

**SCOTTISH RITE FOUNDATION 2020 ANNUAL REPORT
CHILDREN'S COLORADO**

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

In 2020, the Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado (SRF) helped 21 children receive speech-language or learning therapy at Children's Colorado Pueblo Therapy Care. The table below summarizes the number of children served, the SRF contribution for this service, and the average cost per child for these services.

Program	Number Served	SRF Contribution	Average Cost Per Child
Total Individual & group speech-language and learning therapy	21	\$69,111	\$3,291

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Children's Colorado Pueblo completed its 20th year of operation. Due to COVID Pandemic, in March our clinic began servicing children with speech-language, feeding and learning via telepractice (virtual on-line care). Although this closure was intended to be temporary, in October 2020, the difficult decision was made to permanently close the brick-and-mortar building. All speech therapy services were transitioned to telepractice or virtual care. Telepractice speech-language, feeding, and learning therapy has shown to be a very effective service delivery model for many children and families. In particular, it appears to increase the parent's involvement in understanding their child's therapy goals and increasing parent participation in their child's overall speech therapy program. Our Pueblo clinicians remain dedicated to this community and continue to care for these children, either via telepractice or in-person from Children's Hospital Printer's Park Therapy Care. Support for these families regarding transportation is provided as needed by the social work department. The Pueblo team embraced telepractice and continues to provide creative and excellent speech-language and learning services via telepractice. Thanks to a generous grant from the Scottish Rite Foundation, they provided access to technology and toys to promote the successful implementation and utilization of telepractice for families who may not have the resources needed for telepractice.

Our telepractice program in Pueblo currently employs four speech-language pathologists and one learning therapist. Services via telehealth offer speech-language and feeding therapy services to children from birth to 21 years with a variety of medical and developmental diagnoses. Additionally, learning services for children struggling to learn to read are also provided. Many of the therapists at our location specialize in certain areas of working with children, including Autism, Augmentative/Alternative Communication, Stuttering, Feeding Disorders, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Voice disorders.

Over much of the year 2020, our therapists worked very hard to establish new technology and service delivery models for this new mode of providing therapy via telepractice. Clinicians were faced with a steep learning curve, and each therapist has made remarkable strides. Stacey Bernal is currently working on a presentation to the department on using Green Screen technology to improve engagement from young children via telepractice.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Children's Hospital Colorado documents the effectiveness of treatment through validated, standardized clinical measures and parent surveys. We use our electronic health record to track outcomes for children who receive Scottish Rite Funding. These assessments are conducted based on evidence-based care and are part of the standard of care assessments, and all data are de-identified. These assessment tools in the database target social communication skills, language comprehension, expressive language, and articulation abilities and are administered upon a child's entry to therapy and six months intervals thereafter. Pre and post-assessment scores are entered into the database every 6-12 months depending on the acceptable timeframe for re-administered tools. Additionally, Stacey Bernal regularly rounds with parents and caregivers to receive feedback and implement any appropriate suggestions. Feedback from these conversations is almost always 100% positive. Stacey Bernal also does chart audits and observations of treatment sessions to ensure consistent, high-quality care.

LEADERSHIP

Amy Clark served as the Autism-Feeding Team Lead for Children's Hospital Colorado. Martha Drake is a board member of the Soaring Eagles Center for Autism. Stacey Bernal is the Pueblo Associate Manager for Speech Telemedicine program in Pueblo CHCO. Stacey Bernal has created several themed kits for the Play With Me! boxes. These boxes will go to families in need of speech and language facilitating toys, books, and puzzles to be used during telepractice speech therapy sessions in collaboration with their child's speech-language therapist. This request came out of a need for quality play materials for families to use with their children during speech sessions. It was noted by many clinicians when telepractice began that many families did not have these materials readily available for their children. The Scottish Rite Foundation generously gifted funds for at least 150 Play With Me! boxes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Scottish Rite Foundation plays an integral and significant part of our success at the Children's Colorado Pueblo clinic. Skilled intervention services for children with communication, reading, and feeding disorders can help change those lives' trajectory. These services are often undervalued as a necessary benefit by many healthcare plans. The Scottish Rite Foundation's consistency and their support for these children and families bring great accessibility and value to these crucial services.

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of children.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacey Bernal, M.A., CCC-SLP
Children's Colorado Pueblo