



EUGENE S. FARLEY, JR.  
HEALTH POLICY CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

# FRIDAY'S FEATURES

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## NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, CELEBRATIONS

[\*County Commissioners receive collaborative mental health services and school security funding recommendations\*](#), a posting on *Douglas County Colorado* reports that the Board of Douglas County Commissioners held a special work session last week to hear funding recommendations and status reports regarding plans for \$13.3 million appropriated for school security and mental health services for students. These recommendations are being reviewed.

[\*Vincent Atchity\*](#) has been named Mental Health Colorado's president and CEO. As an accomplished, collaborative leader in public health, his multi-industry expertise is expected to leverage a statewide network of partners in advocacy, health care, government, education, public safety, and the justice system to drive systemic transformation to Colorado's mental health landscape.



## COMMUNITY HEALTH AND PREVENTION

[\*Lack of Therapists of Color Creates Barriers to Mental Health Access in Western North Carolina\*](#) is a story on *Blue Ridge Public Radio* by Elena Rivera who calls out how there's a lack of mental health professionals of color nationwide, which makes connecting people who need such services more challenging due to these cultural barriers.

[\*How Microexpressions Can Make Moods Contagious\*](#) is an *NPR* story by Liana Simstrom about how we're wired to get in sync with those around us...animals too. We don't just mimic physical movements, but emotions too.

[\*Improving mental health care a personal mission for Lt. Governor Dianne\*](#)

[\*Primavera\*](#) is an interview by Anne Trujillo with Lt. Gov. Primavera on *Politics Unplugged* who openly discusses her brother's battles with mental illness, and how she and other state leaders on a new behavioral health task force, facilitated by the Farley Health Policy Center, address the challenges Colorado faces.

[\*Helping academics engage with communities\*](#) is an interview posted on the Colorado Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute website with Dr. Don Nease, about the CCTSI Community Engagement Program that he directs. He discusses the pilot grants offered, patient-centered outcomes research, and his philosophy about community engagement work.

[\*Health websites are notoriously misleading. So we rated their reliability\*](#) by John Gregory on *Stat News* reports how Americans consume an unhealthy diet of health misinformation online. NewsGuard rates news and information sites in the United States, Italy, the U.K., France and Germany; and uses nine basic journalistic criteria to rate websites. Of those analyzed, they found more than 1 in 10 accessed by Americans including bad health information.



[\*More state spending on health care may be eroding Americans' health\*](#) is an opinion piece on *STAT* by Shannon Brownlee and Bill Miller who discuss the "hidden piece of the cost conundrum." Health care costs not only rob families, but states of the ability to invest in the suite of vital community conditions that together have a powerful effect on health.

[\*Changes to Help Those "Lost in the System" Because of Mental Illness\*](#) is a story in *Westword* by Sara Fleming who discusses a change in the Colorado statute (Senate bills 222 and 223) intended to streamline the process of determining competency for those declared incompetent to proceed in court, and hold the state accountable for moving people through the system without massive backlogs.

[\*How Does Drug Pricing Work? Hint: It's More Like Designer Handbags than Cars\*](#) is an *NPR* story by Selena Simmons-Duffin who reports that pharma pricing is a weird, convoluted system that governs how Americans get their prescription drugs. And Erin Fox, a pharmacist, points out that people who can least afford high drug prices often pay the most.

[\*Oregon Adopts 'Mental Health Days' as Excused Absence for Students\*](#) is a story in *The Daily Beast* by Audrey McNamara about a new Oregon law that excuses absences from public schools for "mental health days" just like

sick days...one of the first in the country to equate mental health with physical health. The bill was brought up by the students.

[\*\*Exploring the Impact of Integrated Medicaid Managed Care on Practice-Level Integration of Physical and Behavioral Health\*\*](#) is an issue brief by folks from the Center for Health Care Strategies that describes how integrated financing influences the coordination of physical and behavioral health services at the point of care...with insights from providers in Arizona, New York and Washington.

[\*\*Gov. Polis announces 18.2% drop in insurance premiums for Coloradans on state exchange\*\*](#) is a story on Fox 31 by Joe St. George about a change expected in 2020 if the Feds approve reinsurance, which will affect those who have health insurance through the state exchange (more than 200,000 people), but will not impact those who have insurance through their employers or government.

[\*\*Strong medicine is needed to solve America's rural health crisis\*\*](#) is a story on *STAT News* by Traci Marquis-Eydman about the healthcare challenges facing those in rural areas and some legislation, some efforts aimed at improving rural health care investments, and suggestions for moving forward.



[\*\*'Avoidable' ER Visits Fuel Health Care Costs\*\*](#) is a story in *U.S. News* by Joseph P. Williams who reports that new data shows privately insured individuals are unnecessarily using emergency department services. The author states that an inconvenient and perhaps outdated primary care delivery system is the problem.

[\*\*Check Out the New Mental Health Infographic from Healthy People 2020\*\*](#) contains infographics on the *Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion site* with the latest data related to a Healthy People 2020 Leading Health Indicator topic.

[\*\*Tougher gun laws lead to fewer firearm-related deaths among children, a new study says\*\*](#) is a story covered by CNN about research that found that firearm-related deaths among young people are 35% lower in states where mandatory background checks have been required for at least five years.

[\*\*Women who stop drinking alcohol improve mental health, study finds\*\*](#) is a story on *Today* by A. Pawlowski about how new evidence suggests that skipping that daily glass of wine is a better way to boost mental health for women.

[2019 Milliman Medical Index](#) is an interactive tool developed by Milliman that allows you to “build your own family” based on several demographic options, and to better understand the associated healthcare costs. Key findings of the 2019 Milliman Medical Index can [be found here](#).

[How to consider nature’s impact on mental health in city plans](#) is a post by Michelle Ma on the *University of Washington Newssite* about an international study led by the University of Washington and Stanford that resulted in the creation of a framework for how city planners and municipalities can start to measure the mental health benefits of nature, and incorporate those elements into plans and policies for cities and their residents.

[Study: the United States could have averted about 15,600 deaths if every state expanded Medicaid](#) is a story on *Vox* by Tara Golshan who talks of the real impact of Republican’s rejection of Medicaid expansion under Obamacare. As of 2019, 14 states have not adopted Medicaid expansion. A [new working paper](#) by several researchers details the results of a study that looked at health outcomes in state with and without Medicaid expansion.

[Primary Care Providers Believe that Comprehensive Medication Management Improves their Work Life](#) is an article in *JABFM* by Kylee A. Funk and colleagues who set out to identify how PCPs perceive comprehensive medical management impacts their work life and the achievement of the quadruple aim.



[Medical-Legal Partnership and Healthy Start: Integrating Civil Legal Aid Services into Public Health Advocacy](#) is an article by Daniel Atkins and colleagues in the *Journal of Legal Medicine* that presents the public health evidence demonstrating how resolving unmet legal needs improves health; describes the MLP model; and reframes the value of civil legal aid services by focusing on the work of one MLP partnering with a social services agency serving very low-income, pregnant women, and parents with young children.



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