



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOUR FOUNDATIONS ANNOUNCE FUNDING TO INTEGRATE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Denver, CO – Advancing Colorado’s Mental Health Care, a joint effort of the Caring for Colorado Foundation, The Colorado Trust, The Denver Foundation, and HealthONE Alliance, announces that it will be accepting proposals for a five-year, \$4,125,000 effort to help improve the integration and coordination of mental health services in Colorado communities. Based on the 2003 comprehensive study of Colorado’s mental health system, the four foundations joined together to provide grants to better meet the needs of Coloradans with severe mental illnesses. The study, *The Status of Mental Health Care In Colorado* (www.coloradotrust.org), details the crisis situation of Colorado’s mental health care system, noting that only one-third of those who need treatment receive it, that costs continue to rise as state expenditures decrease and that care is often inaccessible and inadequate.

The goal of **Advancing Colorado’s Mental Health Care** is to help improve the “integration” or coordination of mental health services for people. Currently, when a person with a behavioral or mental health diagnosis receives care, services may come from many different, disconnected sources such as human services, criminal justice, the school system, the emergency room, a primary care doctor, private mental health professionals, and/or community mental health services. Research shows that this “non-integrated” type of care, involving multiple interventions and case workers, can result in poor mental health outcomes for the individual with the diagnosis and frustration for family members and caregivers.

Advancing Colorado’s Mental Health Care will support the integration of mental health services in five to eight Colorado communities through five-year grants so that persons with severe mental illness can be treated with the services they need most, regardless of agency differences, funding sources, organizational structures, or variations in policy and practice. In February, the funders completed a competitive application process and selected a Project Coordinator, TriWest Group, to help manage the project. Advancing Colorado’s Mental Health Care is now accepting grant proposals through TriWest Group from communities interested in integrating mental health care. Those interested in submitting a grant proposal can review the Request for Proposals at the website of any of the four foundations (www.caringforcolorado.org, www.coloradotrust.org, www.denverfoundation.org, or www.health1.org).

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