

# INCREASING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE



## **Making Health Care More Affordable**

Colorado Democrats built on years of progress to increase access to quality, affordable health care this legislative session. No Coloradan should hesitate to call an ambulance during an emergency because they are concerned about the cost, which is why Democrats passed [HB25-1088](#) to protect patients from surprise bills after using public ambulance services.

Democrats also boosted funding for health care safety net providers who provide care for Colorado's most vulnerable, including rural hospitals, community health centers, and behavioral health clinics ([SB25-290](#)).

We passed a state budget that protects Medicaid eligibility, increases payments to Medicaid providers, and preserves health care access and coverage for Colorado children ([SB25-206](#)).

Democrats also passed a measure to proactively secure insurance coverage for preventive health care and care for low-income Coloradans if federal action reduces coverage ([SB25-196](#)) and built upon existing law to ensure that breast cancer screenings, including diagnostic and supplemental screenings, will be free for Colorado patients ([SB25-296](#)).

## **Streamlining Access to Quality Health Care**

Democrats are streamlining access to quality health care with legislation to boost rural independent pharmacies ([HB25-1222](#)), modernize health care communications by allowing consumers to opt in to receive electronic notifications ([SB25-010](#)), and create a drug donation program to allow unused medication to be safely donated to a nonprofit or re-dispensed to patients in need ([SB25-289](#)).

We also passed legislation to increase affordable, consistent access to the medication Coloradans need by allowing a health care provider to adjust the dose or frequency of a chronic maintenance drug without needing to go through another lengthy insurance authorization process ([SB25-301](#)).



# INCREASING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE



Under new legislation, occupational therapists will be allowed to prescribe durable medical equipment, like ventilators and wheelchairs, without requiring a prescription from a licensed physician, leading to increased access, better health outcomes, and a higher quality of life for occupational therapy patients ([HB25-1016](#)).

We're focused on supporting Colorado youth and families in their times of need. This year, Democrats extended paid family and medical leave for parents with infants in the NICU for up to an additional twelve weeks ([SB25-144](#)) and improved access to Naloxone in schools to combat fatal overdoses among youth ([HB25-1293](#), [SB25-164](#)).



## **Expanding Access to Behavioral Health Care**

Access to mental health care and substance use treatment is crucial to the health and well-being of Colorado families. This year, we increased access to behavioral health services with legislation to reduce costs and prevent providers from denying coverage for medically necessary mental health and substance use treatment ([HB25-1002](#)).

Democrats also passed legislation to ensure that people experiencing a behavioral health crisis can access care by extending inpatient mental health care coverage, compiling resources on effective crisis response programs, and collecting and reporting data on existing gaps ([SB25-042](#)). We passed another bill to make psilocybin prescription medication legal to prescribe and use in Colorado upon its approval by the US Food and Drug Administration ([HB25-1063](#)).

Colorado Democrats passed legislation to allocate funding from Proposition KK, which voters approved by overwhelming margins on the November ballot, to community-based mental health services for veterans and their families ([HB25-1132](#)). We also improved access to services for Colorado kids with the most extreme and complex health needs by streamlining existing programs ([HB25-1003](#)).