



United Counseling Services employees enjoy a staff recognition celebration.

Vermont Care Partners, providing statewide leadership for an integrated, high quality system of comprehensive services and supports for people with mental health conditions, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities for more than 50 years.

-  CLINICAL SERVICES
-  EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS
-  HOUSING
-  CRISIS RESPONSE
-  MEDICAL SERVICES
-  PUBLIC HEALTH PROMOTION
-  WELLNESS PROGRAMS
-  EDUCATION SUPPORTS
-  HOSPITAL DIVERSION AND CRISIS BEDS
-  CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS
-  PUBLIC EDUCATION
-  RESIDENTIAL SUPPORTS AND FACILITIES
-  INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE
-  TELEMEDICINE



Rutland County Mental Health Services Emergency Services clinicians share information about Zero Suicide at the Rutland Out of the Darkness Walk to Fight Suicide.

Vermont Care Partners (VCP) is a statewide network of sixteen non-profit community-based agencies providing mental health, substance use disorder, and intellectual and developmental services and supports. These services and supports are person- and family-centered, and are provided where people live, work, learn and grow, regardless of income or insurance.

Vermont Care Partners believes that Vermonters have a fundamental right to live in healthy and safe communities with access to locally provided health and support services. VCP's mission is to provide statewide leadership for an integrated, high quality system of comprehensive services and supports. Network agencies provide these services and supports, coordinating with other community providers as needed so that Vermonters thrive in their homes, schools, communities and places of employment.

Vermont Care Partners and network agencies advocate for policies that promote this important work and are fully invested in state payment reform efforts to improve population health. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, agencies continue to actively reach people through virtual services including telehealth, telephone-based services, and pivoting and restructuring programs so that services and supports are provided safely despite an unprecedented workforce crisis. Responsiveness and the ability to creatively and effectively approach complex problems is a hallmark VCP quality. By supporting Vermont's most vulnerable people, the VCP network contributes to the triple aim of improving overall health, controlling the cost of health care, and promoting access to quality care.



Northwestern Counseling & Support Services collaborates with The Notch Health Center to vaccinate clients.

Vermont Care Partners network agencies continue to provide critical and effective services and supports throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

- Continued broad implementation of telehealth and other remote services to promote access to services
- Leadership tirelessly dedicated to supporting communities through the pandemic
- Active outreach to all people supported by agencies to ensure health and safety including medication delivery to the most vulnerable
- Supports to residential and diversion programs to keep the doors open and services intact, including redeployment of staff to residential programs from other agency programs
- Creative housing programs, including a tiny homes project and peer supported housing
- Transitional living program staffed by persons with lived experience
- Adaptation of evidenced based approaches to support children and adults, including Parent Child Interaction Therapy and the Collaborative Network Approach
- Continued support to people recovering from opioid addiction by creating access to medication assisted treatment to people who tested positive for COVID-19
- Management of COVID Support VT, the State of Vermont's FEMA crisis counseling grant that has been called the "gold standard" for the FEMA Crisis Counseling Program
- Warm lines to support parents who were struggling at home with their children during shut down
- Virtual and socially-distanced activity and wellness groups
- Provision of computers in primary care offices to promote access to services through telehealth
- Food delivery to promote nutrition and good health



Hasan and Greg relax after completing the Champlain Voices, "Walk, Run, Roll-athon" they helped organize at Ft. Ethan Allen in Colchester.



Brook Bury from Northeast Kingdom Human Services earns Emerging HR Professional of the Year Award.

Network staff are critical!

Network agencies employed over 5,000 employees including essential workers who provide direct services, clinicians, and administrative and leadership positions to provide high quality services and supports.

The network is in crisis because of an unprecedented workforce shortage with an average vacancy rate of 31%. The vacancy rate is highest in programs supporting one of the more vulnerable populations, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Without our staff, people in your community go without services and supports, which results in their conditions becoming more acute, leading to increased demands upon an already stressed emergency system.

Never have our services been needed more or stretched more than during COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to increases in

- anxiety and depression
- suicidal ideation
- substance misuse and overdoses
- food insecurity and eating disorders
- social isolation and loneliness
- student behavioral and emotional challenges
- job disruptions

With growing demand, workforce challenges impeded access to services and supports

- FY21 staff turnover rate of 31%
- Direct service staff vacancies rose to historic levels
- Hundreds of Vermonters waited up to three months to access mental health services
- Hundreds of children and youth waited up to six months for mental health services
- Over 100 students waited for school-based services for up to six months
- Adults waited for residential mental health supports up to one year
- People with I/DD waited for shared living providers up to one year

In FY21, network programs made a positive impact upon people and communities

People are working

- Network programs supported people's meaningful employment at rates higher than the national average
- 28% of people served with significant mental illness are employed
- Network agencies provide employment support services to promote engagement in ongoing employment for people with developmental disabilities

People are learning and attending school

- Success Beyond Six programs, based in community public schools, provide access to immediate supports for children, youth and their families
- For children and youth with significant needs, network agencies operated independent therapeutic schools with integrated treatment components
- Persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities are supported in higher education programs that result in higher employment rates upon graduation

People are housed

- Network agencies worked closely with community programs to find and support stable housing, including collaborating with shared living providers
- Residential options were provided for the most vulnerable populations, including adults and youth with significant mental health conditions
- Less than 3% of people supported by agencies were homeless or living in a shelter

People benefit from telehealth

- All network agencies worked creatively to provide services by telehealth and phone to engage people in services and supports
- 79% found the services provided during COVID-19 pandemic helpful
- 61% found the video and phone options as effective as meeting in person

People feel better

- 82% of people tell us that their quality of life improved as a result of the services and supports they received

Communities are safe

- Mobile crisis in all network agencies worked closely with first responders to support people experiencing mental health crisis



United Counseling Services Worksite Wellness Program container gardening workshop for staff.



Washington County Mental Health Services tiny home project.

- People supported through public safety funds were provided with high quality programming and supports
- 121 people with developmental and intellectual disabilities were supported safety in the community through public safety funds

People have support in unprecedented times

- Agencies provided disaster response and post-vention supports to over 180 people who experienced challenging events in their families, schools or community due to untimely deaths and suicide
- Disaster response was provided at no cost, immediately, and directly to those in need
- COVID Support VT promoting wellness

and coping for those who are struggling due to COVID-19 pandemic, including first responders and essential workers

- 435 people supported in interactive workshops
- 1,624 people supported through warm line providing coping strategies and referrals



Enjoying summer at Health Care and Rehabilitation Services Kindle Farm School.



Thanksgiving meals prepared by the Washington County Mental Health Services Sunrise Center.

In FY21, network agencies provided high quality services, when and where they were needed

People who are able to access the services they need to recover more quickly from mental health conditions and substance use disorders and require less hospitalization or institutionalized care.

Overall, more people in Vermont were supported in the community mental health system (39:1000) compared to the national rate (23:1,000). As a result, people used higher levels of care, such as psychiatric hospitalizations, less frequently than the national average.

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities were supported in their communities and in their homes, rarely requiring psychiatric hospitalization placements.

Agencies work hard to respond to inquiries quickly and provide ongoing supports and services

- In the last quarter of FY21, 67% of people who called for mental health outpatient services were seen within 5 days, and 64% were seen again within 14 days of their initial assessment
- 99% of care inquiries for Developmental Services were responded to within 48 hours
- Emergency mental health assessments are available 24/7 for people experiencing a mental health crisis. Many received optional follow-up care (42% within 24 hours and 64% within 7 days) from VCP network agency emergency services programs decreasing their likelihood to require hospitalization or to die by suicide.



Taekwondo KICKS at Counseling Service of Addison County.



Finger painting at United Counseling Services Head Start program.

People tell us

- The services were provided by respectful staff (95%), were the right services (90%), the needed services (90%), and that the services they received made a difference (88%)
- They report that front office staff were welcoming and that they were grateful for the continued efforts on the part of agencies and staff to support them creatively through the pandemic. And, for some, their experiences with VCP network agencies were the best they have had in healthcare.

Services are provided where people live, work, learn and play

- Primary care and integrated care settings: VCP network agency staff were integrated into 23 primary care and health care settings in Vermont
- Public schools: 60% of schools in VCP network agency catchment areas benefited from co-located agency supports. 10% of all services provided across the VCP network were provided in schools
- VCP network agency locations: Over 50% of services were provided at a VCP network agency facility, with an additional 13% provided via telemedicine



Lake Champlain Waldorf School student Bevin Dean creates and donates journals to Howard Center for use by clients for personal growth and development as part of the therapeutic process.

In FY21, network agencies supported over 36,000 individuals and touched the lives of more than 50,000 Vermonters

Services for People with Substance Use Disorders

- 2,446 adults and youth engaged in a variety of substance use disorder services by 8 network agencies listed as "Preferred Providers" with the Vermont Department of Health's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Program including: prevention and education programs in the schools, outpatient counseling, intensive outpatient programs, family and group counseling services, and services that support stability in the community. All services were co-occurring ensuring that people's mental health needs were addressed.

Community-based Supports for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- 4,567 children, youth and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities received residential, vocational, and supportive services that promote stability in the community, including respite and flexible family supports.

Emergency Services for People Experiencing Mental Health Crises

- 9,246 people accessed emergency mental health assessments and supports available 24 hours a day, 7 days a

week in every community in across Vermont. Emergency Services were intensive and time-limited, focused on resolving or stabilizing adults, families and children who are in acute mental health crisis. Emergency Services were provided to anyone in need, for free, with 80% of all Emergency Services provided in community settings.

Programs for Adults with Mental Health Conditions

- 7,222 adults with mental health conditions were supported through a range of prevention and intervention services, to help individuals, families and groups cope during times of stress and crisis, as well as to address emotional and behavioral difficulties, serious mental illness, our Community Rehabilitation and Treatment programs engaged in an array of therapeutic, day, and residential services. Network programs promoted community, independence and recovery and minimized the need for inpatient and custodial care.

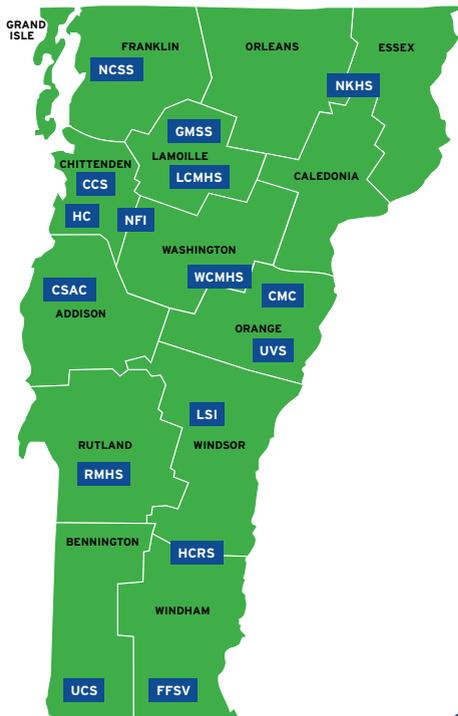
Children's Mental Health - 10,833 children, youth and their families received therapeutic supports in agency offices, homes, schools,

and other community based settings. Services included individual, group and family counseling, school-based programming, independent schools, parenting support and education, home-visiting and outreach, collaborative programming with other youth serving agencies, residential services for children and youth with acute needs, and early childhood prevention programming.

Community Outreach and Education - Network agencies provided ongoing community-based educational opportunities to promote broader understanding about issues that affect the well-being of Vermonters. Opportunities were often offered at no cost and were provided by content experts employed by network agencies.

Disaster Response - Network agencies responded to 73 unique community disasters and significant events with immediate and timely intervention and postvention services to over 430 people in Vermont.

Vermont Care Partner network agencies



- **NCSS:** Northwestern Counseling & Support Services www.ncssinc.org
- **NKHS:** Northeast Kingdom Human Services www.nkhs.org
- **GMSS:** Green Mountain Support Services www.gmssi.org
- **LCMHS:** Lamoille County Mental Health Services www.lamoille.org
- **CCS:** Champlain Community Services www.ccs-vt.org

- **HC:** Howard Center www.howardcenter.org
- **NFI:** Northeastern Family Institute, NFI Vermont, Inc. www.nfivermont.org
- **WCMHS:** Washington County Mental Health Services www.wcmhs.org
- **CSAC:** Counseling Service of Addison County www.csac-vt.org
- **CMC:** Clara Martin Center www.claramartin.org
- **UVS:** Upper Valley Services www.uvs-vt.org

- **LSI:** Lincoln Street, Inc. www.lincolnstreetinc.org
- **RMHS:** Rutland Mental Health Services / Community Care Network www.rmhsccn.org
- **HCRS:** Health Care & Rehabilitation Services www.hcrs.org
- **UCS:** United Counseling Service of Bennington County www.ucsvt.org
- **FFSV:** Families First in Southern Vermont www.familiesfirstvt.org



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