

COVID-19 Response

COVID-19 TOOK A TOLL ON RECOVERY

- 85 drug-related fatalities in the first six months of 2020, up from 60 in 2019
- Non-fatal opioid overdoses almost doubled from 2019, to 29.1 per 10,000 Emergency Department visits

TELEHEALTH WAS A LIFE-SAVER

- Agencies ensured the safety of their clients and their staff by pivoting in-person appointments and intensive outpatient programs to telehealth.
- Between March and June, agencies delivered 51% of all substance use disorders via telehealth, reaching 474 unique clients.

TAKING A CLIENT-BY-CLIENT APPROACH

For some clients, telehealth worked well, and helped to solve transportation barriers. Other clients seemed to drop off the map. Agencies worked to identify each client for whom remote care wasn't working, and offered flexible solutions, such as in-person care with six-foot distancing, reinstating urine analysis screening when necessary, and adjusting medication management practices.

VERMONT CARE PARTNERS LED IN ADVOCACY

Initially, the State of Vermont did not allow group services provided by telephone to be a reimbursable service during the pandemic. Recognizing that this adversely impacted the poorest and most rural Vermonters struggling with addiction, VCP agencies successfully lobbied for parity with telehealth to improve access to care.

Comprehensive Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services

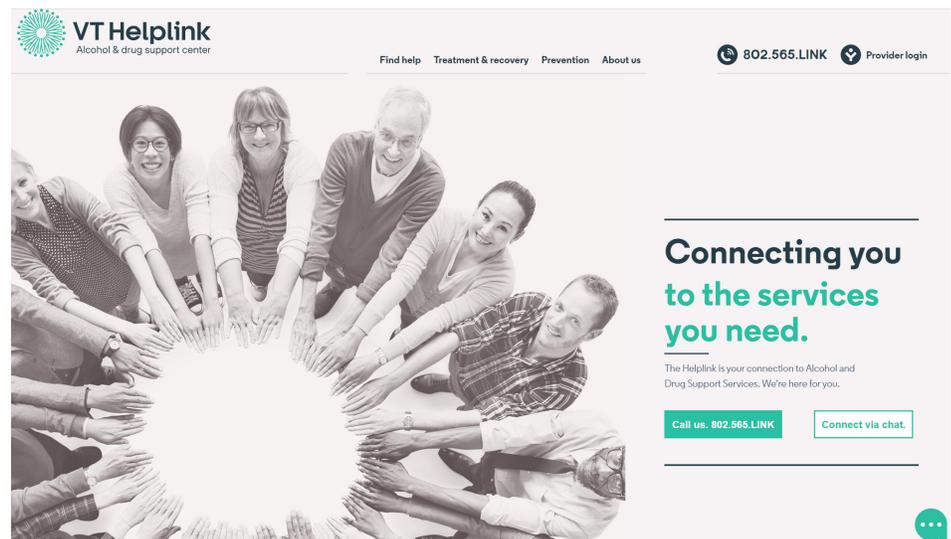
VCP AGENCIES ARE HERE FOR VERMONTERS IN RECOVERY

Nine VCP network agencies provide treatment as preferred providers with the Vermont Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (ADAP) Program. All agencies provide co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder treatment using [evidence-based practices](#).

Services include medication assisted treatment (MAT), intensive outpatient programs, individual and group therapy, community supports, and service coordination.

IMPACT

- 285 staff provided treatment to 3,104 Vermonters
- 36,233 hours of service provided
- 257 Vermonters in recovery received over 1,100 services outside of an office setting in the community
- Over 1,000 clients receive care coordination to support their treatment, totaling close to 2,000 hour with teams that included recovery. Partners included recovery coaches, maternal/child health care providers, domestic violence advocates, Reach-Up/economic services providers, and criminal justice partners.
- 50% of clients were determined to have improved at discharged, with less than 10% unrated or worsened
- Low to no waitlists were maintained for MAT



The screenshot shows the VT Helplink website. At the top left is the logo for VT Helplink, Alcohol & drug support center. To the right are navigation links: Find help, Treatment & recovery, Prevention, About us. Further right are a phone icon with the number 802.565.LINK and a user icon with the text Provider login. The main content area features a large image of a diverse group of people with their hands in a circle, creating a bright light in the center. To the right of the image is the text: Connecting you to the services you need. Below this is a sub-headline: The Helplink is your connection to Alcohol and Drug Support Services. We're here for you. At the bottom of this section are two buttons: Call us. 802.565.LINK and Connect via chat. A small chat icon is visible in the bottom right corner of the screenshot.

Preferred Providers participated with the Vermont Department of Health in the establishment of [vthelplink.org](#) to make substance use disorder treatment easy to access for all Vermonters.