



Regional Health Connectors

IMPROVING HEALTH IN COLORADO

Regional Health Connectors (RHCs) are a community-based workforce who build and strengthen connections between the systems that keep us healthy

REGIONAL HEALTH CONNECTORS...

ARE

LOCALLY-ROOTED

Trailhead Institute selects local community-based health organizations in each region of the state to host an RHC.

As residents of the communities where they live, work, and play, and as local host organization employees with a history of serving their communities, **RHCs are uniquely positioned to identify and address the unique health issues posed in their region.**

FOCUS ON

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Rather than work with individuals and families, RHCs serve as a **trusted local conveners** and work within all 21 regions across Colorado building relationships between **primary care, behavioral health, social services and other community resources** to form a statewide network of public health and health resources.

ADDRESS

UNIQUE COMMUNITY NEEDS

RHCs focus on changing systems by collaboratively **improving health-related social needs, responding to emergent issues** (such as the COVID-19 pandemic), and **helping support or lead locally-tailored priority projects** that address health issues or barriers to health in their communities.

Examples of priority projects can be found in the [Behavioral Health Recovery Act \(BHRA\) Project Summary](#) or on the [RHC Stories of Impact](#) page.

WORK WITH YOU

THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

RHCs change systems through their network of public health, health care partners and community resources. RHCs are well-equipped to **connect you with available resources and partners** interested in reaching similar goals.

RHCs also support practices participating in transformation efforts by partnering with clinical quality improvement teams to **help practices prepare for new models of care and reach their goals.**

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT ARE REGIONAL HEALTH CONNECTORS (RHCS)?

Regional Health Connectors (RHCs) are a locally embedded workforce that aim to improve health in Colorado by connecting the systems that keep us healthy – including **primary care, public health, social services**, and other **community resources**. RHCs work at the systems level, rather than with individuals and families, to bridge connections and leverage community assets and resources to address needs.

WHAT DOES RHC WORK LOOK LIKE?

RHC work varies because **they respond to the local needs and priorities** of their Regions. **Read RHC Stories of Impact** and learn how RHCs change systems.

HOW LONG HAVE RHCS BEEN IN COMMUNITY?

The RHC program began in 2015 with two RHCs in the Denver Metro area and then formally began in 2016 with funding from [State Innovation Model \(SIM\)](#), and [EvidenceNOW Southwest \(ENSW\)](#). In 2017, the program reached full force, scaling its operations to host RHCs in each of Colorado's 21 designated health regions.

WHAT MAKES THE RHC PROGRAM UNIQUE?

The RHC program is based on [health extension models](#) in other states that provide external support to practices, diffuse innovation, and share common resources including local expertise coupled with the technical resources of universities, health departments and social services agencies.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE RHC PROGRAM?

The RHC Program would not be successful without the many partnerships that keep it moving. Trailhead Institute serves as the primary program office who supports the implementation and evaluation of the program; along with support from Colorado Health Institute in sustainability, as well as the Department of Family Medicine for practice transformation and evaluation specific support. Additionally, RHC host organizations are located in communities across Colorado and represent health alliances, local public health agencies, and [Area Health Education Centers \(AHECs\)](#).

HOW DO I CONNECT WITH MY REGION'S RHC AND LEARN MORE ABOUT RHCS?

Visit www.regionalhealthconnectors.org/ to find your RHC and their contact information. Feel free to reach out to them directly!

If you'd like to learn more about the RHC program in general, request a presentation, or need help connecting with your local RHC, reach out to:

- Gillian Grant, Senior Program Manager, ggrant@trailhead.institute
- Hannah Groves, Program Manager, hgroves@trailhead.institute