

2018/2019 The IC Fund



**CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING - ADVOCACY
HOME HEALTH CARE - CNA TRAINING - VETERANS**

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**A NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION**
the-ic.org

A Note from the CEO

Over the last two years, The Independence Center has been working hard to make medical and dental care more accessible for people with disabilities. Through our IC Fund, we have donated nearly \$150,000 in accessible equipment and other tools to Medicaid/Medicare primary care and dental providers in the Pikes Peak region.

By helping health care professionals take a larger role in providing accessible health services through disability-friendly equipment, The IC Fund committee hoped it might start a trend among other health care providers. In a few years, we'll see if our investment sparked others to purchase disability-friendly medical equipment for their patients.

I write for the entire IC Fund committee and our board of directors to say how thrilled we are to be able to make physical health and dental care more disability friendly in the Pikes Peak region. One's health is precious and must be taken care of to live a long, independent life.



Patricia Yeager,
The Independence Center CEO

Founding Board Members of the IC Fund

- Billy Allen
- Elisabeth Blakney
- Bill Brown
- Dean Christensen
- Serina Gilbert
- Gary Morse
- Owen Stockton

Selection Committee Members

- Kimberly Barker
- Ann Belfiglio
- Maureen Christopher
- Patricia Yeager

"I go without my oxygen tank while I'm in the (dental) chair because there's nowhere to put the tank. When my oxygen numbers are low, I get more anxious. I hate it."

Report:

Creating Disability-Friendly Dental Practices

In 2019, The Independence Center conducted focus groups with 46 individuals who self-identified as having a disability. With this feedback, The IC created a report to help dental practices become more inclusive to people with disabilities. Some of these findings are below.

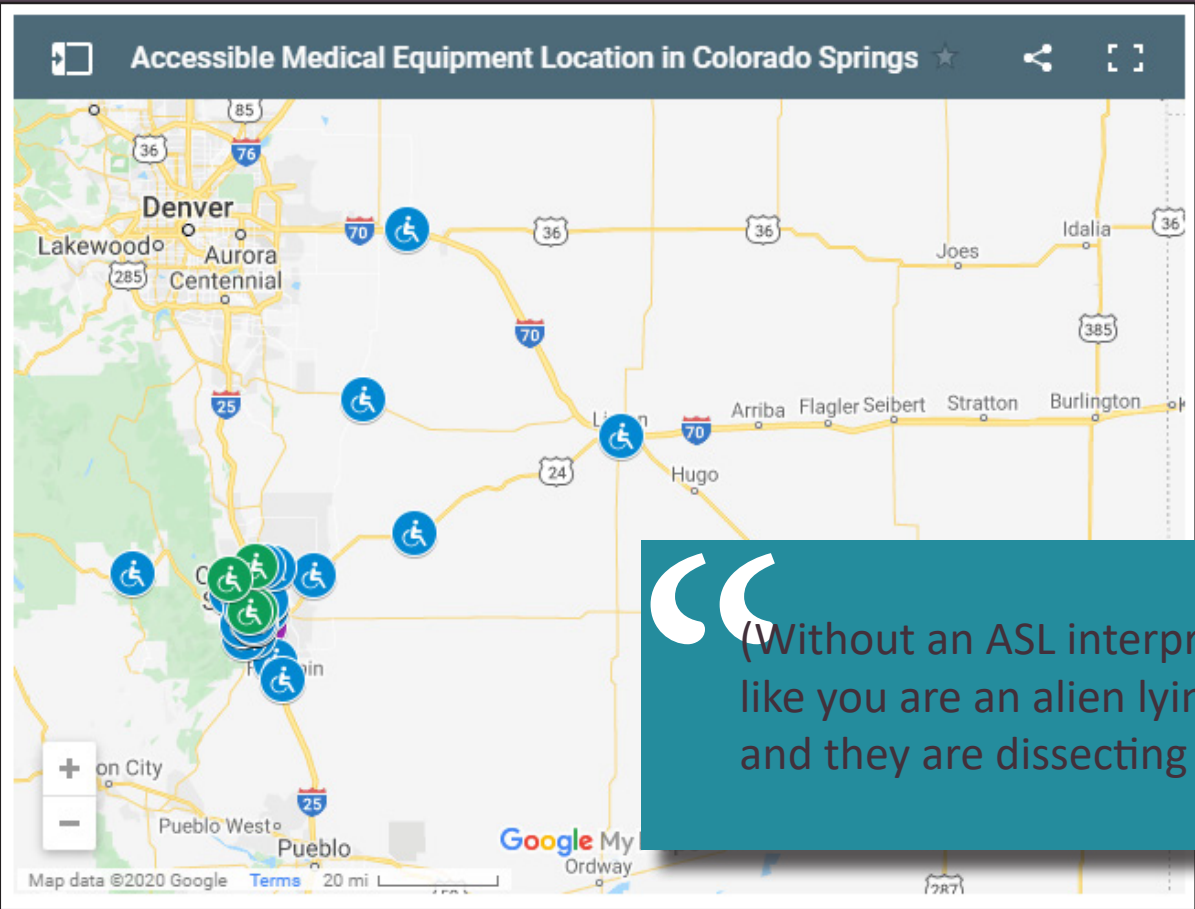
- 24% I do not have access to effective communication at the dentist.
- 19% The dental procedure room is not accessible.
- 18% The appointment process is not accessible to me.

"I am a lip reader, and dentists tend to talk with their masks on. When they speak to me about my teeth, they look at the monitor. I have no idea what he is saying."

To download the full report, go to <http://bit.ly/dentalreport-ic>

Accessible Medical Equipment Locations

The map below shows the various locations of accessible equipment provided to primary care and dental care providers throughout the Pikes Peak region by The IC Fund. To view an interactive map and list of medical and dental offices with accessible medical and dental equipment in the Pikes Peak region, please visit bit.ly/accessiblemed.



"(Without an ASL interpreter), it's like you are an alien lying on a table, and they are dissecting you."

2018

Nine Medicaid/Medicare medical practices in the region, who were nominated by patients, were awarded Hoyer lifts and UpLift accessible exam tables with built-in scales. Hoyer lifts easily and safely transfer patients to and from exam tables. The exam tables can be raised and lowered, allowing patients to sit down and then be raised for the exam. They also provide accurate weight and height measurements.

"Knowing that you can easily get a thorough exam in a safe environment is a huge relief. But it goes beyond that. It really comes down to being treated with the dignity and respect every patient deserves – regardless of whether they have a disability or not."

- Betty Jo Sjoberg, Accessible Medical Equipment Nominator

Upscale



"Our patients seem to love the table, and we all feel better knowing that they've had a comprehensive exam. This gift makes it possible for us to continue to improve the quality of health care we provide to our community."

– Stephanie Bletzacker, practice manager for Prairie View Clinic in Cheyenne Wells, CO

Above: Photos courtesy of Upscale.
Right: SET Family Medical Clinic receiving their accessible table.

2019

The IC Fund awarded accessible dental equipment to four area dental practices who were nominated by their patients. They received Versatilt wheelchair lifts, medical masks with clear windows that allow patients to read lips, a complimentary ADA accessibility audit, and complimentary disability competency training for staff.

“Parents are very used to coming into a dental office almost preparing to have to fight for their child to get the accommodations they need. I think, for a parent, just knowing that they’re coming to a clinic...that’s offering something like this (wheelchair lift), they’re going to come in with the confidence that their kids will feed off of and I think that will make a big difference for...patients with disabilities.”

- Stephanie Contreras, patient care and hospital coordinator, Simply Kids Dental



Above and Below: Local dental offices receiving their accessibility training at The IC. Top left: Briargate Advanced Family Dental receiving their Veratilt. Left: Carrie Baatz demonstrates the clear window masks provided to the offices.



“When you’re someplace where the exam furniture actually works with you instead of against you, you can relax and participate more fully in the process in a dignified and graceful sort of way.”

– Sharon King, accessible medical equipment nominator



WHO

DOES THE IC HELP?

For people with disabilities who want more independence, The Independence Center (The IC) can walk with them on their journey to achieve their goals.

We serve people with disabilities in El Paso, Cheyenne, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Park and Teller counties. Services vary from county to county.

WHAT

TYPES OF DISABILITIES?



ABOUT THE IC

Started in 1987, The Independence Center is a local nonprofit organization that provides traditional and self-directed home health care, independent living, and veterans' and advocacy services for people with disabilities. These services range from providing peer support, skills classes, and employment assistance to individual and systems advocacy. In addition, The IC runs a Certified Nurse Aide training program to equip the area with qualified CNAs.

The IC has over 300 employees today, with over 51% of their Center for Independent Living staff and board having a disability.



HOME HEALTH CARE

The IC offers home health care that is skilled and unskilled, self directed or physician-directed, for all ages, and with the caregiver of your choice or an employee of The IC.

CNA TRAINING

The Independence Center's CNA Training Program offers day and evening classes to become a qualified Certified Nurse Aide.

People with disabilities
building community
**THE INDEPENDENCE
CENTER**