

Local organizations receive \$250K BUILD Health Challenge[®] Award to Improve Seniors' Health

Award given to Truckee Meadows Health Communities, Renown Health & Washoe County Health District

RENO, Nev. (Nov. 19, 2019) – Truckee Meadows Healthy Communities (TMHC), Renown Health and the Washoe County Health District received the BUILD Health Challenge[®] award, a \$250,000 grant to support Caring For Reno's Elders (C.A.R.E.) program. The award comes as a collaborative result of more than 30 local organizations submitting a proposal for the funding.

Renown Health announced that the organization is matching the grant alongside other pledged funding from the community, bringing the current C.A.R.E. support to \$580,000.

Together the entities will focus on senior loneliness and the health issues it creates. The partners are honored that Truckee Meadows was selected as one of 18 communities to receive funding from BUILD in the 2019-2021 term.

"C.A.R.E will be a community approach to enhance life quality for elders by reducing social isolation and loneliness, issues that seriously impact senior health," said co-team leader Kindle Craig, Sr. Director Renown Institutes. "Loneliness is the root cause of many issues including suicide¹, chronic disease² and a reduction in lifespan³. Washoe County senior suicide rates are two and four times the national rate for those aged 65 and 85 years, respectively⁴. That is unacceptable."

Sharon Zadra, TMHC executive director and co-team leader, said this project will tackle barriers to socialization such as access to affordable housing, transportation and healthcare.

"We'll bring the entire community on-board, long-term, to increase social connectedness and reduce health and mortality issues associated with loneliness by starting a cross generational 'Kindness Epidemic,'" Zadra said.

The BUILD Health Challenge is a national program focused on bold, upstream, integrated, local and data-driven projects that can improve community health. The award provides funding, capacity building support and access to a national peer-learning network to enhance collaborative partnerships locally to address our community's most pressing health challenges. The C.A.R.E team expresses special thanks to the BUILD Health Challenge for its support of this initiative.

"Loneliness and isolation in our senior population leads to declines in both mental and physical health, and increased mortality," said Kevin Dick, Washoe County District Health Officer. "We are incredibly honored to join the BUILD cohort, teaming with TMHC and Renown Health to bring long-term solutions by building a cohesive social network to improve the health of our elders."

The BUILD Health Challenge® is made possible with the support of: BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Foundation, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation, Blue Shield of California Foundation, Communities Foundation of Texas, de Beaumont Foundation, Episcopal Health Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas, Inc., New Jersey Health Initiatives, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

TMHC, Renown Health and WCHD have worked united for the last five years, rallying diverse partners and community leaders to influence and advocate for the region's capacity to ensure a healthy community.

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Truckee Meadows Healthy Communities is a collaborative of thought leaders and influencers who seek to make an impact on the health of their community. The collaborative seeks to build a model where all community members strive toward a culture of health in the Truckee Meadows. This model will include the intersection of the health, education and community development sectors in our region. Truckee Meadows Healthy Communities seeks to create a healthier community through a collective impact project. [More info can be found here.](#)

Renown Health is a locally governed and locally owned, not-for-profit integrated healthcare network serving Nevada, Lake Tahoe and northeast California. Renown is one of the region's largest private employers with a workforce of more than 7,000. It comprises three acute care hospitals, a rehabilitation hospital, the area's most comprehensive medical group and urgent care network, and the region's largest and only locally owned not-for-profit insurance company, Hometown Health. Renown has a long tradition and commitment to continually improve the care and the health of our community. For more information, visit renown.org.

The Washoe County Health District has jurisdiction over all public health matters in Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County through the policy-making Washoe County District Board of Health. The District consists of five divisions: Administrative Health Services, Air Quality Management, Community and Clinical Health Services, Environmental Health Services and Epidemiology & Public Health Preparedness. [More info can be found here.](#)

Sources

1. [Ariel Stravynski, Richard Boyer, \(2001\). Loneliness in Relation to Suicide Ideation and Parasuicide: A Population-Wide Study. Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior: Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 32-40.](#)
2. [Hannah Schulze, Sean Wilson, \(2018\). Harvard University Blog. Loneliness: An Epidemic?](#)
3. [Resurgence & Ecologist, \(2018\). Compassion is the Best Medicine. Issue 307](#)
4. Washoe Region Behavioral Health Profile, (2018). Figure 54: Death Due to Suicide/Intentional Self-Harm by Age Group, Washoe County, Nevada, and United States, 2012-2016 Aggregate Data: pp. 42.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2016 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released December 2017. Data are from the Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2016, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>