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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Colorado Access, South Metro Fire Rescue Authority, and True North Health Navigation Collaborate on Pilot Program Aimed at Decreasing Unnecessary Trips to the Emergency Department**

**Denver, CO** - Colorado Access, a nonprofit health plan, has teamed up with South Metro Fire Rescue Authority (SMFRA), a 911 system that provides emergency services to Arapahoe and Douglas Counties, and True North, a doctor-run medical group that provides acute medical care. All three organizations have teamed up to deliver a unique collaborative pilot program aimed at decreasing unnecessary trips to the Emergency Department (ED) while improving services to patients with non-life-threatening 911 emergency calls. The goal of the pilot program is to improve the overall patient experience of care (including quality and satisfaction), improve overall population health, and decrease the cost of healthcare.

Emergency services and 911 calls for non-life-threatening services are increasing. When these calls come in, paramedics will transport the patient to the Emergency Department (ED) for medical care where they may not receive comprehensive care. Many of the non-life-threatening calls can be safely treated onsite by paramedics and licensed medical providers.

**Pilot Method:**

On January 1, 2015, Colorado Access joined SMFRA and True North's groundbreaking program that gives patients more treatment options when they call 911. When individuals call 911, dispatchers identify whether the call is a life-threatening emergency or a non-life-threatening emergency. Then, an Advanced Resource Medic (ARM) car, a mobile medical unit equipped to handle both types of emergencies except for transport will be dispatched immediately to the site. The ARM car is staffed by a paramedic and a licensed medical provider. The patient is evaluated and receives appropriate treatment onsite. Follow up care is also arranged. Onsite medical treatments, outside the ED, can lead to lower healthcare costs, decreased utilization of emergency resources, increased patient satisfaction, and allow for more time for care management.

In this pilot program, SMFRA will operate a fully functional 911 system and provide all necessary equipment, including the ARM car staffed with an advanced paramedic. True North will staff the ARM car with licensed medical providers. Colorado Access will provide ongoing care management to patients and fund the pilot program.

The pilot program will only be available in the following areas: Centennial, Greenwood Village, Foxfield, Lone Tree, Louviers, Parker, Castle Pines, Castle Pines Village, Centennial Airport, Cherry Hills Village, Denver Tech Center, Inverness, the Meridian Office Park, and unincorporated portions of Arapahoe and Douglas counties.

“I am thrilled that SMFRA and True North approached Colorado Access to help create this unique partnership that will lead change in our healthcare delivery system,” said April Abrahamson, Vice President of Health Plan Operations at Colorado Access. “I am hopeful that we will see positive results and that more Coloradans will receive comprehensive and better medical care.”

#### **About South Metro Fire Rescue Authority**

The South Metro Fire Rescue Authority (SMFRA), consolidation of South Metro Fire Rescue District and the Parker Fire Protection District, covers 176 square miles in Douglas and Arapahoe counties. The SMFRA provides emergency and prevention services to approximately 194,796 residents and thousands more who come into our communities to work. SMFRA serves the cities of Castle Pines, Centennial, Cherry Hills Village, Foxfield, Greenwood Village, Lone Tree, and Parker, as well as Castle Pines Village, Louviers, Centennial Airport, the Denver Tech Center, Inverness, and the Meridian Office Park. For more information, visit [southmetro.org](http://southmetro.org).

#### **About True North Health Navigation**

True North Health Navigation is a Colorado-based, private organization whose goal is to provide quality, convenient mobile and virtual healthcare. True North is rethinking the current system and providing sensible, cost-effective care, when and where organizations and patients need it. True North's providers are board-certified physicians and nurse practitioners with over a hundred years of combined experience. To learn more, visit [truenorthhealthnavigation.com](http://truenorthhealthnavigation.com).

#### **About Colorado Access**

Founded in 1994, Colorado Access is a local, nonprofit health plan serving more than 950,000 Coloradans. The company's members receive healthcare under Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+), Medicaid behavioral and physical health programs, long-term support, and/or Medicare programs (Advantage and prescription drug). Colorado Access provides care coordination and management for three (3) of the seven (7) Regional Care Collaborative Organizations under Colorado's Accountable Care Collaborative Medicaid program. To learn more about Colorado Access, visit [coaccess.com](http://coaccess.com).

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