New Biennium of Legislature – Structures are Set
The new biennium of the legislature is off to a smooth start. House Speaker Mitzi Johnson and Senate President Pro Tempore Tim Ashe, as well as Governor Scott, all have two years of experience to build upon. Both Chambers now hold veto-proof majorities so there is more pressure on the Governor Scott to develop a collaborative relationship with the legislature. This was reflected in the Governor’s upbeat inaugural speech on January 10th. The speech mentioned mental health but made no commitments about it. Both the Speaker of the House and the Senate President Pro Tempore responded positively to the speech.

In comments to the media and in discussions with Vermont Care Partners both House Speaker Johnson and Senate President Pro Tempore Ashe have clearly made commitments to address the under-resourced community mental health system, by which they mean the developmental and mental health services provided by designated and specialized service agencies.

Senator Ashe spent the autumn touring designated and specialized service agencies where he made a point to hear directly from staff providing direct services. At each stop, other senators from the region participated in the forums. As a result of forums and dialog with Vermont Care Partners Senator Ashe is strongly committed to improve funding for our services and is supporting Vermont Care Partners to communicate about our funding needs to both House and Senate leaders.

Committee Assignments Set

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Rep. Catherine Toll, Chair
Rep. Mary S. Hooper, Vice Chair
Rep. Peter J. Fagan, Ranking Member
Rep. Charles Conquest
Rep. Martha Feltus
Rep. Robert Helm
Rep. Diane Lanpher
Rep. Linda K. Myers
Rep. Maida Townsend
Rep. Matthew Triebner
Rep. David Yacovone

NKHS, WCMHS
WCMHS
RMHS
CMC, NKHS, UVS, WCMHS
NKHS
RMHS
CSAC
CCS, HC, NFI
CCS, HC, NFI
FFSV, HCRS, LSI
GMSS, LCMHS, WCMHS
Maria Belliveau, Associate Fiscal Officer
mbelliveau@leg.state.vt.us
Theresa Utton-Jerman, Staff Associate
(802) 828-5767
tutton@leg.state.vt.us

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Rep. Ann Pugh, Chair
Rep. Sandy Haas, Vice Chair
Rep. Francis McFaun, Ranking Member
Rep. Jessica Brumsted
Rep. James Gregoire
Rep. Logan Nicoll
Rep. Daniel Noyes
Rep. Kelly Pajala
Rep. Marybeth Redmond
Rep. Carl Rosenquist
Rep. Theresa Wood
Julie Tucker, Committee Assistant

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE
Rep. William J. Lippert Jr., Chair
Rep. Anne B. Donahue, Vice Chair
Rep. Lori Houghton, Ranking Member
Rep. Annmarie Christensen
Rep. Brian Cina
Rep. Mari Cordes
Rep. David Durfee
Rep. Benjamin Jickling
Rep. Woodman Page
Rep. Lucy Rogers
Rep. Brian Smith
Demis Martin, Committee Assistant

SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Sen. Jane Kitchel, Chair
Sen. Alice W. Nitka, Vice Chair
Sen. Dick Sears Jr.
Sen. Robert Starr
Sen. Dick McCormack
Sen. Richard Westman
Sen. Tim Ashe
Mental Health Advocacy Day

Mental Health Advocacy Day will take place on Wednesday, January 30, 2019 at the State House. This is an important opportunity to educate legislators about our system of care, inclusive of developmental disabilities and substance use disorder services. With many new legislators entering the State House at the beginning of the biennium, as well as the beginning of the political process for the state budget it’s an excellent opportunity for us to gather support for “shifting the balance” of funding to invest in the community mental health and developmental disabilities system of care.

Activities begin at 8 a.m. and continue until 2:00 p.m. This year we are looking for strong attendance to strengthen support for our services in the state house. This effort is led by Vermont Care Partners, VAMHAR and NAMI-VT and has 47 co-sponsors including the full membership of Vermont Care Partners.

The Agenda
- Bagels and Coffee with Legislators (Cafeteria)
- Display by all interested Sponsoring Organizations (Card Room)
- Advocacy Training with Peter Mallary (Room 11)
- Testimony at key legislative committees - all day
- Welcome Address from State Leaders (Room 11)
- Legislative Awards and Team Two Awards (Room 11)
- Sharing Stories/Poems (Room 11)
- Lunch with Legislators (Cafeteria)
- Introduction to the House (House Chamber)

Submit nominations for Community Advocate Awards
Please submit your nomination(s) for Advocate of the Year Award that will be presented at Mental Health Advocacy Day - January 30th from 10:00-11:00 a.m. at the State House in Room 11 by January 23, 2019 to Julie@vermontcarepartners.org A nomination subcommittee will review submissions. In one
page or less please explain how the individual meets or exceeds the criteria below and include contact information for the nominee to be invited to receive their award at Mental Health Advocacy Day.

The Award Criteria:

* Exemplifies outstanding commitment and service to advocate on behalf of individuals with a mental health condition or developmental disability
* Demonstrates a passion and commitment to support individuals with a mental health condition or developmental disability
* Advocates on state policy and/or funding to advance and improve the community based system of care
* Active in statewide committees or groups that address mental health or developmental disability
* Supports individuals to promote their recovery and/or integration in community life
* Educates the community about mental health and/or developmental disabilities
* Uses effective advocacy strategies to overcome challenges and barriers for individuals in the community

Vermont Care Partners Legislative Agenda for 2019, Policy and Fact Sheets
Vermont Care Partners legislative agenda is a living document with adjustments made as we proceed through the legislative session. The current draft is ‘Working Draft 3’. Please follow the link to access the agenda, policy statements and fact sheets on Designated and Specialized Service Agencies, Mental Health Services and Developmental Disabilities on our website. 
[https://vermontcarepartners.org/legislative-view/](https://vermontcarepartners.org/legislative-view/)

Vermont Care Partners Outcomes Report for FY 2018
The new Vermont Care Partners Outcomes Report for FY2018 can be accessed with this link: 

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

- Legislative home page: [https://legislature.vermont.gov/](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/](https://legislature.vermont.gov/)
- Governor Phil Scott (802) 828-3333 or [http://governor.vermont.gov/](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.