



INCREASING ACCESS TO

HEALTH CARE



Expanding Access to Behavioral Health Services

New legislation will support Colorado kids' well-being by expanding access to behavioral health services, including: extending the first-of-its-kind L_Matter youth mental health program ([SB24-001](#)); creating the Behavioral Health First Aid Training program to promote adult, teen, and youth behavioral and mental health ([SB24-007](#)); and expanding school-based health care to include telehealth and mobile health units ([SB24-034](#)). Additionally, lawmakers passed bipartisan legislation to promote and support mental health care in rural and agricultural communities ([SB24-055](#)).

Increasing Efficiency and Transparency in Health Insurance

Colorado Democrats are improving transparency in insurance plans by requiring carriers to share accessible information on their negotiated rates and prescription drug trends ([SB24-080](#)). In response to last year's Friday Health Plans shutdown, lawmakers passed policy to ensure that Coloradans whose insurer leaves the marketplace are credited for all out-of-pocket expenses, including deductibles and prescription drugs ([HB24-1258](#)). Additionally, lawmakers passed legislation to improve continuity of health care coverage by requiring a patient's new carrier to cover their treatment as in-network for up to 90 days if they were disenrolled from their previous plan ([SB24-093](#)).

Bolstering Colorado's Health Care Workforce

With bipartisan support, lawmakers funded four projects to support health care and veterinary care at institutions across the state, including establishing a new medical college at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) ([HB24-1231](#)). Marking the state's largest higher education investment to bolster the health care workforce, the new law funds:

- Construction of a new College of Osteopathic Medicine at UNC;
- Construction of the Health Institute Tower at Metropolitan State University of Denver;
- Construction of the Veterinary Health Education Complex at Colorado State University; and
- Renovation of the Valley Campus Main Building at Trinidad State College.

Increasing Prescription Drug Affordability & Improving Accessibility

Colorado Democrats built on previous legislation to make updates to insulin and epi-pen affordability programs to better enforce compliance with existing affordability mechanisms and disseminate information at pharmacies ([HB24-1438](#)). Lawmakers made prescription drug labels more accessible by requiring pharmacies to provide blind, visually impaired and print-impaired Coloradans with access to prescription drug label information ([HB24-1115](#)). Lawmakers also improved prior authorization requirements to ensure Coloradans have better access to prescription drugs ([HB24-1149](#), [SB24-110](#)).



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Improving Maternal Health & Addressing Health Disparities

Lawmakers addressed perinatal health outcomes and health disparities by requiring coverage of doula services and better tracking disparity and health outcome data ([SB24-175](#)). Colorado Democrats also addressed health disparities through the creation of the Arie P. Taylor Sickle Cell Disease Outreach Program to provide outreach and support to individuals living with sickle cell disease ([SB24-042](#)).

Addressing the Opioid Crisis & Saving Lives

Colorado Democrats passed legislation to address the opioid crisis and save lives by providing grants to community-based organizations to fund substance use disorder prevention services ([SB24-047](#)); preventing the spread of disease by offering clean equipment through local health agencies and expanding good faith protections for Coloradans who administer an opioid antagonist, such as Narcan, to prevent a fatal overdose ([HB24-1037](#)); and preventing youth overdose deaths by making opiate antagonists and drug testing strips available on school buses and in schools ([HB24-1003](#)). Lawmakers also incentivized businesses to support employees in recovery and students with their sobriety ([SB24-048](#)).