

Connections • Spring 2026 Newsletter

A walk in nature walks the soul back home.

— *Mary Davis*

IN THIS ISSUE

Articles

Rocky Mountain Post-Polio Retreat 1

New Changes to U.S. DME Policy.. 2

Global Polio Update..... 3

Finding Accessible Sunshine..... 4

Food for Thought – Aging Gracefully..... 6

Family Corner..... 7

CPPO Things to Know

CPPO Resource Book 2

Resources for Caregivers this Way! 3

Advisory Council Meetings 8

Advisory Council Members 9

Donations 9

CPPO Support Groups..... 10



ROCKY MOUNTAIN POST-POLIO RETREAT

LEARN – CONNECT – RELAX



Facilities:

- Fully Accessible
- Three meals a day
- Trained Staff
- Activities & Crafts

Activities:


- Workshops
- PT assessment
- Education Sessions
- Evening Entertainment

EMPIRE, CO
AUGUST 2026

8-11

Register Now!

 720-940-9291

 mtolman@eastersealscolorado.org

easterseals
Colorado

New Changes to the U.S. DME Policy

- By Mitzi Tolman

The United States government has taken steps to decrease medical fraud, and in doing so, has increased oversight in Durable Medical Equipment (DME). The question is, will this affect those with polio who rely on DME to have a healthy and fulfilled life? **Changes include:**

- No new DME companies will be approved as a Medicaid/Medicare provider for at least 6 months effective March 1, 2026.
- Ownership changes of Medicaid/Medicare-approved providers do not transfer provider approval if direct ownership is transferred, effective January 1, 2026.



How might this affect you?

- If your DME is provided by a long-standing company, these changes should have no effect on you.
- If you are prescribed a new DME or need to get a new item, you might have delays.

What can you do?

- Make sure you are purchasing your DME from an approved, established provider.
- Make sure your doctors and DME suppliers are enrolled in Medicare. It is also important to ask a supplier if they participate in Medicare or will accept assignment before you get DME.

What is a DME?

- Durable (can withstand repeated use)
- Used for a medical reason
- Typically only useful to someone who is sick or injured
- Used in your home
- Expected to last at least 3 years



CPPO Resource Book

Need more info? Check out CPPO's Resource Book of Articles Related to Polio and Post-Polio Syndrome.

<https://www.easterseals.com/co/shared-components/document-library/post-polio/july-22-resource-book.pdf>

Global Polio Update

- By Marny Eulberg, M.D.

When someone says to you, “I thought polio was gone!” here is some information you can use to let them know that “Polio is not yet gone!”. Fortunately, the polio vaccine was, and still is, amazingly effective at preventing people from “catching” polio. Since 1988, the number of individuals paralyzed by polio have decreased from about 350,000 “cases” per year to 562 in 2024 and 284 in 2025.

It is possible that a few more cases will be confirmed and reported for calendar year 2025 because it often takes 3-4 months for all the reports from around the world to trickle in. This table shows the global statistics from the last 5 years:

Human Cases Confirmed	As of 3/10/26	At the same time in	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
	2026	2025	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
WPV (wild poliovirus)	1	7	51	99	12	30	6	140
WPV -- Afghanistan	0	1	20	25	6	2	4	56
WPV-- Pakistan	1	6	31	74	6	20	1	84
WPV-other countries	0	0	0	0	0	8	1	0
Variant (cVDPV) poliovirus	13	11	233	463	539	878	699	1117



Resources for Caregivers This Way

Taking care of a family feels a lot better WITH SUPPORT!

You don't have to go at it alone. Find resources and people who get it at

<https://coloradospitecoalition.org/resources-this-way/>

Finding Accessible Sunshine

- By Margaret Hinman

There are many options for getting those rays. However, the first thing to do when seeking time in the sun is to protect yourself from the rays with sunscreen, UV protection clothing, a sun hat and maybe sunglasses.

Enjoy your own home and yard, basking on the patio, porch, deck, sitting in the yard, and/or working in the garden. The best seating should have arms and be high enough to make it easier to transfer between sitting and standing. Gardening is more accessible using containers and raised beds which allows sitting on a chair, a stool or bench rather than getting down on the ground.

Take a stroll around the neighborhood, using canes, crutches, walking poles, rollator walkers, wheelchairs, or scooters to prevent falling, something we cannot afford to do.



Take advantage of your local jurisdiction's parks and recreation offerings. They are required to be ADA compliant. However, we all know that the interpretation of ADA compliancy is up for grabs, not only at these organizations but in general! A conversation with their offices about what accommodations are available and where they are located before you venture out will save on disappointment and frustration. Recreations districts usually have parks, paved trails often along waterways, maybe lakes, and outdoor accessible swimming pools, among other amenities. Know your needs and your limitations when you call and as you search!

Join fellow polio survivors, either solo or with a partner or a caregiver, at Colorado Post-Polio's Rocky Mountain Getaway summer camp at the Easterseals Rocky Mountain Village Camp in Empire, Colorado near Georgetown, August 7-11, 2026. Rocky Mountain Village's accessible outdoor amenities include a heated swimming pool and hot tub, a catch and release fishing lake, wheelchair accessible trails, including a boardwalk trail up into the forest, a climbing wall and a zip-line. Contact mtolman@eastersealscolorado.org.

Finding Accessible Sunshine Cont.

Visit the Denver Zoo which rents wheelchairs and electric scooters on a first come, first serve basis but can be reserved when you reserve your tickets. www.denverzoo.org

Visit the Denver Botanic Gardens which has free manual wheelchairs on a first come, first serve basis. Also, therapeutic horticultural educational programs.

Explore state and national monuments—
for example:

- Garden of the Gods National Monument in Colorado Springs. The trail around the featured rocks is paved and you can drive around the whole monument. www.gardenofgods.org
- Great Sand Dunes National Park has two push sand wheelchairs with large inflatable tires for use. <https://www.nps.gov/grsa/index.htm>
- Rocky Mountain National Park's accessible trails are usually gravel-packed and can have steep grades, but the Coyote Valley Trail has a level grade. Check the park accessible resource guide for a complete list and/or drive the Trail Ridge Road. [Rocky Mountain National Park \(U.S. National Park Service\)](http://Rocky Mountain National Park (U.S. National Park Service))
- **Royal Gorge Bridge and Park near Canon City.** The visitor center and gondola are accessible, but the 1260 bridge has no benches. <https://royalgorgebridge.com>

- **Staunton State Park** near Pine, Colorado has a track-chair with tank tracks which you can take on three different trails. Staunton State Park | Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- **The Broadmoor Seven Falls** in Colorado Springs has a paved path with a gradual incline, accessible shuttles and elevator access to the viewing platform. www.sevenfalls.com
- **Rifle Falls near Rifle** as a short, paved path to three massive waterfalls crashing into a pond below. Rifle Falls State Park | Colorado Parks and Wildlife



Check out specific interest organizations

—Here are a few 501(c) (3) non-profits:

- **Wilderness On Wheels**, near Bailey, Colorado, has a boardwalk that is one mile long and eight feet wide, rising to 9,200 feet above sea level with spectacular views, and with fishing and grilling spots and camping and cabin options. www.wildernessonwheels.org

Finding Accessible Sunshine Continued

- **Winter Park's National Sports Center for the Disabled**—For adaptive snow sports—need to book a lesson ahead of time. www.playwinterpark.com
- **Adaptive Adventures** offers a wide range of programs including cycling, climbing, kayaking, whitewater rafting and more. www.adaptiveadventures.org

- **Outdoor Buddies** focuses on hunting, fishing, boating, camping and educational opportunities for the disabled. www.outdoorbuddies.org

There are also adaptive horseback riding and sky diving programs, among other programs throughout the state.

Disclaimer—Neither CPPO nor Easterseals Colorado sponsor or endorse the programs and activities listed, with the exception of the post-polio summer camp. **Enjoy!!!!**

Food for Thought—Aging Gracefully

- By Margaret Hinman

As our limited lifetime warranty comes closer to its expiration date, it seems as though the list of aches, pains, ailments and diseases grows exponentially and happen more frequently. Our aging bodies are wearing out, and we have to deal with that reality. At this time in our lives, we are constantly confronted by not only those TV commercial diseases like diabetes and acid reflux disorders, but by things we never heard of before, let alone by the major life-threatening diseases like cancer or Parkinson's disease.

With each ailment we go through the process that we learned and perfected from our years with polio and the late effects of polio: learn about what it is, what it means and how it will affect our

lives while making decisions about what to do about it and then find the creative ways we have always used to go on with our lives. As we deal with all of those fears, the anger, the sadness, anxiety and grief in the process, we can also hopefully be able to look at some upsides in our lives, even if only to realize that life could be much worse than it is or being thankful that there are treatment options or even that we are still alive. And when we can accept what is, even if we don't like it, hopefully we can also find some humor in our lives, in our circumstances that will make our lives at least tolerable, if not better.

Food For Thought Continued

While in high school, I remember reading an 1889 essay, *Collecting Symptoms*, by Jerome K. Jerome, an English novelist, playwright and humorist who shares his concerns about maybe having liver disease. In an attempt to learn about the disease, he read a book about diseases at the British Museum and discovered that he had the symptoms of every disease listed in the book except one, housemaid's knee!

After a visit to his doctor who reassured him that he was in good health, the doctor gave him the following prescription: "1 lb. beefsteak with 1 pt. bitter beer every six hours. 1 ten-mile walk every morning. 1 bed at eleven sharp every night.

And don't stuff your head with things you don't understand." Mr. Jerome lived well from then on.

Today we often go through the same process but by checking our symptoms on the internet and following up with the doctor. Hopefully, like his symptoms, ours are as his were and we can comfortably follow some version of his prescription and continue with our lives.

I hope we can all find and make our own humor in our lives! It will help keep us upbeat and help us age gracefully! To get at least a good chuckle, read his essay, Jerome K. Jerome, *Collecting Symptoms*, at www.laphamsquarterly.org.

Just some food for thought!

Family Corner – Benefits of Sunshine, Dirt & Fresh Air

- By Mitzi Tolman

Who doesn't love a new term or catch phrase? Earthing, and forest bathing are all terms now used for the simple act of getting outside and connecting with nature. Or, as my grandmother used to say when we had been cooped up inside for a while, "Get out and get the stink off you."

This year's mild Colorado winter has allowed us to enjoy the sunshine without the risk of freezing our fingers and toes, and I know I've opened my windows more often to let in fresh air, now referred to as, "burping" your home. But, what are the real benefits of sunshine, dirt, and fresh air?



*Sue Brandon, CPPO
Advisory Council Chair,
enjoying the sunshine.*

The Environmental Protection Agency says that American spend 90% of their time indoors. This can be correlated to an increase in sedentary lifestyle, mental health issues, and increase in vitamin deficiency.

Family Corner Continued

Dr. Koniver of the Chang Gung University has done extensive research in the effects of grounding concluding, “Because our bodies are entirely conductive – every cell, the cytoplasm of each cell, the cytoskeleton of each cell, every fluid in the body (including blood, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, plasma and more), every tissue, and every organ system – the entirety of our anatomy is conductive. When we touch the earth in any way, we become a part of this global electrical circuit through the nature of our innate conductivity.”

There are some indications that being outdoors for as little as 15 minutes a day reduces inflammation, boost energy levels, increases circulation and can decrease anxiety and depression and helps aid in better sleep.

Suggestions of practical ways you can see the benefit of nature include planting a few vegetable pots on your porch or balcony, taking up birdwatching, swimming in an outdoor pool, sitting by a stream and listening to the water, taking off your shoes and socks and putting your feet in the grass, or taking extra time on your way to mailbox to notice changes in the landscape around you. Find a reason to go outside every day.

There is also some indication that if you suffer from poor sleep, that if you go outside in the morning for 20 minutes after waking that you will notice an improvement in your sleep at night after doing this consistently for as little as one week. So grab that morning coffee, get a comfortable chair and get outside!

SOURCE(S): Koniver, L. (2023). Practical applications of grounding to support health. Biomedical Journal, 46(1), 41–47. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bj.2022.12.001>

2026 Advisory Council Meetings

Advisory Council meetings are when planning takes place. You are welcome to attend. Meetings are held quarterly the 4th Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom. If you are interested in attending, please let Mitzi know.

2026 dates: April 22, July 22, and October 28.

 **2026 Advisory Council Members**

Sue Brandon, Chairperson
 763.377.2287
 suebrandon1950@gmail.com

Margaret Hinman
 303.763.0013
 mhinman12@icloud.com

Marny Eulberg, MD, Medical Advisor
 303.829.1538
 marnyeul@me.com

Robert Burnett (Habla Español)
 720.394.5500
 robert.v.burnett@gmail.com

**Mitzi Tolman, Colorado Post-Polio
 Program Coordinator**
 720.940.9291
 mtolman@eastersealscolorado.org

Lois Tilley
 303.638.4192
loistilley@live.com

Jim Carr
 720.220.8413
 jimlcarr@msn.com

 **Donations**

If you would like to donate to support Colorado Post-Polio efforts, please complete this form, detach and mail it to Mitzi Tolman at Easterseals Colorado. To ensure that CPPO receives 100% of your donation, contributions should be payable to Easterseals Colorado with "POST-POLIO" written in the memo line. Your contribution will be gratefully acknowledged. Thank you!

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

MAIL TO: Easterseals Colorado

Attn: Mitzi Tolman

940 Wadsworth Blvd. STE 120

Lakewood, CO 80214

Memo line: POST-POLIO



Colorado Post-Polio Support Group Schedules

CPPO encourages you to stay in touch with your facilitator so you are aware of any meeting changes.

AURORA (NEW LOCATION)

Meets the 4th Thursday of every month from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Meeting in-person at Christ the Savior Lutheran Church 1902 S Nome, Aurora

Facilitator: Myrna Schmidt, 608.790.5755 or myrnaschmidt1@yahoo.com

COLORADO SPRINGS (NEW LOCATION)

Meets the 1st Wednesday of every month from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Meeting in-person at Gold Hill Police Station 955 W. Moreno Ave., Colorado Springs

Contact the facilitator for additional information.

Facilitator: Fran Weitzel-Callan 719.460.4764 franweitzel@comcast.net

DENVER NORTH (Zoom Meeting, All Welcome)

Meets the 3rd Saturday of every month from 10:00 a.m. to Noon.

Meeting via Zoom.

Facilitator: Jill Eelkema, LCSW, 720.675.9902 or jille@westerncarepartners.com

DENVER SOUTH

Meets the 1st Tuesday of every month from 11:00 a.m. to 12:45

Meeting via Zoom. Contact erubin85248@gmail.com for the link or contact mtolman@eastersealscolorado.org

GRAND JUNCTION

Meetings are held quarterly.

Contact Ron Carlson, 970.640.8052 or rpcarlson2@gmail.com for support and information.

NORTHERN COLORADO (Fort Collins)

Meets the 4th Saturday of every month from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church of Fort Collins 301 E. Stuart St., Fort Collins

Facilitator: Peter Way, 970.460.6164 or NOCOPolio@gmail.com

**FREE MATTER FOR
BLIND OR DISABLED**



easterseals Colorado
Colorado Post-Polio
940 Wadsworth Blvd Ste 120
Lakewood, CO 80214

This Is YOUR Newsletter – *Connections* is the official news publication of the Colorado Post-Polio Program. The opinions are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily constitute an endorsement or approval by either the Colorado Post-Polio Council or Easterseals Colorado. **(Always check with your personal physician for all medical questions and concerns.)**

We invite not only your comments about this newsletter; tell us what topics you want to read about in future issues. If you have article ideas or suggestions, are willing to write a short article, tell your personal story or you'd like to review a book, please call **Mitzi Tolman** at **720.940.9291** or email her at mtolman@eastersealscolorado.org, or write to: Easterseals Colorado, Attn: Mitzi Tolman - Colorado Post-Polio *Connections*, 940 Wadsworth Blvd Ste 120, Lakewood, CO 80214

If you prefer to receive this newsletter online or need to change your mailing information, please contact Mitzi Tolman at Easterseals Colorado at 720.940.9291 or mtolman@eastersealscolorado.org.