



**THE
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A Health Equity Foundation

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DEDICATED TO ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY FOR ALL COLORADANS

Health Equity in Rural Communities: Discussion Guide from The Colorado Trust

This discussion guide is a tool for individuals and organizations to understand health equity and, in particular, health equity in rural communities.

To support and advance the conversation around health equity in Colorado, The Colorado Trust is providing several resources to stimulate a dialogue on the topic.

First, Denise Gonzales, program director of the Con Alma Health Foundation in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Susan Wilger, who directs the National Center for Frontier Communities in Silver City, New Mexico, will speak at History Colorado Center on July 23, 2015. Ms. Gonzales oversees the foundation's programs advancing health equity, and has two decades of experience in nonprofit management and philanthropy in New Mexico. Ms. Wilger has worked for more than 10 years in four rural and frontier counties in southwest New Mexico where she has developed and managed local coalitions and several innovative health and social service programs.

Second, The Colorado Trust is distributing five short documents: 1) "A Roadmap for Health Equity," a summary of the Con Alma Health Foundation's strategies for promoting health equity in New Mexico, 2) "Snapshot of Rural Health in Colorado," a fact sheet of key issues affecting rural health in Colorado prepared by the Colorado Rural Health Center and 3) "Action for Equity – Rural Colorado," a fact sheet of key health equity issues in rural Colorado prepared by the Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved, 4) Health Perspectives, 5) Health Disparities in Rural Colorado and the Promise of Programs Aimed at Reducing Readmissions.

After viewing the presentation and/or reading the materials, below are a set of discussion questions to consider as you further explore health equity and the applications to your own work.

1. What are the root causes of health inequities in rural communities? Are they different from health inequities in urban or other geographic communities? Why?
2. What are the biggest challenges and opportunities rural communities face in advancing health equity? Who needs to be involved to address these challenges and foster greater opportunities for health equity in rural communities?
3. Think of an example in which a rural community addressed an issue related to health equity. What did they do? What strategies worked for them? What can be applied to your community?
4. What is one initial step your organization or community can take to advance health equity in rural communities?