

Community Health Improvement Plan 2024 Annual Report

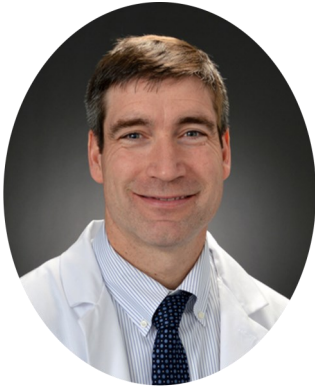


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A Message From Leadership



The University of Vermont Health Network is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of people in the communities we serve. Every three years, UVM Health Network's six health care partners conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). CHNAs help us to reflect on our work to date and consider the challenges and opportunities involved in creating healthier communities. This process informs how priority health needs will be addressed by each health care partner alongside our diverse community partners.

The University of Vermont Medical Center's Calendar Year 2024 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) annual report serves as a demonstration of the organization's accountability and effectiveness working together to strengthen community health.

We take this opportunity to celebrate stories of collaboration and progress in the last year on initiatives that are addressing the underlying drivers of health and advancing health equity in our region.

Our organization continues to work towards greater access and inclusivity. We continue to measure our progress, and our work will never be done in this area. This report highlights a snapshot of the initiatives addressing the community identified health priorities. We prioritize centering the voices and experiences of community members in developing and carrying out our strategies.

As you read through this report, I hope it's clear that people are at the heart of our efforts. Thank you for taking time to learn about this important work.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Leffler", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stephen Leffler, MD
President & Chief Operating Officer
UVM Medical Center

Introduction

Annual Report Overview

Adopting an 'Implementation Strategy' and evaluating the impact of our Community Benefit programs is a requirement of our health system's tax-exempt status. This demonstrates our commitment, accountability and effectiveness in addressing our communities' identified health priorities. An annual progress report is best practice for Community Benefit. This report spotlights programmatic highlights, investments made, and collaboration with our key partners to improve the health of our community in 2024.

Prioritization

Two health priority sessions for the 2022 CHNA brought together 140 community members representing 57 different organizations to review data collected. Attendees rated six top priorities via electronic survey based on impact, community readiness, and equity. Following these sessions, CRS researchers analyzed the quantitative and qualitative findings. This led to the selection of the top three Community Health Priorities:

- *Cultural Humility & Inclusive Health Care*
- *Housing*
- *Mental Health & Wellbeing*

The top three health priority findings were presented to the Steering Committee. Steering Committee members considered the following questions for each of the three priorities to inform implementation planning: 1) *What is working well currently?* 2) *Where can our community focus resources to make meaningful health improvements?* 3) *Who should be at the table? Consider inclusion of community stakeholders and groups who have not been engaged to date and how they can contribute moving forward.*

These conversations validated the three top community health priorities. The UVM Medical Center will continue to collaborate with partners at various capacities to address the three additional priorities identified by the CHNA and not being addressed as part of the CHIP:

- *Accessible and Coordinated Care*
- *Food Access and Security*
- *Workforce Development*

ABOUT US

The University of Vermont Medical Center (UVM Medical Center) serves more than 1 million patients across all counties in Vermont and its neighboring states. This includes 175,000 residents in UVM Medical Center's Health Service Area (HSA) of Chittenden and Grand Isle counties.

Every three years, UVM Medical Center is required to complete a community health needs assessment and corresponding Implementation strategy. This effort is facilitated by the Community Health Improvement (CHI) Department and completed in collaboration with community partners.

Summary of Accomplishments

Over the past year, the Chittenden Accountable Community for Health (CACH) Teams have made significant strides in improving the health and well-being of our community through various initiatives and collaborations. Here are some of the key accomplishments, success stories, and challenges encountered.

Highlights

CACH Housing Team:

- 40+ mental health and housing direct service providers trained by local expert, Rhiannon Kim (Love at the Roots, LLC) across 9 sessions of “Trauma Awareness and Compassion Series for Healing the Collective”
- Collaborating with the Camden Coalition to identify existing barriers that hinder collaboration among service providers working with individuals who frequently interact with emergency services. Formed a new cross-sector team that had not been established before to take on this issue.

CACH Cultural Humility and Inclusive Health Care Team

- Consulted on the outreach and equity planning for the newly established Mental Health Urgent Care facility. Resulting walk-through video for prospective guests has been viewed 479 times since its launch.
- Partnered with Vermont Language Justice Project to create an educational video explaining when to use the Emergency Department. Translated into 15 languages in addition to English. More than 1,200 views across all languages to-date
- Continued to develop Cultural Resource Guides.
- Two Reflection Friday events with 20+ attendees
- Conducted a Health Literacy Environmental Assessment
- Hair Care Equity Project: 93% of clinical staff responsible for hygiene have completed Cornerstone training.

CACH Mental Health and Wellbeing Team

- Youth Wellness Pod Initiative: Achieved a 154% increase in students receiving services compared to the previous year. 233 mental health sessions conducted within the pod. Increased mental health service access at Edmunds Elementary and Middle School, significantly reducing the waitlist.

Challenges

- While significant progress was made, challenges such as securing sustainable funding remain. These challenges have reinforced our commitment to continued advocacy and resource development.

Work in Progress/Anticipated for 2025

- The Cultural Humility and Inclusive Health Care Team would like to continue to serve as consultants on the Mental Health Urgent Care outreach and equity plan, and other relevant projects and programs.
- The Cultural Humility and Inclusive Health Care Team intends to continue working with Vermont Language Justice Project on a series of videos, including when to use primary care and when to use urgent care. The primary care video is set for production in 2025.
- The Mental Health and Wellbeing Team plans to continue to support and collaborate with the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance to further training efforts to expand into other areas of direct service needs.
- Further quality improvement efforts, data analysis and service enhancement (i.e. telehealth) will continue to be the focus of efforts related to the Youth Wellness Pod.
- The CACH Housing Team will continue to work with the Camden Coalition and local partners advancing the Barrier Identification Project. The Team is currently identifying interviewees and conducting outreach.



Key Community Partnerships

CACH membership - more than 20 community organizations. For a comprehensive list of each member and their respective organization, please visit cachvt.org/all-team-members.

- The University of Vermont Health Network
- The Howard Center
- Community Health Centers
- CVOEO
- The Abenaki Community
- Vermont Language Justice Project
- Burlington Housing Authority
- Champlain Housing Trust
- Edmunds Elementary and Middle School
- Office Environments
- City of Burlington EMS, Fire Department and Police Department
- Agency of Human Services
- The Camden Coalition
- Love at the Roots, LLC



Investments

Chittenden Accountable Community for Health (CACH) - Housing Health Priority Team

\$25,000

Secured the second year of program grant funding from the Community Health Investment Fund. (CHIF). This funding paid for the "A Trauma Awareness and Compassion Series for Healing the Collective" workshop and will fund upcoming initiatives.

Cultural Humility and Inclusive Health Care Team—Operating Funds

\$6,000

"When to visit the Emergency Department": video created in collaboration with Vermont Language Justice Project to assist people in understanding when to use the Emergency Department.

TOTAL: \$31,000

Calendar Year 2024: Work to Date



Cultural Humility and Inclusive Health Care



OVERARCHING GOAL: Access to inclusive, high quality health care in settings where all community members feel safe, respected, and seen.

OBJECTIVES:

- To establish trusted relationships between healthcare providers and patients.
- To address Language Accessibility and Health Literacy needs.
- To support the development of a diverse healthcare workforce.

POPULATIONS OF FOCUS: BIPOC, LGBTQII+, Older Vermonters, People with Disabilities, Veterans

Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

Initiative: Mental Health Urgent Care - Outreach Consultation

Summary: The Mental Health Urgent Care, a collaboration between the UVM Medical Center, Howard Center and Community Health Centers opened its doors in the fall of 2024. Prior to opening, the team reached out to the CACH Cultural Humility Team to provide consultation on their outreach and equity plan.

Goal: Increase access to the newly opened Mental Health Urgent Care, especially for community members from marginalized groups.

Objectives: Provide insight and guidance regarding outreach and equity based on the strengths and experience of the CACH Cultural Humility Team.

Strategies: Meet with leaders of Howard Center and Community Health Centers to better understand needs and provide recommendations. Accomplishments to highlight:

- A walk-through video tour was created so that prospective guests can see the space before coming in. Translated versions of the video will be available in 2025.
- Community partner agencies that specifically serve vulnerable or underserved populations are receiving targeted outreach including print materials, tours, and attending staff meetings to describe the program.
- Staff meetings 1Xmonth focus on anti-racism and anti-bias work, primarily using Howard Center's DEI toolkits.

Populations of focus: Veterans, unhoused individuals, immigrants and refugees, Abenaki community members

Key community partnerships: The Howard Center, Community Health Centers, CVOEO, the Abenaki Community

Initiative: When to Use the Emergency Department Video Collaboration

Summary: A video was collaboration with Vermont Language Justice Project to assist people in understanding when to use the Emergency Department. This video came at the request of Emergency Department personnel and community partners who work with refugees, immigrants, and those less familiar with the American healthcare system.

Goal: Create an opportunity for community members of different backgrounds to connect, especially those working in healthcare, social service, or DEI sectors and to create meaningful resources for community members to better understand when to use the Emergency Department.

Objectives: Educate community members through effective mediums, visual or otherwise.

Strategies: Create educational videos, translate educational videos, distribute educational videos effectively.

Accomplishments to highlight:

- Effective partnership with the Emergency Department, Immigrant Health Initiative, Health Literacy Program, and Vermont Language Justice Project.

Progress on measures:

- The video has been recorded in 15 languages in addition to English.
- There have been a total of over 1200 views in all languages.

Populations of focus: Immigrant, migrant communities. Those unfamiliar with the US healthcare system.

Key community partnerships: Vermont Language Justice Project

BY THE NUMBERS

1,200+

views of educational video explaining when to use the Emergency Department. Created with Vermont Language Justice Project



[Everything to Know About the Emergency Department -](#)



Initiative: Hair Care Equity Project

Summary: Hair Care Equity in healthcare is not just good patient care, it is necessary to avoid harm to patients who are currently and have historically been marginalized by the healthcare system. While hair types are not specific to race, many BIPOC patients do not have access to hair care and other basic hygiene products that meet their needs. This project aims to address this inequity by providing adequate products and ensuring direct care staff are trained to care for diverse hair types while understanding the importance for this care. While this project focuses on hair care for all, many of the lessons learned are applicable to any health-equity focused quality improvement project in public health and healthcare.

Goal: To bring equitable hair care to all patients at UVM Medical Center to start and then to roll it out throughout UVM Health Network.

Objectives:

- Create and Develop hair care curriculum for staff members.
- Provide equitable hair care products for all patients who are hospitalized.
- Develop a hair care guideline for staff members to reference when providing hair care.
- Initiate a plan to provide inclusive hair care services for all patients.

Strategies:

- Source and stock appropriate products.
- Train direct care staff on the importance of equitable hair care and how to work with all hair types.
- Engage leaders to be champions for the project.
- Engage the community to provide input in product selection.
- Provide leadership opportunities and compensation for staff with lived experience.



BY THE NUMBERS

93%

clinical staff responsible for hygiene have completed Hair Care Equity Cornerstone training.

Accomplishments to highlight:

- Through a process of continuous quality improvement, staff will be offered hands-on training at upcoming LNA and Nursing Education Days.
- Began the Network roll out to the 6 Health Care Partners. Staff training at CVPH, Porter, and CVMC will begin this spring. All hospitals to be engaged by summer with staff trainings completed by January 2026.

Progress on measures:

- 93% of UVM MC clinical staff responsible for hygiene have completed Cornerstone training.
- Roll out begun at CVPH, CVMC, and Porter.

Populations of focus: Patients with all types of hair, especially those with type 3 and 4.

Key community partnerships: Pascale Onguende, Braids by Pascale, REACH Employee Resource Group.

Housing



OVERARCHING GOAL: To foster a resilient community through funding trainings for housing retention and supporting mental health and housing direct service providers.

OBJECTIVES:

- Provide financial support for tenant rights training and community programs.
- Broaden community education on relevant topics, as identified by the Health Priority Team and partners, including secondary trauma and tenant rights.
- Support the wellbeing and resilience of mental health and housing direct service providers.
- Ensure inclusivity in training sessions by actively reaching out to diverse segments of the community and promoting a welcoming and inclusive environment. Empower residents with knowledge about their rights as tenants, creating informed and proactive community members who actively contribute to housing retention efforts.
- Strengthen data collection and evaluation processes to measure the impact of training programs, enabling evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement.

POPULATIONS OF FOCUS: Tenants, Mental Health and Housing Direct Service Providers

Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

Initiative: Workshop Series for Mental Health and Housing Direct Service Providers - "A Trauma Awareness and Compassion Series for Healing the Collective"

Summary: The CACH Housing Team partnered with the Burlington Housing Authority to host a 9-session workshop. The training explored various aspects of trauma awareness, emotional well-being, and the power of compassion. Each session was designed to help participants gain insight into the impact of trauma exposure response on themselves and others.

Goal: Support Mental Health and Housing direct service providers.

Objectives: Increase provider effectiveness, decrease burnout, decrease secondary trauma, increase emotional awareness.

Strategies:

- Hire local expert to conduct sessions.
- Ensure accessibility of the sessions: Host sessions in a centralized location with ample parking. Make sessions hybrid.

(Cont.) Accomplishments to highlight: Completed all 9 sessions with excellent feedback solicited and unsolicited.

Progress on measures: Trained over 40 direct service providers across 9 sessions

Populations of focus: mental health and housing direct service providers

Key community partnerships: Burlington Housing Authority, City Of Burlington, Howard Center, Champlain Housing Trust



Initiative: Barriers Identification Project

Summary: The CACH Housing Team is working in collaboration with the Camden Coalition on a team-based care project.

Goal: Identify existing barriers that hinder effective and productive collaboration among service providers working with individuals who frequently interact with emergency services.

Objectives: Create a unique cross-sector team to identify existing barriers, identify barriers.

Strategies: Interview stakeholders and case managers across the community, document barriers, distribute information to seek solutions across the community.

Accomplishments to highlight: Formed a new cross-sector team that had not been established before to take on this issue.

Populations of focus: Case managers, EMS, individuals who frequently interact with EMS.

Key community partnerships: City of Burlington EMS, Fire Department and Police Department, The Howard Center, UVM Medical Center, Agency of Human Services

BY THE NUMBERS

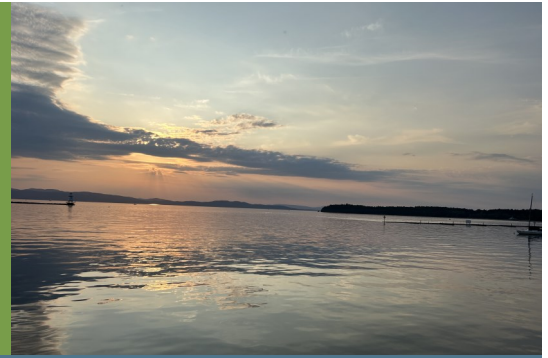
40

direct service
providers across 9
sessions

Barriers Identification Project Innovative Cross-Sector Team

- Agency of Human Services
- City of Burlington EMS
- City of Burlington Fire Department
- City of Burlington Police Department
- The Howard Center
- UVM Medical Center

Mental Health and Well-being



OVERARCHING GOAL: Advance youth mental health support in schools by addressing barriers and promoting standardized well-being supports.

OBJECTIVES:

- Enhance the Youth Wellness Pod at Edmunds through extensive data collection, analysis and continuous improvement activities.
- Extend the Pod initiative to additional schools.
- Integrate the Pod and well-being platform seamlessly into schools.

POPULATION OF FOCUS: Youth in Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties

Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

Initiative: Youth Wellness Pod

Summary: One of the most significant obstacles preventing the provision of youth mental health services in schools is the absence of private, confidential spaces. To overcome this obstacle, the team purchased a conversation suite in 2023 which we call a “Youth Wellness Pod”. The Pod was installed in Edmunds Elementary School between the Elementary and Middle School so that both schools could have access to the Pod.

Goal: Enhance/Increase access to youth mental health services.
space for other services as needed.

Objectives:

- Increase total number of mental health services for elementary and middle school students.
 - Provide a confidential and inviting space for providers and students.
- Provide a confidential space for other services as needed.

Strategies:

- Maintain the use of the Pod and ensure access.
- Work with providers to utilize pod with a schedule.
- Collect and review data with Team in regular intervals.

Accomplishments to highlight:

- The Pod was utilized on a more frequent basis in 2024.
- The CACH Mental Health and Well-being team was able to collect demographic and utilization data.

Progress on measures: 233 sessions were provided in the Pod in 2024.

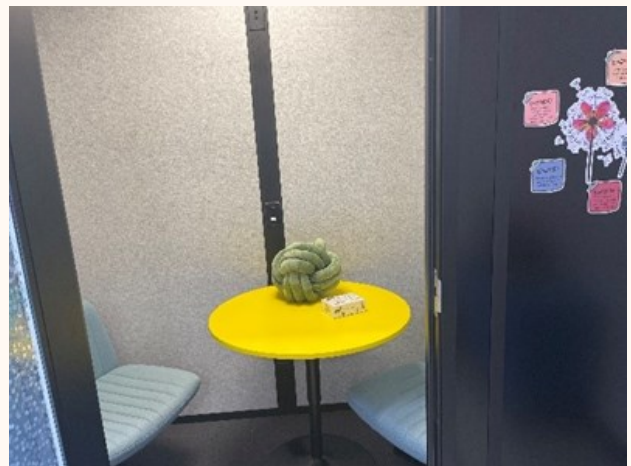
Populations of focus: Students ages 7, 9, 11, 12 and 13 (elementary and middle school students).

Key community partnerships: Edmunds Elementary and Middle School, Office Environments, CACH Mental Health and Well-being Team organizations (www.cachvt.org)



154%

Increase in student access to
mental health services via
Youth Wellness Pod Initiative



CONTACT

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The University of Vermont Health Network

Community Health Improvement

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CHITTENDEN ACCOUNTABLE COMMUNITY FOR HEALTH (CACH)

WWW.CACHVT.ORG

