Colorado and Wisconsin AIDS Groups Merge, Creating a New HIV Medical Home

The organization will keep the two original names.

March 3, 2017

Rocky Mountain CARES (RMC), which operates in Denver, and the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW) in Milwaukee are merging after unanimous votes from the boards of directors of both groups, according to a joint press release.

The merged organization will continue to operate under the two different names.

The merger's immediate goal is for RMC to set up an HIV Medical Home in Denver, similar to the one operated by ARCW. Such "homes" integrate several HIV services at one convenient location, including medical, dental and mental health care, a pharmacy, and social services. The model in Denver will also offer pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to HIV-negative people.

Currently, according to the press release, ARCW operates the only HIV Medical Home approved by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

"This merger will mean more people living with and at-risk for HIV in Denver will receive the health care they need to keep, protect or regain their health," said Shannon Southall, RMC's executive director. "On behalf of everyone at RMC, I am excited about what our organizations will accomplish moving forward together."

Doctors Ken Greenberg, DO, and John Hammer, MD, who have been working with HIV-positive clients in Denver, will serve as the new clinic's medical providers. "As a physician, I know that oftentimes some of the biggest barriers HIV patients face to achieving health are related to unaddressed mental and behavioral health concerns, not having enough nutritious food, and not having a safe place to live," Greenberg said in the press release. "The HIV Medical Home is critical to making sure patients have all of their needs met so that they can focus on successfully managing their health."

ARCW president and chief executive officer Michael Gifford added: "Our merger will help build upon the incredible work already well underway by bringing the successful HIV Medical Home

model of care to Denver, helping to enhance and increase access to care, attract and retain more patients who are not currently in care or have fallen out of care, and ultimately and most importantly, help people with HIV live long, healthy lives.”

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