCs currently provide a health care home to one-third of Medicaid enrollees and one-fifth of the states' uninsured. For more information, please visit [www.cchn.org](http://www.cchn.org).

Colorado Children's Campaign (CCC) is a statewide child advocacy organization focusing on the health, education and well-being of Colorado's 1.2 million children. For more information, please visit <http://www.coloradokids.org/>.

Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council (CBHC) represents Colorado's statewide network of community mental health providers, including 17 community mental health centers (CMHCs), two specialty clinics—Asian Pacific and Servicios de la Raza—and the 5 Behavioral Health Organizations (BHOs). For more information, please visit <http://www.cbhc.org/>.

Colorado Access is a nonprofit health plan that provides access to behavioral and physical health services for medically underserved Coloradans. The health plan is sponsored by The Children's Hospital, Colorado Community Managed Care Network and University of Colorado Hospital/University Physicians, Inc. For more information, please visit <https://www.coaccess.com/public/index.jsp>.

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