

Hospital Markets in Colorado *at a glance*

A snapshot of hospital market structure, concentration, and ownership across the state — and how they've changed since 2000. This analysis reflects data available through May 2026.

In Colorado, average concentration in hospital markets changed little since 2000, while the percentage of hospitals owned by a system rose from 42% to 62%. Four of its 17 transactions qualified as Red Zone mergers.

WHAT THIS ANALYSIS COVERS

This analysis focuses on the state's 85 general short-term acute care (GSAC) hospitals — the facilities where most privately insured, Medicare, and Medicaid patients receive inpatient care, and where market concentration most directly affects the prices employers and workers pay. Each hospital's market is defined via a 30-minute travel radius around that facility. Within it, we measure concentration using the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) — a standard antitrust metric calculated as the sum of the squared market shares of the owners in a market. HHI ranges from 0 (many small hospitals, low concentration) to 10,000 (a monopoly market, which has a single owner). Our hospital-centric HHI is a consistent analytical proxy for market concentration, not a legally defined antitrust market.

● GSAC Hospitals (85)

● VA / Military

● Psychiatric / Behavioral

● Rehabilitation

● Children's Specialty

Market Concentration

Colorado's hospital market concentration has changed little since 2000, with average hospital market HHI falling slightly from 6,409 to 6,354, a decrease of 55 points. Every hospital still has an HHI above 1,800, the threshold the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Department of Justice (DOJ) consider “highly concentrated.” The number of monopoly hospitals increased from 28 to 31. Over the period, 4 hospitals closed and 17 opened, a net gain of 13 hospitals. Seventeen transactions reshaped ownership. Four of those transactions (24%) were “Red Zone” mergers. A Red Zone merger raises at least one merging hospital's market HHI by over 100 points to above 1,800, which DOJ and FTC guidelines suggest is likely to raise prices.

2000 | 72 hospitals overall

2026 | 85 hospitals overall

24 (33%)

20 (28%)

28 (39%)



28 (33%)

26 (31%)

31 (36%)

CONCENTRATION SCALE (IN HHI)

● **Low** (<1,000 HHI) ● **Moderate** (1,000 to <1,800) ● **High** (1,800 to <5,000) ● **Higher** (5,000 to <10,000) ● **Monopoly** (10,000 HHI)

Explore the data yourself

Our tool has three components. **The Market Explorer** tracks how hospital market concentration has evolved from 2000 to May 2026, drawing on ownership data from the AHA's Annual Survey, validated against state health department filings, SEC disclosures, and public reporting. **The Closures Explorer** tracks hospital closures and openings nationwide, each year since 2000. **The Forecast Lab** uses that same data to model how a proposed merger, closure, or opening would reshape a hospital market as it stood in 2026 — it models the scenarios you specify and does not identify potential mergers.

Note on the data: The tool uses a first-of-its-kind database that we built from scratch. We have done our best to gather and validate the data; however, if you notice an error (e.g., a hospital's name, a merger year) or if you have questions about our methodology, please notify us at HealthCareAffordabilityLab@yale.edu.

Health Care
Affordability Lab
at Yale

Explore Market Concentration at
Markets.HealthCareAffordabilityLab.org



QR code to CO Hospitals

Hospital Markets in Colorado

October 2026

Key Stats

RED ZONE TRANSACTIONS

4 of 17

24% in Red Zone

NET HOSPITALS GAINED

+13

4 closed, 17 opened

4 LARGEST SYSTEMS

38 of 85

45% · UCHealth + CommonSpirit + HCA + Intermountain

AVG HHI CHANGE

-55

6,409 → 6,354

Independents Give Way to Systems

The share of Colorado hospitals owned by a multi-hospital system rose sharply from 42% to 62% between 2000 and 2026, and the number of independent hospitals fell from 42 to 32. The largest operators are UCHealth (15 hospitals) and CommonSpirit Health (9), followed by HCA Healthcare (8).

2000 | 72 hospitals overall

30 in 8 systems 42 independents

42%

58%

2026 | 85 hospitals overall

53 in 9 systems 32 independents

62%

38%

Colorado's Largest Systems

Nine systems own 53 of Colorado's 85 hospitals; UCHealth and CommonSpirit Health lead.

SYSTEM	HOSPITALS IN STATE	AVERAGE MARKET HHI	HOSPITALS WITH CONCENTRATION ABOVE 1,800 HHI
UCHealth	15	6,049	15 of 15
CommonSpirit Health	9	6,309	9 of 9
HCA Healthcare	8	2,652	8 of 8
Intermountain Health	6	3,253	6 of 6

Average market HHI reflects the mean HHI across each system's hospitals within the state. HHI is calculated within a 30-minute travel radius of each facility. National hospital data typically lags by one to two years for new openings and recent ownership changes, so figures for 2024–2026 are preliminary and may not yet reflect all recent activity.

Acquisitions Coupled With Hospital Openings

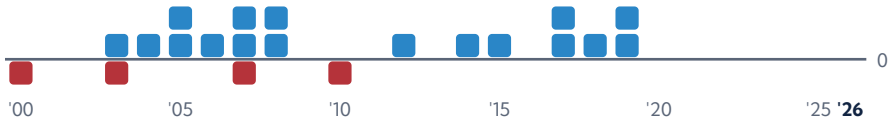
Colorado's system-owned share rose from 42% to 62%, as systems including UCHealth and CommonSpirit acquired independent hospitals. Of 17 transactions, 4 (24%) were “Red Zone” mergers.

Yet average market concentration held roughly flat. Seventeen hospitals opened while only 4 closed, adding capacity even as ownership consolidated.

Hospitals opened & closed by year

17 OPENINGS

4 CLOSURES



Transactions by year

4 RED ZONE MERGERS

13 OTHER TRANSACTIONS

