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## **CLEAR CREEK COUNTY TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL CO-RESPONDER AND CRISIS RESPONDER WEEK**

Clear Creek County and Clear Creek EMS are proud to celebrate National Co-Responder and Crisis Responder Week throughout the week of September 15th 2024. The International Co-Responder Alliance created this week of recognition last year, and Clear Creek County is excited to participate in the celebration for the first time this year.

The week celebrates the many co-responders and crisis responders carrying out this important work across the country, while trying to meet the rising demand for mental health and substance use services. Here in Clear Creek County, the Clear Creek Health Assistance Team (CCHAT) handles these types of co-response and crisis-response calls.

CCHAT is a coordinated effort with Clear Creek EMS, the Clear Creek County Department of Human Services, Board of County Commissioners, and law enforcement agencies including the Clear Creek County Sheriff's Office. CCHAT is a program focused on providing support to vulnerable populations in Clear Creek County.

“Effective mental health support thrives on collaboration. By partnering with law enforcement, we ensure a unified approach that not only addresses immediate needs, but also fosters long-term well-being,” CCHAT Director Elizabeth Gallagher said. “Co-responders and first responders work tirelessly together each day, striving to bridge gaps and create a safer, more supportive community for all.”

CCHAT is also pleased to be fully-staffed to respond seven-days a week to calls starting in October.

In observance of this week, CCHAT will be hosting two Coffee With a Co-Responder events. Members of the public and media are encouraged to attend to meet our co-responders, ask questions, and enjoy a cup of coffee with them.

1. **Idaho Springs:** The Frothy Cup - 1510 Miner St., Idaho Springs - Sept. 18th at 8:30 - 11:00 AM
2. **Georgetown:** Mountain Mamas' Needful Things - 415 Rose St., Georgetown - Sept. 19th at 8:30 - 11:00 AM

The Clear Creek County Board of County Commissioners will also read a resolution into the record cementing this as a weeklong observance during its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 17th.

The CCHAT has three main functions:

1. **A Community Alternate Response Team**, which responds to appropriately screened 911 calls for service which do not require EMS, Fire or Law Enforcement (LE). The team aims to de-escalate and resolve each call with the least restrictive means including safety planning and resource navigation in order to reduce or eliminate future contact with emergency services.
2. **A Co-response Team**, which responds alongside Clear Creek EMS, Clear Creek Fire or LE to calls for service involving a vulnerable person that also require EMS, Fire, or LE presence. The team supports de-escalation, conducts mental health and needs assessments, assists with determining appropriate call resolution, and always advocates for the physical, mental, and behavioral health needs of the vulnerable person.
3. **A Community Integrated Health Care Service (CIHCS) Team** which, under the CIHCS License, helps address the gaps in access to care in Clear Creek County. The team will provide resource navigation, basic health assessment and medication management, care coordination, and patient education to vulnerable populations. Patients will be identified through a crisis intervention/911 system, social services agencies, and via referrals from hospitals or other health care providers.

Alternate and Co-response models are well-researched. CCHAT is an innovative concept in how first responders can effectively help and respond to an increasing number of challenging calls made to 911.

The CIHCS function serves as the driving tool to integrate all facets of patient care in Clear Creek County. Annually, calls involving vulnerable populations represented **15 to 20 percent of the total 911 calls in Clear Creek County**. The CCHAT program aims to reduce the reliance on emergency services to fill unmet need, support our first responder partners, and help the vulnerable populations in Clear Creek County navigate the complex and often difficult-to-access systems of care.

***To reach CCHAT on its non-emergency/non-urgent phone line, call (720) 560-9919. If it is an EMERGENCY call 911 or 988. You can also contact Colorado Crisis Services at (844) 492-TALK (8255).***

Thank you to all of our co-responders here in Clear Creek County! Below is a photo you are welcome to use in your publications.

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