

Dear Kim and Tim,

Thanks to your dedicated support and efforts, the CARES program in Colorado has achieved unprecedented success with more than 200 paramedic agencies and hospitals now reporting. Today, 96% of our state's population is represented; and the data collected over the coming years will allow all of us to make significant strides in improved outcomes for our citizens. We are on a path to make Colorado the safest state in the union to suffer a cardiac arrest and not only survive, but thrive as well.

Starting Hearts is honored to fulfill the role of State Coordinator. The collaboration with all eleven RETACs and your reporting agencies is a model for the nation; and our implementation and best practices will be studied and adopted by our colleagues in state after state. As a result, Starting Hearts is preparing a peer reviewed journal article, led by Dr. Morton Mower, co-inventor of the implantable defibrillator, to share our progress with the world. We have also submitted an application to present our collective efforts at the Cardiac Arrest Survival Summit, our industry's hallmark symposium in San Diego in December.

Starting Hearts is pursuing all avenues to obtain financial support for the CARES program in Colorado. Our grant from CARES expires in October this year; and we continue discussions with you, grant makers, and several state agencies. We firmly believe CARES will, one day, be funded by one of our government agencies; however, the process to achieve this will take time. We are in communication with our congressional representative, Dylan Roberts, who championed our state bill HB19-1183 to place many more public access defibrillators. Dylan is a passionate advocate for improvements in our healthcare system; and we believe his efforts will result in sustainable funding for CARES in the future.

Compared to an estimated loss of more than \$1.1 million for every cardiac arrest death in medical costs, lifetime earnings, tax revenues, and devastation to a family, the cost to maintain CARES is nominal. With over 2,000 cardiac arrest events in our state each year, the impact is an astonishing two billion dollars! We are confident our legislators will make the correct economic and social decision in due time.

Until then, we have a specific ask of you, to bridge the gap with funding from each of your RETACs. We understand that you are in the budgeting process now, and ask that you include a line item of \$8,000 or more for CARES support this year. If this amount is not within your budgeting parameters or your means, a contribution on your part will help greatly.

Julie Ramstetter, one of our colleagues at San Luis Valley Health and an SLV board member, states, "I want you to know that the SLV RETAC strongly supports the CARES program and we are willing to support the program financially and encourage other RETACs to participate. While funds are always an issue for us in the SLV, we feel the program is worth the money we'd put forward to keep it going. Currently we have 66% of our hospitals and 30% of the EMS services participating. Our goal is for all agencies to hop on board by the end of the year."

With funding from each RETAC, we can continue this important function for the state. Our work has just begun and your assistance is vital. We sincerely thank you for your continued support of the CARES program.

Best regards,

*Alan Himelfarb*

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*Saving the lives of Sudden Cardiac Arrest Victims*



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