Welcome

OCTOBER is Health Literacy Month. Learn about its importance and what TCHNetwork does to improve it in our community. As Open Enrollment quickly approaches, 11/1/17-1/12/18, find out how to prepare and learn about how TCHNetwork can assist you. October is also National Hispanic Heritage Month! Meet our bilingual/bicultural team members providing assistance to the Hispanic community.

Health Literacy: a Factor of Good Health

It’s safe to say that most people recognize good hygiene, a healthy diet, and frequent exercise as key elements to a healthy lifestyle. However, there are many more determinants for a healthy life besides cleanliness, diet, and exercise. As they say, knowledge is power, and in this case, power equates to a healthier life. Health literacy encapsulates all of the knowledge necessary to make appropriate health decisions, and it is a crucial aspect of one’s health.

According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, only 12% of adults are proficient in health literacy and 14% of adults have below basic health literacy. Beyond reflecting our society’s lack of health knowledge, this describes our inability to prevent disease and seek proper treatment when needed.

Those lacking in health literacy skills are unlikely to enter the healthcare system until they are sick. By contrast to their more informed counterparts who actively seek preventive services, often avoiding getting sick in the first place. This

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TCHNetwork Spotlight

Latino Advocacy & Bilingual Assistance

Claudia Garcia Cultural Navigator

Kody Gerkin Intercultural Navigator

Claudia Gamez Enrollment Navigator

Darlene Mora Community Health Worker

Miguel Herrera AmeriCorps VISTA

Coni Arevalo AmeriCorps VISTA

National Hispanic Heritage Month is Sept. 15 - Oct. 15. TCHNetwork offers bilingual assistance from any of our bilingual team members. In addition, our Latino Advocacy Program connects local Latino families to bilingual/bicultural resources, while working to develop solutions for barriers to care.
means more hospitalizations and use of emergency services for those with limited health literacy, which in turn increases the cost burden on the healthcare system. In addition, limited health literacy skills are linked to a greater likelihood of developing a chronic condition and not being able to manage it, as well as an increase in morbidity and mortality rates.

Like many things in life, the key to solving the health literacy problem in our country is clear communication. The main cause of poor health literacy is that health information is often unfamiliar, complex, and filled with jargon. Instead, familiar words should be used, and numbers and images should be presented in such a way that makes sense to those receiving the information.

Tri-County Health Network is committed to helping solve the health literacy problem in our region by providing free services that ensure our communities not only have the information they need to manage their health effectively, but also can clearly understand how to use that information. Programs like the Community Health Worker (CHW) program and the Chronic Disease Outreach program help the people of our region better understand and manage their health, while our insurance assistance program provides enrollment navigation and personal education about one’s health insurance benefits and how to use them.

Our CHWs provide outreach, education, referral, follow-up, and advocacy for those at-risk for diabetes and heart disease – two of the most preventable and manageable chronic diseases. They offer free screenings to determine risk for diabetes and heart disease, and help establish an action plan for clients to make lifestyle changes that improve their health.

Through our Chronic Disease Outreach program, Patient Health Navigators (PHNs) guide patients through and around their barriers to accessing healthcare. They improve the overall health of patients with diabetes and cardiovascular disease by providing education about the disease and making lifestyle changes based on the guidance of the patient’s primary care physician. PHNs also ensure patients follow up for routine visits and testing to help keep their chronic disease in check.

One aspect that many don’t consider when thinking about their health, despite its essential role, is health insurance. Enrolling in health insurance can be tricky, and knowing how to navigate coverage can be even more difficult. Enrollment Navigators are responsible for educating, processing, and enrolling eligible individuals and families efficiently and effectively into programs such as Medicaid, Child Health Plans Plus (CHP+), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the state marketplace, Connect for Health Colorado.

Furthermore, TCHNetwork’s Trails to Health Insurance Literacy program (“Trails”) is dedicated to empowering residents of our region to select and use a health insurance plan that provides the level of coverage they need at a price they can afford. Through this program, TCHNetwork works with residents to improve their health insurance literacy skills, which is an important aspect of their overall health literacy.

According to the 2015 Colorado Health Access Survey, which surveyed over 10,000 Coloradans representing the 21 public health regions in the state, the region that TCHNetwork serves ranked last in health insurance literacy. As such, our commitment to improving the health literacy of our region is great. Trails participants receive health insurance assistance from TCHNetwork and throughout the service, are educated about their health insurance and how they can get the most out of it.

Improving health insurance literacy is a crucial aspect of improving the overall health literacy of our region. Understanding one’s health insurance plan corresponds to a higher likelihood of using the preventive services offered by the plan, which increases the amount of interactions with health professionals. This cascades into improved health literacy and a healthier life!

As the National Institutes of Health says, health literacy “Saves lives. Saves time. Saves money.” TCHNetwork is committed to improving the overall health and quality of healthcare in our rural region. One of the many ways we do this is by helping our community increase its health literacy skills.

If you’d like to learn more about any of our programs, please contact the TCHNetwork office at 970.708.7096 or see: tchnetwork.org.

Follow Us
Stay up to date on TCHNetwork and community partner events!

Facebook:
TriCountyHealthNetworkTelluride

Twitter:
@TCHNetwork_CO
October Recipe
Chicken with Apples and Raisins

For more healthy, affordable, delicious and easy recipes, see: https://cookingmatters.org/recipes

Instructions
1. Peel and dice onion. Rinse, peel, and dice carrots. Rinse and dice apples.
2. If using, chop nuts. Rinse and mince parsley or cilantro.
3. In a small bowl, mix cinnamon, coriander, cumin, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and pepper.
4. Pat chicken dry with paper towels. Remove skin. If using whole chicken legs, separate the thigh and drumstick. If using bone-in chicken breasts, cut in half on the diagonal so pieces are almost even. Rub chicken pieces with spice mixture.
5. In a large skillet over medium heat, heat 1 Tablespoon oil. Add onion, carrots, and apples. Cook, stirring occasionally, until starting to brown, about 15 minutes. Transfer to a medium bowl.
6. Add remaining 1 Tablespoon oil to skillet. Brown chicken in 2 batches, 2-4 minutes per side. Return all chicken pieces to skillet and add broth. Bring to a simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165°F, about 15-25 minutes depending on the size of the pieces. Transfer cooked chicken to a clean plate.
7. Add raisins, vegetable mixture, and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt to skillet. Bring to a simmer and cook until liquid is almost gone, 5-10 minutes more. Serve over cooked chicken. If using, top with nuts and herbs.
Open Enrollment for Health Insurance: You must re-enroll every year.

Health Coverage Guides (HCGs) are available for private appointments outside of normal working hours or on the weekend. Call your local HCG to make an appointment that best fits your work schedule!

Here's an overview that will help you prepare:

**OPEN ENROLLMENT TIMELINE**

- **November 1, 2017**
  1st day of Open Enrollment
  You can enroll for 2018 health insurance starting today.

- **December 15, 2017**
  Last day to enroll for a January 1st effective/start date.

- **January 12, 2018**
  Last day to enroll for 2018 coverage without a qualifying life change event*. Enrolling after December 15, 2017 will allow you a February 1st start date. You will not have insurance during the month of January 2018 if you enroll after December 15, 2017.

**BEFORE NOVEMBER 1st**

- **Log into your Connect for Health Colorado account and reset your password.** Connect for Health requires a password reset every ninety (90) days. Reset your password during the month of October. This will help you avoid long hold times to reset your password during Open Enrollment. You can reset your password to the same, current password. Reset your password using the website prompts (connectforhealthco.com) or call 855-752-6749; your local HCG can also help you accomplish a password reset. Give them a call before November 1st.

- **Call to make an appointment with your local HCG or insurance broker.** Appointments during Open Enrollment fill up fast. Here is contact information for your local HCG.
  - Ridgway/Ouray
    Carol Schutter 970-708-7967
  - Telluride Area
    Alexis Klein 970-708-0921
  - Norwood/West End
    TCHNetwork 970-708-7096

**ENROLLMENT FAIRS**

TCHNetwork is hosting enrollment fairs during Open Enrollment. Here is a schedule:

- **Enroll Ridgway**
  Ridgway Library (300 Charles St.)
  November 4th and December 2nd
  10am to 5pm

- **Enroll Telluride**
  Telluride Library (335 W. Colorado Ave)
  November 11th and December 9th
  10am to 5pm

We will have enrollment events in Norwood and Naturita during the months of Open Enrollment. Check out our community calendar to stay informed: http://tchnetwork.org/press-events/, watch for an email from a TCHNetwork HCG or call 970-708-7096 for follow up.

**HCG OFFICE HOURS**

TCHNetwork’s HCGs hold regular offices ours in our service areas. Walk-ins are welcome but appointments guarantee your meeting. Here’s our schedule beginning November 1st, 2017 through January 12th, 2018:

- **Ouray/Ridgway**
  Ouray Public Health (302 2nd St.)
  Monday through Friday
  9am to 5pm
  Call Carol Shutter to make an appointment.

- **Telluride Library**
  Mondays, 10am to 5pm
  Monday 11/6, 11/13, 11/20, and 11/27: 12pm - 7pm Call Alexis Klein to make an appointment.

- **Naturita**
  WEEDC Building (230 W. Main St.)
  Wednesdays, 10am - 4pm
  Call 970-708-7096 to make an appointment.

*What’s a “Qualifying Life Change Event?” A qualifying life change event opens up a special enrollment period so people, outside of open enrollment, can enroll in health insurance. These qualifying life change events include but are not limited to: loss of job, loss of health insurance, marriage, adding a child to the household, and moving to Colorado. When a life change event occurs you must report this change within 60 days of the qualifying event. To learn more see tchnetwork.org/faq-links-videos/ or call your local HCG.

Thank you for reading this month’s HealthMatters. If you have content that you would like for us to share with our TCHNetwork community, contact: info@tchnetwork.org

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Improving the health of our communities through innovation & collaboration