Beginning July 1, 2018, Colorado's Medicaid behavioral health providers will be entering phase two of the Accountable Care Collaborative, and operating under a new contract with new expectations. Over 1 million Coloradans utilize the Health First Colorado (Medicaid) program for their primary care and behavioral health needs. Each region of the state now has its own Regional Accountable Entity (RAE). Southeast Health Group is a partner of Health Colorado, the new RAE for Region 4 in the southeastern and southcentral part of the state. Other members of the partnership include: Beacon Health Options, Valley Wide Health Systems, San Luis Valley Behavioral Health Group, Health Solutions and Solvista Health.

“We were very grateful to have been awarded the Medicaid contract for our six-county region for the next seven years,” said JC Carrica, CEO of Southeast Health Group. “It was a competitive bidding process, and we spent a year preparing our application. We will be working more closely now with Valley Wide Health Systems and our partners at SyCare, and there will be slight changes to our reimbursement system.”

The goal of phase two is to create a cohesive network of providers that work together seamlessly and effectively to provide coordinated health care services to Medicaid members. Local residents will see no disruption and very few changes in the services they receive. “You can expect to see your behavioral health providers and primary care providers collaborating more closely on your care,” said Carrica. “We are expected to help people gain access to housing, food, education and transportation, which can have a direct impact on health. People will also have better access to preventive care, such as patient education and chronic disease management.”

Since 1957, Southeast Health Group has been the largest provider of mental health and substance use disorder treatment in the region, which includes the counties of Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero and Prowers. In 1995, SHG joined SyCare, which serves as a bargaining unit for southern Colorado behavioral health providers, and moved to a Medicaid per capita reimbursement system. “There are a lot of advantages to a capitated reimbursement system,” said Carrica, “and we are glad the state has kept this method moving forward. It allows us flexibility to use our funding to meet the unique needs of each community in our region, rather than being locked in a fee-for-service mode of production.”

Southeast Health Group is accepting new patients for primary care, mental health counseling, substance use disorder treatment, and physical therapy. Call 1-800-511-5446 for more information, or visit www.southeasthealthgroup.org.