

MH MarillacHealth

Committed to a Healthier You.

News for Friends of Marillac • Fall 2021

Trusting Today's Data to Plan Tomorrow's Health Care

While last year's dominant challenge was COVID, this year's hill to climb is CAPACITY.

Since 2015 when Marillac gained Community Health Center status, our goal was to serve 10,000 patients per year. But over the past four years our annual patient count has averaged 12,000 persons. "We have not stopped enrolling new patients, nor created a wait list," explains Kay Ramachandran, Chief Executive Officer. "MarillacHealth is the only Community Health Center serving Mesa County.

We always want to extend our safety net of health care to all people of all ages, no matter what."

So what's going on?

Every year Marillac's leadership team and board of directors study community health data to understand the forces and trends that are driving demand. "We are fortunate to have two recent assessments that explain what is happening now, and also enlighten us for the future," Kay explains. "We know there is a backlog of postponed health services from 2020; however, it's much more than that. **Expert assessments tell us that chronic disease, mental health needs, substance use and social determinants of health are very pressing issues for the people of Mesa County. And the frame around the big picture is poverty.**" Poverty is associated with many chronic conditions and adverse health outcomes including higher fatalities for more than a dozen leading causes of death.

We are here to serve

Master site planning for a larger facility is in progress as Marillac envisions the next 10 years and beyond. We urge you to stay tuned. We want you to be the first to know our formal plans for addressing capacity and access, and our desire to provide the best possible care, to as many persons as possible.

How well do you know Mesa County?

Compared to the entire state, Mesa County has more lower income households on federal benefits for food (12% Mesa County vs. 8%, Colorado)

Mesa County has 47% single female households versus 29%, Colorado

Mesa County reports that 9% of residents lack health care insurance, compared to Colorado's uninsured rate of 6%

In Mesa County, 26% of residents report "cost" as a barrier to dental care (compared to 20.6% in Colorado)

Mesa County has a higher (& growing) rate of older residents (19%) compared to Colorado (15%)

97.83 % of Marillac patients have household incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Sources: Service Area and Target Population Needs Assessment, July, 2021. John Snow, Inc., and Mesa County Health Needs Assessment, 2021.



"My Dream Job is Here"

We all hope to find the job that makes us happiest; our new Chief Medical Officer (CMO) believes she has found that here at Marillac.

In early August, Marillac welcomed Dr. Shannon Keel to the role of CMO.

Charged with overseeing daily clinical operations and ensuring our patients receive the high quality care we are committed to delivering, Dr. Keel is excited to be in a position where she can impact many patients. "While my passion is in primary care and I never want to stop caring for individual patients, this position allows me to work at a higher, systemic level and making care better for everyone: staff and patients."

Dr. Keel will see patients 40% of her full time schedule. For the remainder of her time, she looks forward to "...creating a culture of excellence here at Marillac.

I want Marillac to be the place where everyone wants to work and receive their care." She sees herself not necessarily as a supervisor, but as a mentor and guide to support Marillac teams to deliver their best care in the career they have chosen.

For a look at Dr. Keel's education and experience, visit our website

<https://marillachealth.org/meetourproviders/>.

Know that Marillac is being guided by someone who knows where she is meant to be.

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The WWC team is made up of

- Rosa, Physician Assistant
- Alexia, Medical Assistant
- Emily, Program Coordinator
- Steven (not pictured), Behavioral Health Provider.

School Based Health Center is Hoppin'

There's so much we'd love to share about Warrior Wellness Center, but our space here is limited. Here's a quick review.

Compared to last year, the Warrior Wellness Center at Central High School is busy every single day. School started on August 9th and by Labor Day the Center had already logged 560 health care visits with teen patients and staff. While many visits are for COVID testing, the WWC team has also been helping school staff and students with behavioral health concerns, sports physicals, minor injuries and various symptoms/illnesses.

Rosa shared this. **"We can tell by the way students are showing up, entering the clinic, and interacting with us that they're becoming more comfortable at the Warrior Wellness Center. When they're at ease, we can really address whatever concerns they have."** She adds, "Hopefully as the students and staff continue to stop in for COVID testing or other needs, we can make headway with vaccinating the adolescent population at Central High School. We have excellent materials on hand for students to share with their parents and caregivers to inform their decision making. We want people to feel comfortable making a choice that is right for them, but also help ensure that this decision is made with evidence-based and factual information."

What a Gift! Twinkling Smile Restored!

Every child deserves to have a cute smile and a healthy mouth. But sadly, that's not always the way it goes.

Sugary drinks, poor home-care and lack of preventive dentistry caused one elementary school-age dental patient to have a mouthful of baby teeth so diseased that her smile was largely rotted down to the gums. **Extensive decay can cause pain, inability to eat many foods, disrupted sleep, delayed speech development, embarrassment, missed school days, and more.**

The financial impact is also substantial. Such extensive comprehensive dental work for a fearful child is costly because it must be performed in an operating room under anesthesia. It requires a 4-person team and resources only the OR offers.

Months ago, long time Marillac donor, Pamela Blythe, expressed, "If you ever have a really troubling case with a patient needing extensive dental work, I'm here to help." Well, Pamela's gift was timed just right to help this little girl!

Dr. Kate Hart, DDS, Marillac's pediatric dentist, has a special message for Pamela and all Marillac donors/supporters. **"Marillac's care doesn't happen by accident or luck. It's made possible each and every time a donor writes a check."**



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A donation is like a love letter to a child or person they'll never meet. It's an expression of compassion unlike any other. Because of a special gift from Pamela Blythe, a little girl is out of pain, is infection free and smiling bright for the first time in a long time.

Voter Registration for Our Health

When we work to improve the health of our citizens, we also improve the health of our democracy. This fall we are promoting voter registration and directing people to visit our new Register to Vote page on our website marillachealth.org/register-to-vote/. Use this link to register or check your registration status on the Secretary of State's website. We also provide links to nonpartisan websites with information on ballot content, issues and candidates. Check it out!



Colorado Gives Day – December 7, 2021

Colorado Gives Day unites all Coloradans in strengthening nonprofits across the state on a single day through online giving. When you give to Marillac on Colorado Gives Day, your donation increases the amount we will receive from the \$1 million incentive fund. The more you give, the more we receive! Plan to give on Dec. 7, or schedule your donation ahead of time starting Nov. 1 at <https://www.coloradogives.org/MarillacHealth/overview>. Thank you for caring to help others stay healthy!

Remember, leaving a gift to Marillac in your will is one way you can help ensure Marillac will be here for our community in the future. Contact us at 970-200-1628.