

AUTUMN 2026 NEWSLETTER

Rooted in Community. Committed to Care.

It's 1988. Imagine a Mesa County family struggling to pay the bills, buy groceries, and keep a roof over their heads. One child wakes up with a fever. Another looks pale and tired.

For families already stretched thin, getting medical care could mean another difficult choice: What bill could wait? What could they go without? Could they afford to see a doctor, or would they have to wait and hope things got better?

Across western Colorado, many families faced choices like these. The economic downturn of the early 1980s had hit the region hard, leaving many without jobs or health insurance. Local leaders recognized the growing need for affordable healthcare.

A community responds

In the years leading up to the clinic's opening, Sister Marianna Bauder, then president of St. Mary's Hospital, helped mobilize local leaders to create a safety-net clinic. **In May 1988, Marillac Clinic opened.**



Where it all began. Marillac Clinic's original location at 600 Center Ave., Building 2, in Grand Junction.

Named for Saint Louise de Marillac, the clinic began with a small budget and volunteer doctors and dentists providing much of the care. **Marillac recorded more than 3,000 medical visits in its first year.**

Nearly four decades later

Today, PrimeHealth+ provides medical, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy services, with **more than 54,000 visits annually and more than 14,000 patients served.** Marillac became PrimeHealth+ in 2025. Although our name has changed, that original commitment has not.

Many of the challenges facing local families haven't changed, either. People still struggle with the cost of living, access to health insurance, and finding healthcare they can afford. Changes to Medicaid requirements beginning in January 2027 could leave an unknown number of people without coverage, making the need for accessible care especially important.

Think again about that family in 1988.

Their children would be adults today, perhaps with children or grandchildren of their own. We may never know how many families have trusted us across multiple generations, but our roots have become intertwined with theirs.

Our focus remains on caring for those families and preserving the foundation that makes this work possible.

Rooted in community. Committed to care.

A Message From Kristy



*Kristy Schmidt, Chief
Development Officer*

It is always special to spend time with Sisters Barbara Aldrich, Judith Jackson, and Maureen Hall, and it was wonderful to welcome them back to Grand Junction this summer along with Don Stubbings, Director of Associates for the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

I have known the Sisters for many years, and we have stayed in touch as our organization has evolved. Their visit wasn't about introducing them to the PrimeHealth+ of today. It was an opportunity to be together again, reflect on our beginnings, and look toward the future.

It has been my privilege to witness much of that journey myself. I've watched our organization adapt and deepen its ability to care for the people of Mesa County. Generations of staff, volunteers, Board members, partners, and supporters have sustained this work.

Throughout that journey, our community has continued to speak to us. We listen, we learn, and we find ways to improve the lives of the people who count on us.



From left: Sister Judith Jackson, Sister Maureen Hall, and Sister Barbara Aldrich of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth visit PrimeHealth+ beside the building's dedication plaque.

There is a lot to be proud of when we look back at our beginnings. But what encourages me most is knowing we're still building on that enduring foundation.

There is still so much good work ahead of us.

Kristy

Beyond the Prescription: Helping Patients Stay on Track

Having a pharmacy right inside PrimeHealth+ makes getting needed medications easier for patients. Prescriptions can move from the exam room to the pharmacy without a trip across town, and our pharmacy team can work directly with providers when questions arise.

Our pharmacy is also open to the public, whether or not someone receives medical care at PrimeHealth+. And with free home delivery, busy patients and patients who have difficulty with mobility don't have to leave home.

Getting a prescription is one step. Being able to fill it and keep up with refills is another.

For patients managing conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure, taking medications consistently is an important part of treatment. Research has linked pharmacy services that help manage refills and medications, including medication synchronization and home delivery, with better medication adherence. Our on-site pharmacy and free home delivery remove practical obstacles that can make it harder for patients to stay on track.

From January through September 2026, PrimeHealth+ recorded 39,230 prescriptions across its in-house pharmacy and 340B contract pharmacy partners, according to Chief Financial Officer Dan Becker. Of those, 27,266 were filled through our in-house pharmacy.

But there's another side to our pharmacy's impact—one patients may never see.

One important part of making healthcare more affordable is the federal 340B Drug Pricing Program, which allows eligible healthcare organizations to purchase certain outpatient medications at reduced prices.

For PrimeHealth+, the benefits extend beyond medication access. As Becker explains, 340B savings help offset the costs of serving uninsured and underinsured patients while supporting programs, staffing, and services throughout the organization.

“In general, 340B is an important part of our financial model because it allows us to reinvest resources back into patient care and the communities we serve,” Becker said.

Recent 340B Changes: Why They Matter to Our Patients

The federal 340B Drug Pricing Program helps community health centers like PrimeHealth+ stretch limited resources and provide affordable healthcare to lower-income patients.

Under a revised federal pilot program scheduled to begin January 1, 2027, participating health centers would pay higher prices upfront for certain medications and request rebates afterward, rather than receiving discounts at purchase.

Federal regulators have approved the new rebate arrangements for certain medications. However, an October lawsuit challenges the program, leaving its future uncertain.

Why This Matters to Our Patients

Paying more upfront, waiting for rebates, and managing additional paperwork could strain PrimeHealth+'s finances and potentially reduce resources available for patient care. While the direct financial effects are not yet known, **340B savings remain critical to our ability to serve uninsured and underinsured patients.**

Make Your Voice Heard

Decisions about 340B affect community health centers nationwide. If you share concerns about the proposed rebate model, you can contact your elected representatives and ask them to **support a two-year delay in its implementation.**

Find Your U.S. Representative: house.gov/representatives

Contact Your U.S. Senators: senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm

Or call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at **202-224-3121** to reach your representative's or senator's office.

Editor's note (October 21, 2026): *The federal 340B landscape is changing rapidly. This article reflects the most current information available to PrimeHealth+ at the time of writing. Program details, implementation dates, and legal developments may change.*

Sources: HRSA — 340B Rebate Model Pilot Program; American Hospital Association — October 9, 2026, announcement of legal challenge (aha.org).

Breast Cancer Screening: Awareness Is the First Step

For some women, the biggest obstacle to breast cancer screening may be something simple: not knowing it's time to schedule a mammogram.

Breast cancer screening recommendations have changed, and women who thought they had several more years before needing a mammogram may now be due for one.

AGE 40

Breast Cancer Screening Now Starts at Age 40

For women at average risk, the CDC recommends a mammogram every two years through age 74.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), women at average risk should begin breast cancer screening at age 40 and continue every two years through age 74. Individual screening needs can vary, so patients should talk with their healthcare provider about what's right for them.

Source: CDC — Screening for Breast Cancer

Helping Patients Complete Their Screenings

Knowing when to get screened is important. Having a clear path to getting it done matters just as much.

According to Carrie Neyers, RN, Director of Medical Clinical Operations, PrimeHealth+ has arrangements with three local imaging facilities that allow patients who are due for screening to call their preferred location and schedule a mammogram directly.

Those facilities are St. Mary's Hospital Pavilion—Imaging; Community Hospital Canyon View Medical Imaging, both in Grand Junction; and Radiology Family Health West in Fruita.

For patients who face challenges along the way, PrimeHealth+'s in-house Patient Navigators can help resolve obstacles, coordinate next steps, and follow up to encourage completion.

Continuing the Work

Every completed screening represents a patient who has taken an important step toward protecting her health.

By helping women understand screening recommendations and access the care they need, PrimeHealth+ continues working to make preventive healthcare more accessible.

The goal is more than scheduling a mammogram. It's helping patients complete one.

Dental Care Starts Before the Dental Chair

For some of PrimeHealth+'s youngest patients, the first step toward a healthy smile looks less like a dental appointment and more like a game, a puppet, or a very large toothbrush.

PrimeHealth+ uses community outreach to make oral health approachable for kids—and to create opportunities to talk with their parents. This year, our team once again participated in Rocky Mountain PBS KIDS Fest, where our dental-themed games, puppets, and oversized toothbrush demonstrations gave children a fun way to learn while giving our team time to answer questions, talk about healthy habits, and help families become more comfortable with dental care.



Meet Manny Molar! Our toothy little friend was all smiles as he helped kids discover that dental health can be fun at Rocky Mountain PBS KIDS Fest!

Those connections continue in other places children already spend time.

Through our Smart Smiles program, **PrimeHealth+ dental hygienists bring free oral screenings directly to students at local schools.** The program helps reinforce healthy habits and can also identify children who may need additional dental care.

At our school-based health centers, students receive dental screenings right at school. This helps our hygienist identify dental needs and connect students with care at PrimeHealth+'s Main Clinic or their own dental home.

PrimeHealth+ also reaches children in a familiar medical setting through our partnership with Western Colorado Pediatric Associates, a division of Primary Care Partners, helping bring preventive dental care to children where they already receive primary medical care.

And when children need more comprehensive dental care, pediatric dentist Dr. Kate Hart and her team care for PrimeHealth+'s youngest patients at our Main Clinic, including providing hospital-based care when needed.

From a conversation with a parent at a community event to a screening at school to care in the dental chair, each connection makes it a little easier for children to get the dental care they need.

Sometimes growing access starts with something as simple as making a child smile.

Thank You for Being Part of Our Story



Good company, grateful hearts, and a beautiful fall evening at our October 8 Donor Appreciation Gathering.
To everyone who joined us for our October 8 Donor Appreciation Fall Gathering, thank you!

It was a pleasure to spend time together, celebrate the relationships that sustain PrimeHealth+, and express our appreciation for the encouragement and support you bring to our work.

The strength of PrimeHealth+ has always come from the people who believe in what we do. We're so glad you're among them.

Some Things Are Worth Carrying Forward

A legacy gift to PrimeHealth+ is one way to help ensure that care remains available for generations to come.

By including PrimeHealth+ in your estate plans, you can help carry forward a mission that has mattered to Mesa County families for nearly four decades.

The work that began in 1988 is still needed today. With thoughtful planning, you can help sustain it for the years ahead.

To learn more about legacy giving, please contact Martha Graf at 970-200-1628 or Martha.Graf@PrimeHealthPlus.org.

More Ways to Make a Difference

Colorado Gives Day — Dec. 8, 2026

Every gift helps PrimeHealth+ continue caring for Mesa County families.

Early giving begins Nov. 1! You can make your gift starting that day or schedule a donation for Colorado Gives Day.

[Give Through Colorado Gives →](#)

Other Ways to Give

There are many ways to support PrimeHealth+'s mission. Explore additional giving opportunities and find the choice that's right for you.

Explore Ways to Give →

Sources and web addresses

CDC breast cancer screening: cdc.gov/breast-cancer/screening/index.html

Medication adherence research: pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/42219110/

Medication synchronization research: pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33741277/

HRSA 340B rebate pilot: hrsa.gov/opa/340b-model-pilot-program

AHA 340B legal challenge: aha.org

U.S. House contact information: house.gov/representatives

U.S. Senate contact information: senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm

Colorado Gives — PrimeHealth+: coloradogives.org/organization/Primehealthplus

Other ways to give: primehealthplus.org/donate/