



Helping people live healthy, safe and satisfying lives in their communities

Legislative Update May 14, 2018

Final Legislative Budget Prioritizes Mental Health Funding

The Legislative session concluded this weekend. A wrap-up of the legislative session will be distributed at a later date with information on special education, trauma legislation and other policy topics. In the interim, here is a summary of fiscal issues.

The Governor is planning to call the Legislature back for a special session after he vetoes the Revenue and Appropriations bills. Vermont Care Partners is hopeful that the funding decisions listed below will hold.

- All of the \$4.3 million proposed reduction for Developmental Services was restored.
- \$4.3 million was appropriated for Mental Health Services Workforce Investment Stage 2. This only includes services funded by the Department of Mental Health (DMH) at designated (not specialized service) agencies. It does not include substance use disorder (SUD) services, developmental disabilities or services funded through the Department of Vermont Health Access. Additionally, 20% of the funds will be reserved for the mental health payment reform incentive pool, with 50% of the remaining funds being specifically appropriated for direct services that are provided by master's level clinicians and other staff with high levels of credentials and experience to reduce the compensation gap for this staff.
- \$200,000 was appropriated for DMH housing vouchers for statewide use.
- \$5 million from Tobacco Funds was appropriated over 4 years for SUD/MH workforce development. the Agency of Human Services is directed to convene a work group to plan distribution the funds
- \$2.5 million from Tobacco Funds was appropriated over 4 years for time-limited or self-sustaining SUD initiatives including prevention, intervention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery.
- \$400,000 was appropriated for Medication Assisted Treatment in correctional facilities
- Mobile outreach funding was appropriated just for continuing the Chittenden County pilot, the other 3 proposed pilots did not receive funding.

To take action or for more information, including the weekly committee schedules:

- Legislative home page: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/>
- Sergeant-at-Arms Office: (802) 828-2228 or (800) 322-5616
- State House fax (to reach any member): (802) 828-2424
- State House mailing address (to reach any member):

Your Legislator
State House
115 State Street, Drawer 33

Montpelier, VT 05633-5501

- Email, home address and phone: Legislators' email addresses and home contacts may be found on the Legislature home page at <https://legislature.vermont.gov/>
- Governor Phil Scott (802) 828-3333 or <http://governor.vermont.gov/>

The purpose of the legislative update is to inform individuals who are interested in developmental, mental health and substance abuse services about legislative advocacy, policy development and activities that occur in the State Legislature. The Vermont Council is a non-profit trade association which works in partnership with Vermont Care Network to form Vermont Care Partners. Together our mission is to provide statewide leadership for an integrated, high quality system of comprehensive services and supports. Our membership consists of 16 designated developmental and mental health agencies.