

# Public Health News

## Year of Changes for San Juan Basin Health

SAN ■ JUAN ■ BASIN  
**HEALTH**  
 DEPARTMENT

San Juan Basin Health  
 Department  
[www.sjbhd.org](http://www.sjbhd.org)

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### *From the Director:*

San Juan Basin Health Department enters 2012 with the majority of our services intact, several improved services, new partnership initiatives, and a balanced budget. However, difficult decisions and changes were made this past year that affected services and staff. The economy is deeply impacting governmental agencies locally and nationally. Public health departments across the country have cut roughly 1/5 of their workforce since 2008, with more than half cutting services in the first six months of 2011. To provide services this past year, SJBHD drew down our reserves by over \$300,000. We had to make changes to balance our 2012 budget.

It is always difficult to consider decreasing services in a time when there is increasing need. Last summer SJBHD began looking at services we offer that are also provided in the community. We decided to close our personal care provider agency and discontinue our prenatal clinic. Both of these services are provided by other entities in both La Plata and Archuleta counties. We have worked with other providers to transition the care of our clients. You will read more about these changes in this newsletter.

These difficult changes were made to enable SJBHD to continue providing essential public health services that may not be offered in our community or as affordable. These include: Family Planning, Immunizations, Environmental Health, Communicable Diseases, Emergency Preparedness, Community Health Promotion, Nurse Family Partnership, Women, Infant & Children, Healthcare for Children with Special Needs, Water Lab, Dental, Single Entry Point, and Skilled Home Health.

In addition, we are working with varied private and community partners on two new initiatives in 2012. This year we will complete a Public Health Improvement Plan. This process begins with a community health and capacity assessment funded by Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Mercy Regional Medical Center, and the Pagosa Springs Medical Center. The second initiative is the Community Care Team of the Southwest, a partnership between private health care providers, an insurance company and public health nurses. SJBHD will employ nurse navigators to assist clients by screening for physical, behavioral and dental healthcare needs. The nurse navigators then triage and help clients manage chronic conditions and access needed healthcare services. Rocky Mountain Health Plans, Mercy Regional Medical Center, Pediatric Partners of the Southwest and La Plata County jointly fund this initiative.

*Joe Theine*

**San Juan Basin Health looks forward to serving the  
 community as your public health agency in 2012 and wishes  
 everyone a happy and HEALTHY NEW YEAR!**

**HEALTHY 2012** ... Start by making an appointment for your annual exam or dental cleaning or STD testing or attending a radon informational meeting and testing your home, or pledging to drive with less distractions like no cell phone use, or getting up-to-date with your immunizations or finding out birth control options. Just **START** making 2012 **YOUR HEALTH YEAR!** Check out our free to low cost programs and services at: [www.sjbhd.org](http://www.sjbhd.org).



THE BROWN FAMILY  
IS GOING  
GREEN

### January is National Radon Awareness Action Month Radon Presentations in La Plata and Archuleta counties

January is National Radon Action Month! It's a great time to test your home for radon, an odorless gas that is the second leading cause of lung cancer. Learn how to protect your home and family at one of our free one hour presentations on how to test for radon and easy actions to take if you find unsafe levels. **Participants get a free test kit!**

For dates and locations throughout La Plata County and Archuleta County, visit [sjbhd.org/radon](http://sjbhd.org/radon) or call 335-2055.

*It takes just one hour, one test to have peace of mind.* Sponsored by San Juan Basin Health Department and Colorado State Extension Office.



### Southwest Smile Makers Now Offers Adult Services

Southwest Smile Makers Dental Clinic is now offering limited adult dental services to uninsured individuals and those on Medicaid. They are presently providing fillings and extractions. Uninsured individuals need a La Plata County CARES card first to receive treatment on a sliding scale fee.

For more information or to make an appointment, call 385-4480. To apply for La Plata CARES card, visit The Family Center or San Juan Basin Health or go to: [laplatacares.org](http://laplatacares.org).



Call us today -  
we'll see you tomorrow!

### Reproductive Health Services

Individuals using San Juan Basin Health Department's Reproductive Health Services love the ease and convenience of next-day appointments. Whether it's for an annual exam, STD testing, or birth control including longer term options, **people can call 335-2013 and get in the next day!** In Pagosa Springs, please call 264-2409, ext. 0 for a next day appointment. **We offer free to low cost services for males, females and teens.** Learn more about our services at: [sjbhd.org/reproductive-health](http://sjbhd.org/reproductive-health).



### Grant Received to Decrease Distracted Driving Locally

San Juan Basin Health's Injury Prevention Coalition has been awarded a \$6500 grant from State Farm Insurance for distracted driving community education and awareness. **Funding will be used to** increase community awareness among La Plata County drivers in an effort to reduce inattentive driving. Please contact Pattie at 335-2047 or [padler@sjbhd.org](mailto:padler@sjbhd.org) for more information or to schedule a presentation.

# Changes and Congratulations

## Changes to Home Health Services

The Home Health Division at San Juan Basin has undergone significant changes in the last few months of 2011 in order to meet the challenges of a difficult economy. First we are closing the Personal Care Agency which provides personal and homemaking services to individuals in La Plata and Archuleta counties. Before making this decision, however, we identified three other licensed agencies in the area which provide the same scope and quality of services. Each assisted during this transition. As of late November, the vast majority of our clients had already transferred their care and established relationships with a new agency of their choice.

Secondly, we are restructuring our skilled home health agency to ensure that we are efficiently meeting the skilled home care needs of patients in our community. We specialize in dual eligibility clients who have both Medicare and Medicaid coverage. Additionally, we are well positioned to fulfill not only acute care needs, but long term skilled nursing care and support as well. **The Home Health staff at San Juan Basin Health look forward to continue providing quality, personal home care to our friends and neighbors in 2012!** For more information about our services, call Holly at 335-2061.

## Changes to Prenatal and Reproductive Health Services

As a result of budget constraints, our Personal Health Division is in the midst of making adjustments to programs and services. The major change made was transitioning prenatal medical care from the health department to community medical providers. This is now completed. We applaud and appreciate the sensitivity and care in which the prenatal staff at San Juan Basin Health Department and private healthcare providers handled this transition for existing clients.

There are no changes to other health services offered at San Juan Basin Health. Specifically, we will continue to offer:

- Free to low-cost family planning and other reproductive health services to uninsured and underinsured women and men at both clinics.
- Free breast and cervical cancer screenings to eligible uninsured and underinsured women over 40 at the Pagosa location only.
- Free to low-cost immunizations for eligible children and adults at both locations.
- International travel immunizations at the Durango location only.

Both the Durango and Pagosa Springs offices of San Juan Basin Health Department will also continue to provide non-medical services for underserved pregnant women including Medicaid Presumptive Eligibility, WIC, Nurse Navigation through the Community Care Team, and Nurse Family Partnership home visitation program for first-time moms.

**As we head into the challenges of 2012, our staff wants to reassure our clients and the community that we are committed to providing quality core public health services.** This includes participating in San Juan Basin Health's ongoing process to assess public health needs and assets in our community, and to the best of our ability, respond to needs as they are identified. As always, our goal is to contribute to improving the health and vitality of our community.

## Congratulations to Promoviendo La Salud ~ Promotoras Recognized with Colorado Video Award Grant and National Medical Interpreter Certification

Mariel Sholes, a promotora with the Promoviendo La Salud program at San Juan Basin Health, recently passed the exam to become a National Board Certified Medical Interpreter. Only 281 applicants nation-wide earned this certification and only 19 in the state of Colorado. The purpose of a national certification is to evaluate and verify the competency of medical interpreters to ensure patient safety and improve provider compliance. Under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, public agencies and other recipients of federal funding are required to provide competent language assistance to limited English-speaking individuals. Contact Mariel at 759-1504.

San Juan Basin Health's Promoviendo La Salud program was awarded \$5000 from the Colorado Health Foundation for a video submitted to its Colorado KaleidosCOPE project. The three minute piece profiles Marta, a Promoviendo client, her health challenges with diabetes and ultimate successes. It was created by Domenica Gonzales who at the time was one of the program's promotoras. The KaleidosCOPE project recognizes that stories unite us, engage us and move us to take action. San Juan Basin Health is proud to be chosen to participate in this project that illustrates how Colorado organizations are working to improve health and health care for the people in their communities. Please check out Marta's "Heroe" story at: [sjbhd.org/promoviendo-la-salud](http://sjbhd.org/promoviendo-la-salud).

**Find Out What Immunizations  
You Need...call your doctor or us  
and/or  
Click to TAKE A SHORT QUIZ**

Both adults and children should be up-to-date on their immunizations. San Juan Basin Health offers low cost vaccinations. Call 247-5702 for an appointment in La Plata County or 264-2409 in Archuleta County. For more information, visit [www.sjbhd.org/immunizations](http://www.sjbhd.org/immunizations).

We also provide travel immunizations and consults. To schedule an ttravel appointment, call 335-2001.



### **Board of Health Meets January 26th and February 23th**

The next Board of Health meeting will take place on Thursday, January 26th at 2 p.m. at San Juan Basin Health Department's Durango office, 281 Sawyer Drive in Bodo Park. The public is welcome to attend. In general Board of Health meetings will take place on the fourth Thursday of each month in 2012. Every third month, it will meet in Pagosa Springs.

### **Senior Outreach Nurse program Assisted Over 1,000 Seniors**



*This section was devoted to our Senior Outreach program schedule of free visits at Bayfield, Durango and Ignacio Senior Centers. For over four years, seniors at these centers were faithfully served each month with testing blood pressure, temperature, heart rate, oxygen level, and blood glucose level --- in addition to making home visits. Unfortunately, this program's grant funding ended on December 30, 2011.*

**Tracy Davis, RN and Brenda Isgar, RN (combined one full-time nurse) provided Senior Outreach Nurse services through San Juan Basin Health for over four years, conducting home visits to 1,077 different clients throughout La Plata County.**

Davis and Isgar conducted home visits to seniors living in subsidized senior housing, campers and tents, but also some in large homes. All had needs. These people are often living alone, in rural areas, hard of hearing, vision-impaired, can't drive a car, are on assisted devices for walking and often on oxygen. It's difficult for them to navigate the medical system and do needed paperwork, like Medicaid. Many can't drive themselves to get food or to medical appointments. These individuals were connected with wonderful resources including 50 community organizations and church groups that help seniors with their various needs.



**Of these clients: 51% live alone \* 17% were significantly vision impaired \* 31% hard of hearing  
\* 53% do not drive \* 41% used an assisted device to ambulate \* 25% on supplemental oxygen**

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**VISIT US ONLINE : [www.sjbhd.org](http://www.sjbhd.org)**

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