

COVID-19 Response

Significant increases in hospital emergency departments

Due to closed beds in the Vermont acute mental health care system, Emergency Services programs and their hospital and community partners have seen a significant increase in long waits in hospital emergency departments.

While over 2000 Vermonters received crisis services from network agency staff in Emergency Departments during FY21, approximately 78% of crisis services were provided outside of hospitals in homes, communities, and network office settings - often preventing unnecessary Emergency Department waits.



RMHS Emergency Services Director Loree Zeif and Clinician Michelle Beaulieu present on mental health crises and coping strategies at the Castleton Free Library

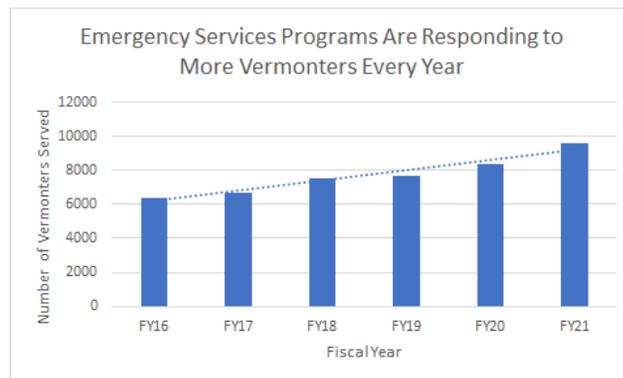
Emergency Services for Vermonters Experiencing a Mental Health Crisis



Over 9,600 Vermonters received over 85,000 hours of crisis services in FY21.

24/7 RESPONSE

VCP network agencies provide around-the-clock crisis response for people who are experiencing a mental health crisis. Agencies respond regardless of diagnosis, disability, age, or ability to pay.



MOBILE OUTREACH

Crisis clinicians meet with Vermonters in their homes, in the community, in schools, in Emergency Departments, by phone, and by telehealth. Staff work closely with health care, social service, education, and law enforcement partners to help Vermonters access the best care as quickly as possible in the least restrictive and most supportive environment.

FOLLOW UP IS FOUNDATIONAL

More than 40% of Vermonters who received a crisis service had a second service within 24 hours, and more than 60% had a follow-up service within seven days. Even before referral to a higher level of care or an outpatient referral, clients received an average of five services from Emergency Services programs alone.

CLIENT SATISFACTION

- 86% of consumers of Emergency Services Programs reported that they received the services they needed and 92% said they were treated with respect
- 81% said the services they received made a difference, and 74% reported it improved their quality of life
- Clients shared "very helpful and patient staff," "got the help I needed," and "saved my life."

SUPERIOR COMMUNITY-BASED CARE

Network agency services supported Vermont's system of care in its continued excellence as compared to other states:

- Lower 30-day readmission rate for adults in involuntary inpatient treatment compared to the national average
- Vermont's non-State hospital psychiatric inpatient utilization is 55% of the national average (2019 data)