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New Mexico and Colorado Awarded \$7.7 Million Grant to Improve Children's Health Care Quality

SANTA FE – The U.S. Health and Human Services Department has announced New Mexico and Colorado together are one of 10 awardees of the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) grant to improve health care quality and delivery systems for children enrolled in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). The \$7.7 million grant will be awarded over five years.

The New Mexico and Colorado grant proposal focuses on leveraging resources to achieve improved health care outcomes for children who seek care at one of the 69 School Based Health Centers approved to bill Medicaid in our state. "Improved child health outcomes through care coordination and integration, particularly as it relates to integrating mental health with primary care, is intrinsic to achieving the goals of this grant project," said Carolyn Ingram, New Mexico's Medicaid Director with the Human Services Department.

The first goal of the project is to integrate School Based Health Centers in to the Medical Home approach already implemented in New Mexico and Colorado. A Medical Home is a patient-centered source of personal primary health care and is based on the relationship between the patient and provider to improve the patient's health across a continuum of referrals and services.

"New Mexico's School Based Health Centers play a unique role as an integrated partner in the Medical Home approach which will help contribute to systemic change and improvement to the delivery of health care for children," said Yolanda Cordova, School and Adolescent Health and Substance Abuse Prevention Director with the Department of Health. "The project will also document the impact School Based Health Centers make on improving health outcomes as well as academic achievement."

The second goal of the project is to enhance the delivery model of care within the School Based Health Centers by improving screening, preventive services, management of chronic conditions, education of adolescents to encourage more involvement in their own health care, and follow-up with primary care providers.

"New Mexico's objective is to see measurable, significant increases in the percentage of children and youth who receive screenings and preventive services in School Based Health Centers," said Ingram.

Colorado is the lead agency for the CHIPRA grant. New Mexico's Human Services Department has been designated as the project lead for New Mexico and will facilitate the partnership of stakeholder entities throughout the state, including the University of New Mexico and the Department of Health.

The New Mexico Department of Health manages the 69 School Based Health Centers and works with school districts across New Mexico to improve adolescent health by providing students primary and behavioral health care in their schools.

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