

Guest View – Just Show Up

Bill Gates Senior has written a book titled “Showing Up For Life”. In this book he has shared his thoughts about how positive change occurs when people “just show up” for a cause they believe in. To quote Mr. Gates “Like my son, I am an optimist. I believe in the combined power of men and women who “show up” for the people they love and the causes they believe in. I've seen the power of public will to take on and surmount great challenges and I believe our society works better when people think less about “me and mine” and more about “us and ours”. I've seen the huge progress that can be made when people invest for the common good and when bad precedent is overtaken by good thinking and public will --”

I too am an optimist and healthcare is a cause that I have believed in for close to 40 years. The current healthcare reform debate has become a very hot topic for conversation. It seems that almost everyone has strong thoughts and opinions surrounding this topic. While this debate rages on I would like to let you know how you can “just show up” to help to shape the future of healthcare delivery right here in Morgan County! A group of interested Morgan County residents joined together and received a grant from The Colorado Health Foundation to learn more about our current Morgan County healthcare delivery and explore possibilities for improvement. This group of citizens has now become the Morgan County Healthcare Horizon Council.

The new Healthcare Horizon Council has invited the National Center for Rural Health Works to facilitate a series of community meetings to discuss healthcare in Morgan County. We need residents throughout the County to participate in this “community engagement process”. Anyone involved in or interested in Morgan County’s healthcare system should plan to become a member of the steering committee and attend these open community meetings.

This steering committee will work together to:

- identify Morgan County’s healthcare needs;
- examine the social, economic, and political realities affecting the local delivery of health care; and
- discuss what they want and realistically can achieve in a healthcare system to meet the county’s needs.

The information developed as a result of this process and the discussions throughout the process will provide valuable input to the members of the Horizon Council as they pursue their goal, which is “to create and implement a plan for an integrated healthcare system that better serves the people of Morgan County”.

The meetings are scheduled from noon to 1pm on Thursdays –

- **December 10, 2009** - Economic Impact of the Health Sector. Based on information gathered from local health services and facilities, RHW staff will provide information regarding the impact our health sector has on the county’s economy. Additionally, the meeting will involve the design of the upcoming county-wide survey and the publicity “blitz” before the community survey is taken
- **January 14, 2010** - Health Services Directory. Based on information they have gathered, RHW staff will present the draft of a county health services directory,

which lists all health services and resources in Morgan County. Participants will be asked to make sure the information is accurate and thorough.

- **February 18, 2010** - Health Data and Information. RHW staff will present data including economic/demographic and health/behavioral data for Morgan County. Participants will be asked to verify and discuss the data and the implications.
- **March 18, 2010** - Community Health survey. RHW staff will provide the results of the county-wide telephone survey. The information will provide insight on access to health care and local utilization of healthcare in Morgan County.

The location for the meetings will be at Morgan Community College, in the Founders Hall located at 920 Barlow Road, Fort Morgan, CO. Staff from the National Center for Rural Health Works, will provide facilitation of these four meetings and a light lunch will be provided.

I hope that you, as a citizen of Morgan County, will care enough about this cause to invest one hour of your time and talents and “just show up” as we explore possibilities to change the shape of healthcare delivery in Morgan County for current and future generations.

The Horizon Council will make all the information developed through this process on our website www.mocohealthcarehorizon.org. You can also use this site to let us know you will be attending the meeting on December 10, 2009.