

Community Health Improvement Plan

2025 Annual Report



Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties



**University of
Vermont Health**

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A Message From Leadership



CEO, UVM Health
President and COO,
UVM Medical Center

University of Vermont Health is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of people in the communities we serve. Every three years, UVM Health'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.

University of Vermont Medical Center's Calendar Year 2025 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". The signature is fluid and includes a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Stephen Leffler, MD

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 2025.

Prioritization

This is the final annual progress report for the University of Vermont Medical Center's 2023-2025 Community Health Improvement Plan cycle. The 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment identified priority areas of need for those who live, work, and seek services in central Vermont. Based on the outcomes of the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) the following four focus areas were selected:

- ▶ **Cultural Humility and Inclusive Health Care**
- ▶ **Housing**
- ▶ **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

UVM Medical Center and community partners completed a new CHNA and CHIP cycle to establish strategic direction and collaborative efforts for the coming three years.

The 2026–2028 Chittenden & Grand Isle Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) outlines a shared, community-driven approach to improving health and well-being across the region. CHIP activities are coordinated through the Chittenden Accountable Community for Health (CACH) with backbone support from UVM Health, Community Health Improvement.

Priorities for the 2026-2028 Community Health Improvement Plan (In alphabetical order):

- ▶ **Building Community Connectedness**
- ▶ **Engaging on Mental Health**
- ▶ **Increasing Health Care Access**

To learn more, visit UVMHealth.org/CHI-UVMHC.

Summary of Accomplishments

This annual report for calendar year 2025 details key actions taken to advance population health initiatives and community health priorities.

Highlights

- ▶ UVM Health Community Health Improvement staff carried out 2025 Chittenden and Grand Isle County Community Health Needs Assessment in partnership with key community partners and the UVM Center for Rural Studies. See the full 2025 CHNA report: uvmhealth.org/sites/default/files/2025-09/UVM-CHNA-2025-web.pdf
- ▶ Chittenden Accountable Community for Health (CACH) Teams continued to collaborate and invest in initiatives that advance 2022 CHNA community health priorities:

CACH Cultural Humility and Inclusive Health Care Team:

- ▶ Rolled out the Hair Equity Project to all UVM Health system hospitals:
- ▶ Over 85 staff were trained in 2025 through a Cornerstone module and via hands on demos.
- ▶ At UVMHC, 84% of responsible staff completed training, surpassing the 80% benchmark.
- ▶ Collaboration with Vermont Language Justice Project and USCRI continued to produce and translate videos that increase knowledge of the American healthcare system and conduct community outreach.
- ▶ First video was translated in 16 languages. 1600+ total views.
- ▶ Funding was secured for two additional videos in the series: When to Use Primary Care and When to Use Urgent Care. Production began in late 2025 with completion in early 2026.

CACH Housing Team:

- ▶ Allocated \$20,000 to the Winooski School District to launch a Flexible School-Based Housing Support Fund to address overcrowding and/or unaffordability. Assisted 4 households (23 individuals) by covering security deposits, enabling them to secure appropriately sized housing units aligned with their needs.
- ▶ In partnership with the City of Burlington and Champlain Housing Trust (Harbor Place), provided \$14,500 of emergency funding to help families at imminent risk of homelessness maintain stable housing and access essential support.
- ▶ Provided funding for CVOEO's three-part Housing Advocacy Program, which offers free training on housing stability and retention to more than 150 community members.
- ▶ Provided funding to VAAP (Vermont Asylum Assistance Program) to deliver training to more than 50 shelter, social service, and housing providers, focused on improving service delivery for immigrant communities, and overview of the local immigrant services landscape to enhance referral pathways.
- ▶ Provided \$20,000 in flexible, unrestricted funding to the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA) and other key community partners to support emergency housing supportive services, housing retention, and relocation assistance for individuals and households. To date, these funds have assisted 40 households totaling 59 people.

CACH Mental Health and Wellbeing Team:

- ▶ Since its launch in late 2023, the Youth Wellness Pod at Edmunds Elementary and Middle School has more than doubled the number of students receiving consistent mental health services.

Partnering to Advance Community Health Priorities

Key Community Partnerships

CACH Team organizations (www.cachvt.org)

- ▶ The Howard Center
- ▶ Community Health Centers
- ▶ CVOEO
- ▶ The Abenaki Community
- ▶ Vermont Language Justice Project
- ▶ Burlington Housing Authority
- ▶ City Of Burlington
- ▶ Howard Center
- ▶ Champlain Housing Trust
- ▶ Edmunds Elementary and Middle School
- ▶ Office Environments
- ▶ City of Burlington EMS, Fire Department and Police Department
- ▶ Agency of Human Services
- ▶ United Ways of Vermont
- ▶ United Way of Northwest Vermont
- ▶ Spectrum Youth and Family Services
- ▶ Vermont Language Justice Project
- ▶ USCRI

Investments

Community Health Improvement operating funds, \$12,000

Translated 3-part video project to increase knowledge of the American Healthcare system.

Community Health Investment Fund:

The Fund offers primarily multi-year (3 year) awards. In order to align with the triannual community health needs assessment, fiscal year 2025 awards marked the end of multi-year cycles for funded partners. A new 3-year cycle will begin in fiscal year 2026 informed by the 2025 assessment.

To learn more, visit UVMHealth.org/CHI-UVMHC or contact Justin.Graham@uvmhealth.org.



\$1,098,953
Invested
Locally

26
Projects
Funded



45,521*
People
Impacted

Work Underway/Anticipated for 2026

- ▶ Hair Equity Project roll-out at University of Vermont Health—Home Health & Hospice. Continued quality improvement at all other partners.
- ▶ Completion of videos two and three of a three-part series to support community members who speak languages other than English to better understand when to use Primary Care, the Emergency Department and Urgent Care.
- ▶ Approximately \$6,000 in CACH Housing Team flexible unrestricted funding remains for emergency housing supportive services and housing retention.
- ▶ Continue supporting individuals and families at risk of homelessness in securing stable housing and essential support services through participation in Chittenden County Housing Alliance (CCHA) and other initiatives, including staffing UVM Medical Center Mental Health and Housing Investment Committee.





Calendar Year 2025: 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

Translated Video Project

- ▶ **Summary:** Three-part video series for community members who speak languages other than English to better understand when to use primary care, the emergency department, and urgent care.
- ▶ **Goal:** Increase knowledge of the American Healthcare system.
- ▶ **Objectives:** Provide language appropriate resources on the healthcare system.
- ▶ **Strategies:** Partner with Vermont Language Justice Project to produce and translate the videos and conduct community outreach to raise awareness about the resource.
- ▶ **Accomplishments to Highlight:** Funding was secured for the two additional videos in the series: When to Use Primary Care and When to Use Urgent Care.
- ▶ **Progress on Measures:** When to Use the Emergency Department video translated in 16 languages. 1600+ views. Videos in all languages have views.
- ▶ **Populations of Focus:** Immigrant, migrant communities. Those unfamiliar with the US healthcare system.
- ▶ **Key Community Partnerships:** Vermont Language Justice Project, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
- ▶ **Work in Progress:** Production began late 2025 for When to Use Primary Care and When to Use Urgent Care videos. Planning completion in early 2026.
- ▶ **Video Playlist:** Everything to Know About the Emergency Department - YouTube

Hair Equity Project

- ▶ **Summary:** The Hair Care Equity Project brought inclusive healthcare products and trained staff in how to care for a wider variety of hair types and stocking appropriate products for UVM Health patients who have type 2-4b hair.
- ▶ **Goal:** To provide appropriate and safe hair care for all patients who have an overnight stay and require hygiene care.
- ▶ **Objectives:** Provide language appropriate resources on the healthcare system.
- ▶ **Strategies:** Stock appropriate products. Staff are trained through Cornerstone module and with hands on demos.
- ▶ **Accomplishments to Highlight:** Hair Care Equity Project was rolled out to all UVM Health system hospitals.
- ▶ **Progress on Measures:** At UVM Medical Center, 84% of responsible staff completed a Cornerstone module and hands on demo training, surpassing the 80% benchmark.
- ▶ **Populations of Focus:** UVM Health patients who have type 2-4b hair.
- ▶ **Key Community Partnerships:** Pascale Onguende, Braids by Pascale
- ▶ **Work in Progress:** Roll out at UVM Home Health and Hospice. For all hospital partners, quality improvement efforts to continue to encourage staff to complete training and use the products appropriately.



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

Community-Based Training

- ▶ **Summary:** CVOEO developed, promoted, delivered, and evaluated community-based training and education related to housing stability and retention which was offered free to the public.
- ▶ **Goal:** Provide participants with the skills, materials, and confidence necessary to find and maintain stable housing.
- ▶ **Objectives:** Provide Vermont and community specific training that will allow for community members to access housing and remain housed.
- ▶ **Strategies:** Create a three-part workshop which includes "Tenant Skills" which was a direct results of the CVOEO Housing Advocacy Program supported by the CACH Housing Team.

By the Numbers

150+

Community members attended Tenant Skills training.

\$20,000

Community Health Investment Funds to the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance.

40 Households totaling 59 people assisted.

70 Individuals remained safely housed and connected to support services.

► **Accomplishments to Highlight:**

- Free Renters Workshop session entitled "Tenant Skills" as part of the Housing Advocacy Program, which provides participants with the skills, materials, and confidence necessary to find and maintain stable housing. Combined with "Finding Housing," and "Sustaining the Rent" the Tenant Skills workshop allowed for an incentive in so far that if participants complete all three workshops (Tenant Skills, Finding Housing, and Sustaining the Rent) and attend a one-on-one financial coaching session they receive a Preferred Renter Certificate.
- This certificate shows a landlord that the applicant or current tenant is invested in being a successful renter, knowledgeable about resources, and connected to service providers, such as a financial coach.
- **Progress on Measures:** 150+ community members have attended this training to date with ongoing offerings.
- **Populations of Focus:** Immigrant and Refugee community members, BIPOC community members, low income families and community members, youth, older adults, people with disabilities.
- **Key Community Partnerships:** United Way, Howard Center, Burlington Housing Authority, City of Burlington, CVOEO, CACH Housing Team, Community Health Investment Committee.
- **Work in Progress:** The three-part workshop will continue to be offered in person and online on demand.

Vermont Asylum Assistance Program

- **Goal:** Educate providers social service providers and housing providers on the Vermont asylum assistance process.
- **Objectives:** To increase provider knowledge and capacity to effectively support immigrant and refugee community members by improving understanding of the Vermont asylum assistance process and local immigrant service systems.
- **Strategies:** Deliver targeted training to shelter, social service, and housing providers that strengthens service delivery for immigrant communities, including actionable guidance on navigating the local immigrant services landscape to improve referral pathways.
- **Accomplishments to Highlight:** Provided training for 50+ shelter, social service and housing providers. Focus on improving service delivery for immigrant communities, including calls to action, such as an overview of the local immigrant services landscape for effective referral making.
- **Progress on Measures:** More than 50 providers completed the training, and all participants rated it 'excellent' for its usefulness in their day-to-day work.
- **Populations of Focus:** Immigrant and Refugee community members, Older Adults, Youth, Shelter and Social Service providers, Housing Providers
- **Key Community Partnerships:** City of Burlington, Vermont Asylum Assistance Program, CACH Housing Team, Community Health Investment Committee.
- **Work in Progress:** This initiative was completed as a one-time training, with no further activities planned at this time.

Flexible Unrestricted Funding

- ▶ **Goal:** Provide flexible unrestricted funding for community members and partners to utilize when there is no available funding to support such needs.
- ▶ **Objectives:** To increase community members' ability to secure and maintain stable housing by providing flexible, unrestricted financial support when no other funding sources are available.
- ▶ **Strategies:** Provide flexible, unrestricted funding to community partners to address urgent and unmet needs such as temporary lodging, security deposits, transportation, food, clothing, identification, and other essential supports that help prevent homelessness and promote housing stability.
- ▶ **Accomplishments to Highlight:** Sub-granted \$20,000 in Community Health Investment Funds to the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (via its fiscal agent, CVOEO). The funds provided temporary lodging for vulnerable clients working with advocates, supported families with young children and older adults in accessing needed services, and supplied essential items including transportation, food, clothing, identification, and survival gear critical for accessing shelter, employment, and health services.
- ▶ **Progress on Measures:** Individual services to date: 40 unduplicated households totaling 59 people have been assisted.
- ▶ **Populations of Focus:** Youth, families, Older Adults, People with disabilities, BIPOC community members.
- ▶ **Key Community Partnerships:** The Burlington Police Department, Age Well, CVOEO, AHS, VT Cares, the Community Health Center, Probation and Parole, the Elmwood Community Shelter, the Foundations Family Shelter, and VCCI have accessed the funding. CACH Housing Team, Community Health Investment Committee.
- ▶ **Work in Progress:** Approximately \$6,000 in funds remains to be utilized by the community to further support emergency housing supportive services and housing retention.

Emergency Hotel Pool Funding

- ▶ **Goal:** Maintain housing and access to needed services for families with children residing at Harbor Front after the GA Emergency Housing program motel voucher program ended.
- ▶ **Objectives:** To prevent unsheltered homelessness and maintain stability for families with children by ensuring continued access to temporary lodging and critical support services following the end of the GA Emergency Housing motel voucher program.
- ▶ **Strategies:** Utilize a hotel pool in partnership with the City of Burlington and Champlain Housing Trust (Harbor Place) to provide continued lodging for families at imminent risk of becoming unsheltered, minimizing disruption for children and allowing time to secure permanent housing placement.
- ▶ **Accomplishments to Highlight:** Launched an emergency hotel-pool initiative in partnership with the City of Burlington and Champlain Housing Trust (Harbor Place) to prevent families with children from becoming unsheltered following the end of the state motel voucher program. This flexible funding stabilized families, minimized disruption for children, and created the time needed for staff to secure permanent housing placements rather than relying on emergency shelter.
- ▶ **Progress on Measures:** More than 70 individuals remained safely housed and connected to support services through hotel-pool funding following the end of the state motel voucher program.
- ▶ **Populations of Focus:** Families and individuals at imminent risk of homelessness.
- ▶ **Key Community Partnerships:** CVOEO, Champlain Housing Trust (Harbor Place), CACH Housing Team, Community Health Investment Committee, City of Burlington
- ▶ **Work in Progress:** Continue supporting individuals and families at risk of homelessness in securing stable housing and essential support.



Flexible School Based Housing Support Fund

- ▶ **Goal:** Prevent homelessness and promote affordable and sustainable housing arrangements for families ineligible for other community funding.
- ▶ **Objectives:** Provide financial assistance for housing transitions to families at risk of homelessness who lack access to other resources.
- ▶ **Strategies:**
 - ▶ Support housing transitions for families in the Winooski School District (WSD) who are experiencing housing instability and financial barriers in relation to housing.
 - ▶ These funds directly address urgent and unmet needs related to moving costs, deposits, overcrowding, homelessness prevention, and housing retention.
 - ▶ Utilize housing stabilization funds for critical needs such as security deposits to enable affordable and sustainable housing arrangements.
- ▶ **Accomplishments to Highlight:** \$20,000 towards addressing urgent, unmet housing needs for families in the Winooski School District (WSD)
- ▶ **Progress on Measures:** To date, Housing Stabilization Funds have supported 4 households (23 people) by covering security deposits to secure 4 housing units in Winooski. Awards totaled \$9,850 (avg. \$2,462.50 per household; median \$2,475). Assistance prioritized families ineligible for community funds, those relocating due to unaffordability or overcrowding, or who had already exhausted available assistance. Outcomes included transitioning one family from hotel shelter (ESD) to permanent housing and enabling a large 11-person household to right-size into two stable homes; one subsidized through WHA.
- ▶ **Populations of Focus:** Youth, Older Adults, Refugee and Immigrant community members, BIPOC community members
- ▶ **Key Community Partnerships:** Winooski School District, Winooski Housing Authority, Emergency Services Division
- ▶ **Work in Progress:** Approximately \$10,000 in funds remain for this program to help families in 2026.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

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.

Populations of Focus: Youth in Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties

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. Many youth were not able to get the help they needed. To overcome this obstacle, the team purchased a conversation suite which we call a “Youth Wellness Pod” for a total of \$22,000. The pod provides the following features and benefits: Soundproof (but can still hear fire alarms), Active ventilation with built in air flow, Capacity for one-on-one sessions and telehealth services for students, modified to ensure student safety, Ultra-efficient. 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.
- ▶ **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.
- ▶ **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.

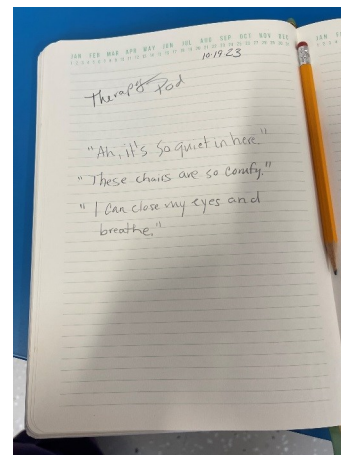
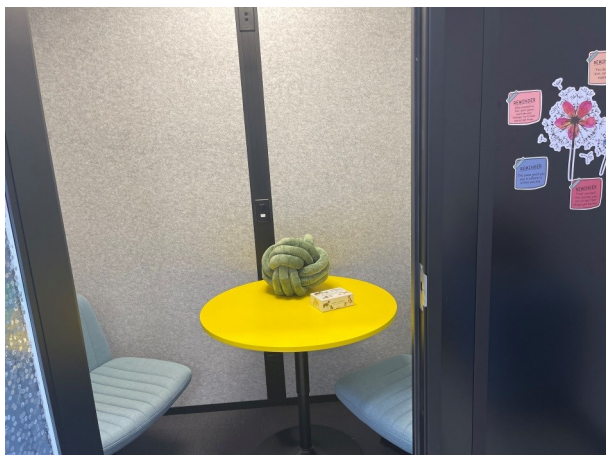
Youth Wellness Pod

► 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 has continued to be a resource for increased access for students at Edmunds Elementary and Middle School over the past year.
- While meaningful progress was made, securing sustainable funding remained an ongoing challenge. During this reporting period, the team sought grant funding to support the purchase of an additional youth mental health pod to be placed in another school and to pursue the integration of telehealth services into the pod model to further expand access to care; however, the funding was not awarded. As part of the adoption of the new 2026 – 2028 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team has since sunset, and responsibility for advancing youth mental health access strategies will transition to future CHIP-aligned efforts as funding opportunities and partnerships emerge.
- **Progress on Measures:** Student participation in mental health services more than doubled following installation of the Pod, underscoring the effectiveness of providing a confidential, accessible space for care.
- **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 (cachvt.org) .
- **Work in Progress:** Future work will shift to CHIP-aligned efforts, depending on new funding and partnerships.



UVM Medical Center

Community Health Improvement



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