



CHF Statewide Listening Tour
Northwest Tour Executive Summary
February 8 - 9, 2016

Purpose of Tour: The new Foundation President and CEO, Karen McNeil-Miller, is touring Colorado in order to learn about health needs and concerns within communities across the state. The statewide #HealthiestCO Listening Tour is an opportunity for grantees, community residents and local leaders to come together and share their perspectives on health. Karen is interested in speaking with community members about the major assets as well as concerns and barriers to good health that exist within communities across Colorado. Karen believes that health is everyone's business, not just for individuals that work directly in healthcare, and hopes to engage community members across all sectors.

Who participated? The delegation included six staff members from The Colorado Health Foundation and two staff members from Community Resource Center. The Northwest tour reached approximately 30 persons in the region, including tour session attendees as well as site visit hosts and participants.

Where did we go? The Northwest Regional Listening Tour took place on February 8 – 9, 2016. The delegation met with representatives from Moffat and Routt counties. The tour consisted of two sessions hosted in the communities of Meeker and Craig, Colorado. Additionally, the delegation participated in site visits of the Northwest Colorado Boys and Girls Club in Craig and the Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association in Craig. A full itinerary of the tour is available in Appendix A.

What did we do? The Foundation hopes to start an on-going conversation with communities across Colorado to effectively address the needs of the state. In open discussions, community leaders described the region's character, existing needs, and efforts currently underway to address a variety of health related needs.

What did we hear? At each tour session we heard concerns of community members and various barriers to achieving overall health and wellness. While every community presents its own unique perspective and set of challenges, we heard several themes that can be applied to the Northwest region as a whole. Session attendees described their region as being rich in outdoor recreational opportunities and described residents as hard-working and committed. The top three issue areas that we heard were centered on the retention of qualified healthcare professionals, mental health and substance abuse services, and access to childcare.

Regional Themes

Retention of Qualified Healthcare Professionals: Both Rio Blanco and Moffat counties face a variety of challenges that come with being geographically isolated. Specialty providers are few and far between in the region, causing residents to rely on services many miles away. Rangely has recently opened a new hospital, but has encountered financial difficulties due to low patient counts. Session attendees in Meeker spoke of the need for more nurses, physicians, physical therapists and eye doctors. Pioneers Medical Center in Meeker has partnerships with organizations and providers in Craig to offer specialty services to Meeker residents. If local needs

are not met, residents must travel to Glenwood Springs, Grand Junction or Denver for the care they need. Attendees in Craig touched on the challenge of drawing new people into their community. Colorado Northwestern Community College (CNCC) has a nursing program and works to educate local youth and empower them to take on leadership and healthcare positions in the community. Even with these efforts, local youth often leave the region in order to pursue higher education and do not have the desire or ability to return to their hometowns.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health: As in many other areas throughout the state, attendees expressed concern over rising substance abuse and the lack of mental health services within the region. While Mind Springs Health serves as a major asset with psychiatry services offered onsite in Moffat County and via tele-video in Rio Blanco County, there are still gaps that need to be filled within the region. Attendees in Moffat stated that there is not a youth mental health provider in the county that accepts Medicaid. This is a pressing issue because youth mental health concerns, suicide attempts and substance abuse have become increasingly prevalent. The region still faces stigmatized perceptions of accessing mental health services. There is a need for more health and wellness education in order to boost the conversation around mental health and the services that are available.

Childcare Services: Access to childcare services is a large barrier for both Rio Blanco and Moffat counties. Rio Blanco is defined as an Early Childhood Desert by the Colorado Office of Early Childhood. Meeker has only one fully licensed home care provider and Rangely has just one preschool center and one licensed home care provider. There are less than ten licensed home care providers in Moffat and no facility-based childcare providers in the area. The lack of adequate childcare causes huge strains on parents and families who are often forced to choose between keeping their jobs and staying home with their children. Employers struggle keeping employees, largely nurses, due to this lack of available childcare.

Assets: Community members spoke of the plentiful assets that exist within their communities. Attendees in Rio Blanco County highlighted their hospitals and recreation centers as being assets, as well as the close-knit community that exists. Attendees in Moffat County cited their community clinics, CNCC and a strong faith community as being assets. Both counties are fortunate to be positioned in the mountains, lending access to a wide variety of outdoor recreational activities.

Topics and Projects Unique to Specific Counties

Meeker (Rio Blanco County): Access to healthy and affordable food is a challenge for residents of Rio Blanco County due to geographic isolation. This is a large issue for the low-income population who cannot afford to leave town to buy fresh foods. There is little availability of fruits and vegetables in the county, causing higher costs for the little produce that is sold.

Craig (Moffat County): Residents spoke of the persistent poverty that exists in the region. Many of Moffat County's highest paying jobs are with the local coal mines. While the coal mining industry is the largest provider of jobs in the county, many residents also work in retail, the service industry, the school districts and hospital. Many residents make minimum wage, which has created a large population eligible for Medicaid. Attendees spoke of the need for increased support services for families living in poverty.

Appendices

Appendix A. Listening Tour Itinerary

Monday, Feb. 8

1:00 – 2:00 PM: Meeker Tour Session @ Pioneers Medical Center

2:30 – 3:00 PM: Walking tour of downtown Meeker

4:30 – 5:30: Craig Tour Session @ Colorado Northwestern Community College

Tuesday, Feb. 9

9:00 – 9:30 AM: Site Visit @ Northwest Colorado Boys and Girls Club

9:45 – 10:30: Site Visit @ Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association

Appendix B. Session Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Organization	Tour Session
Jamie	Daszkiewicz	MC Human Service Volunteers	Craig
Dana	Duran	Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Colorado	Craig
Tom	Gangel	Mind Springs Health	Craig
Gisela	Garrison	Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association	Craig
Norma	Levitt	Senior Social Center	Craig
Karen	Massey	Routt County Extension	Craig
Aspen	Matthews	Moffat County United Way	Craig
Charity	Neal	Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association	Craig
Betsy	Paeller	Moffat County	Craig
Donna	Theimer	Colorado Northwestern Community College	Craig
Evelyn	Tileston	Senior Citizens Action Group	Craig
Katelin	Cook	Rio Blanco County	Meeker
Michelle	Huber	Mind Springs Health	Meeker
Margie	Joy	Pioneers Medical Center	Meeker
Michael	Melneck	Colorado Northwestern Community College	Meeker
Peggy	Hill	University Physicians Inc Building	Meeker

Appendix C. Colorado Health Foundation Staff Feedback

Staff feedback was collected from those who attended the tour sessions. Answers are based on the following questions.

What was the most prevalent theme you heard from participants?

- Issues are different in these areas because there are so few people - it is difficult to access funding due to limited numbers; increasing and sustaining the workforce is difficult, etc. (Craig/Meeker)

What assets of the community were mentioned, if any? What do they seem particularly proud of?

- They are proud of having a "can-do" attitude and independent spirit. They are proud of the mines in their area. They are proud of how their organizations and communities work together.

What issues that the community is facing were mentioned if any? What were their biggest concerns health or otherwise?

- Mental/behavioral health and substance abuse were major concerns. Other issues: fresh/nutritious food; access to medical care, especially specialists; the economy (dependence on the energy sector); lack of child care; lack of transportation; the sheer size of their counties (makes providing services difficult); internet access; and regulations that are urban-oriented.

Please provide your overall reaction to this session and tell us why you chose that particular rating. (Poor, Fair, Good, Excellent)

- I would consider this a good session. It was fairly small, which is to be expected for the area, but there was not a lot of government support and the audience was not very diverse (there were no Latino individuals, for example). It did seem to be a genuine conversation.

Final question: Is there anything else you would like to mention about this tour stop? (Low hanging fruit in the community, opportunities feedback on the Foundation etc.)

- There were concerns from the community about the difficulties of managing a grant from TCHF. A rural methodology may be required. It was great to get to this part of the state. It seems like we need to develop more relationships there.

Appendix D. Media Report

02/22/2016

Print and Online Outlets

2/13/16

Craig Daily Press

“Colorado Health Foundation learns of area’s strength, concerns”

By: Michael Neary

<http://m.craigdailypress.com/news/2016/feb/13/colorado-health-foundation-learns-areas-strengths-/?templates=mobile>

2/17/16

Herald Times

“Colorado Health Foundation CEO visits area”

By: Reed Kelley

<http://www.theheraldtimes.com/colorado-health-foundation-ceo-visits-area/rio-blanco-county/>

Social Media

Facebook

8 Posts - 3 link shares, 5 photo

Total Impressions: 10000

Facebook Fan Impressions: 9693

Twitter

12 tweets

Impressions: 4288

Avg. Engagement rate: 0.34%

Retweets: 3

Favorites: 3

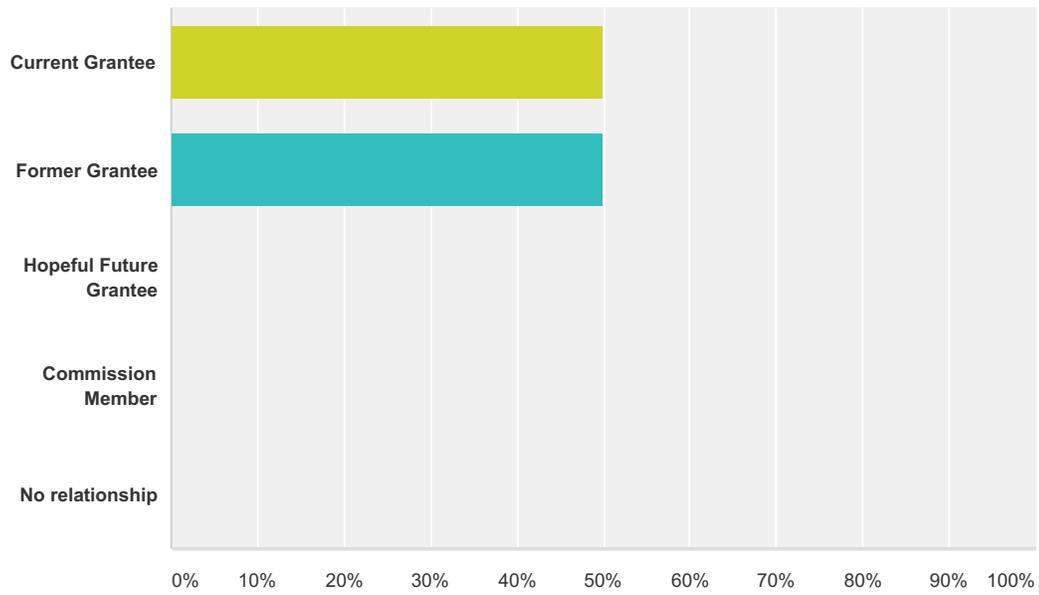
Instagram

8 posts

Avg. 7.6 hearts/post

Q1 What is your current relationship with The Colorado Health Foundation?

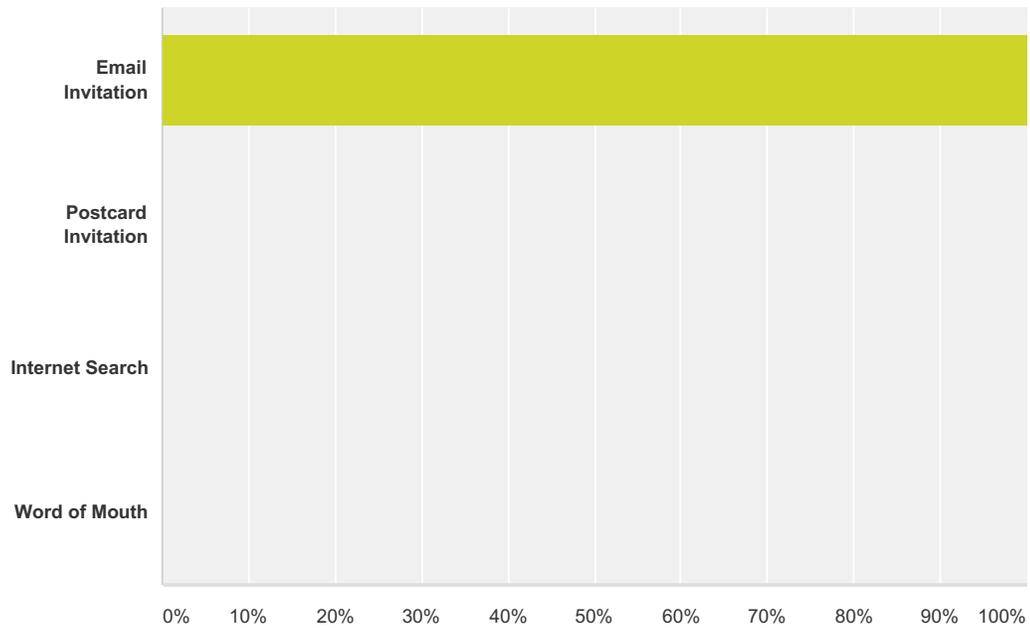
Answered: 2 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Current Grantee	50.00% 1
Former Grantee	50.00% 1
Hopeful Future Grantee	0.00% 0
Commission Member	0.00% 0
No relationship	0.00% 0
Total	2

Q2 How did you hear about the #HealthiestCO Statewide Listening Tour?

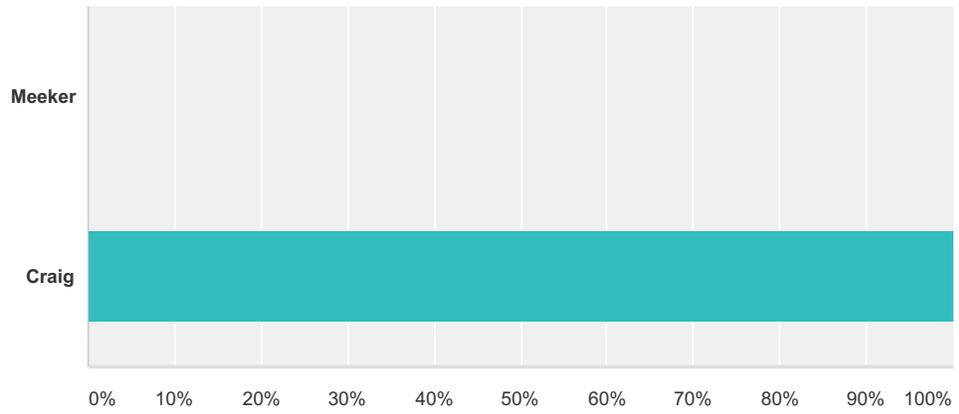
Answered: 2 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Email Invitation	100.00% 2
Postcard Invitation	0.00% 0
Internet Search	0.00% 0
Word of Mouth	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 2	

Q10 Which tour session did you attend?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Meeker	0.00% 0
Craig	100.00% 2
Total Respondents: 2	

Q13 Please indicate your agreement with the following statements:

Answered: 2 Skipped: 0

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
I have a better understanding of the barriers my community faces to be healthy	0.00% 0	100.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2
I have a better understanding of what healthy means to my community	0.00% 0	50.00% 1	50.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2
I made meaningful connections with local community members	0.00% 0	50.00% 1	50.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2
I have a better understanding of the Foundation's role in improving health in my community	100.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2
I have a better understanding of Karen's new role with the Foundation	50.00% 1	50.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2
I feel as though I made a meaningful connection with Karen	50.00% 1	50.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2

Q14 In what ways, if any, will today's session help you and/or your organization? Please be specific.

Answered: 2 Skipped: 0

Q15 What else would you like Karen to know about health in your community?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 0