

Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers: A Comprehensive Statewide Model of Care

The Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC) program is a federal initiative launched in 2014, designed to increase access and improve the quality of community mental and substance use disorder treatment services.

CCBHC designation is available to a variety of nonprofit entities; it is not restricted to community mental health centers. Organizations can qualify as CCBHCs either through individual federal grants or as part of a statewide certification process.

In October 2022, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration announced a new round of CCBHC funding for states. Colorado has the opportunity to apply for an initial 1-year planning grant in December 2022 and then potentially apply for a 4-year enhanced Medicaid match for a statewide CCBHC demonstration program beginning in 2024, securing at least \$240M additional federal funds.

CCBHCs must serve all clients regardless of ability to pay and adhere to uniform national data collection requirements focused on outcomes, not outputs, and enable comparisons across facilities and states. They are required to provide a federally defined array of services, either themselves or through partnerships with designated collaborating organizations (DCOs).

These services include:

- Crisis mental health services
- Screening, assessment, and diagnosis
- Patient-centered treatment planning
- Outpatient mental health and substance use disorder services
- Primary care screening and monitoring
- Targeted case management
- Psychiatric rehabilitation services
- Peer support services and family support services
- Services for members of the armed services and veterans

CCBHC meshes perfectly with the recommendations of Colorado's Behavioral Healthcare Transformation Task Force and the goals of the new Behavioral Health Administration:

- CCBHC criteria put the patient at the center of care and require clinics to demonstrate tangible improvements in access and outcomes.
- Its requirements mirror new provider definitions in HB 22-1278 and the legislation's call for new value-based payment models.
- Because a demonstration grant will apply to the entire state and a range of entities can qualify as CCBHCs, it will reinforce Colorado's steps toward a more coordinated system of behavioral

CCBHCs Nationally: Key Impacts¹

- **77% of CCBHCs have been able to increase the number of patients they see, with an average 23% increase** in people served
- This increase in access is largely driven by **workforce expansions of 13%** compared to prior to becoming a CCBHC
- Those workforce expansions have come at all levels, from peer support specialists to psychiatrists
- CCBHCs have also been able to improve staff retention through salary increases, bonuses and other strategies enabled by CCBHC funding
- **64% of CCBHCs operate 24/7 crisis lines available to anyone**
- **94% directly provide medication-assisted treatment for substance use disorder**
- **100% of responding clinics indicate that CCBHC status has helped them better serve people of color, improve access to care and reduce health disparities in their communities**

CCBHCs in Colorado:

- **Aurora Mental Health Center** (Arapahoe/Adams counties; grant awarded 5/20)
- **Denver Health** (Denver County; grant awarded 9/22)
- **Jefferson Center for Mental Health** (Jefferson County; grant awarded 9/22)
- **Mental Health Partners** (Boulder County; grant awarded 9/18)
- **North Range Behavioral Health** (Weld County; grant awarded 2/21)
- **Solvista Health** (west/south CO; grant awarded 9/22)
- **SummitStone Health Partners** (Larimer County; grant awarded 9/22)

CCBHC Impacts in Colorado:

- Aurora Mental Health Center used CCBHC funds to purchase a symptom and care measurement technology used by patients and clinicians. It has enabled patients to get better faster, with a 56% improvement in symptoms, which in turn improves access as clients can step down into lower levels of care and free up higher-acuity appointments for others who need them. It has also increased satisfaction for both patients and clinicians.
- Mental Health Partners strengthened their continuum of care by implementing new intensive outpatient programs, expanding integrated care programs, and creating a Community Health Worker (CHW) program. CHWs conduct proactive outreach to engage current and new clients in care and assist them in accessing other needed community supports. In an initial analysis, 54% of clients experienced a decrease in psychiatric distress as a result of MHP's CCBHC-enabled programs.
- North Range Behavioral Health is working to increase same day access to care and enhance services for underserved populations.
- Southeast Health Group developed community-specific programs, including specialized services for veterans by creating new county Veterans Services Officers positions in each of their 6 counties. They have also focused outreach for agricultural communities through their local Ag Advisory Council.

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¹ All data from National Council for Mental Wellbeing [Impact Report survey of CCBHCs](#), conducted summer 2022.