

COLORADO HEALTH NETWORKS (CHN) WAS ESTABLISHED AS AN equal partnership between ValueOptions – a managed behavioral health company – and seven community mental health centers across 40 of the state’s 64 counties.

Achieving national recognition for delivering cost effective and quality services, CHN serves 85,000 Medicaid members in remote areas of southern and western Colorado.

### Accomplishments include:

- **Improved cost management:** By reducing administrative expenses and lowering a 30-day hospital readmission rates to 10% or less, CHN was able to allocate services to those most at risk.
- **A recovery-based philosophy:** CHN has directed a recovery-based model of care to transition patients from institutionalized treatment to independent living in the community. Alternative treatment units are in place to help consumers work, volunteer or attend school. CHN has also established 50 new self-help support groups and several drop-in centers offering peer counseling, psychosocial programs and community outreach.
- **Enhanced crisis stabilization and alternative services:** To meet the needs of rural counties with scarce and costly mental health services, CHN developed an extensive network of crisis and alternative services, enabling people to be treated in the communities where they live and work instead of driving hundreds of miles to an urban area. Examples include; school-based treatment & after-school programs, respite homes for adults and children, in-home crisis and support services and homeless outreach services.

### AT A GLANCE

**Client:** Colorado Dept. of Healthcare Policy and Financing

**Covered Lives:** 85,000 adults and children

**Covered Services:** broad range of mental health services

**Type of Contract:** capitated

**Employees:** 44

**Location:** Colorado Springs

**Date Started:** 1995

**National Recognition:** Lilly Reintegration Award, 2nd Place, 2002, USA Today Quality Cup Finalist, 1996, NAMI Outcomes Roundtable award, 1996

- **New outcomes system:** The Consumer Recovery Outcomes System (CROS) was established to measure and track the progress of patients in recovery and provide timely feedback to mental health practitioners. The CROS captures psychometrically sound feedback from the clinician, the patient and a family member or friend from a variety of issues such as hope for recovery, quality of life, treatment satisfaction, daily functioning and coping skills.
- **Advanced technology and reporting:** CHN designed a secure, online data collection system that allows clinicians to enter clinical data through electronic forms which have the same look as the paper-based forms. The system, which meets HIPAA security requirements and is accessible via a web browser, checks for typing and other data entry errors, which improves the overall accuracy and efficiency of the data collection and reporting process.

### Breakthrough Results:

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- **Decreased spiraling Medicaid program costs:** Met the needs of the state's growing Medicaid population while receiving just 81.5% of actuarial projections.
- **Expanded coverage:** Used cost savings to reinvest \$8.5 million into mental health services for non-Medicaid populations between 1995 and 2002.
- **Increased access to care:** Eliminated waiting lists of up to 30 days for a routine outpatient appointment, with consumers offered appointments within 7 days.
- **National recognition:** Southeast Health Services in La Junta, a community mental health center within CHN's partnership, earned second place in the 2002 Lilly Reintegration Award competition for demonstrating cost savings as well as improved clinical and functional outcomes for adults previously regarded as "low-functioning."
- **Growth of best practices:** An intensive providers training program has equipped providers to handle more recovery-oriented services for their patients. A recent survey showed a 93% overall satisfaction among providers under the new training program.
- **High customer satisfaction:** A 2004 Independent Fact Finders Survey showed 89% of patients in Colorado were satisfied with the mental health care services they received.
- **Advanced technology boosts efficiency:** Through a secure web-based application, 90% of transactions are processed online with 100% data accuracy and security.
- **Decreased response time:** With less than a 1.5% abandonment rate, crisis support units respond to emergency calls quickly and efficiently.

