



Supporting Vermonters to lead healthy and satisfying lives community by community

Legislative Update January 15, 2019

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	NKHS, WCMHS
Rep. Mary S. Hooper , Vice Chair	WCMHS
Rep. Peter J. Fagan , Ranking Member	RMHS
Rep. Charles Conquest	CMC, NKHS, UVS, WCMHS
Rep. Martha Feltus	NKHS
Rep. Robert Helm	RMHS
Rep. Diane Lanpher	CSAC
Rep. Linda K. Myers	CCS, HC, NFI
Rep. Maida Townsend	CCS, HC, NFI
Rep. Matthew Trieber	FFSV, HCRS, LSI
Rep. David Yacovone	GMSS, LCMHS, WCMHS

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Rep. Ann Pugh , Chair	CCS, HC, NFI
Rep. Sandy Haas , Vice Chair	CMC, HCRS, RMHS, UVS
Rep. Francis McFaun , Ranking Member	WCMHS
Rep. Jessica Brumsted	CCS, HC, NFI
Rep. James Gregoire	NCSS
Rep. Logan Nicoll	HCRS, LSI, RMHS
Rep. Daniel Noyes	GMSS, LCMHS
Rep. Kelly Pajala	FFSV, HCRS, LSI, UCS
Rep. Marybeth Redmond	CCS, HC, NFI
Rep. Carl Rosenquist	NCSS
Rep. Theresa Wood	WCMHS

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Rep. William J. Lippert Jr. , Chair	CCS, HC, NFI
Rep. Anne B. Donahue , Vice Chair	WCMHS
Rep. Lori Houghton , Ranking Member	CCS, HC, NFI
Rep. Annmarie Christensen	HCRS, LSI
Rep. Brian Cina	CCS, HC, NFI
Rep. Mari Cordes	CSAC
Rep. David Durfee	UCS
Rep. Benjamin Jickling	CMC, UVS
Rep. Woodman Page	NKHS
Rep. Lucy Rogers	GMSS, LCMHS
Rep. Brian Smith	NKHS

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Sen. Jane Kitchel , Chair	NKHS
Sen. Alice W. Nitka , Vice Chair	FFSV, HCRS, LSI
Sen. Dick Sears Jr.	UCS
Sen. Robert Starr	NKHS
Sen. Dick McCormack	HCRS, LSI
Sen. Richard Westman	GMSS, LCMHS
Sen. Tim Ashe	CCS, HC, NFI

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND WELFARE

Sen. Virginia "Ginny" Lyons , Chair	CCS, HC, NFI
Sen. Richard Westman , Vice Chair	GMSS, LCMHS
Sen. Ann Cummings	WCMHS
Sen. Dick McCormack	HCRS, LSI
Sen. Debbie Ingram , Clerk	CCS, HC, NFI

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For additional information on Committee membership and contact information:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2020/23>

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 Mallery (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/>

Vermont Care Partners Outcomes Report for FY 2018

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

<https://vermontcarepartners.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2018-VCP-Outcomes-Report.pdf>

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.