

Community Health Improvement Plan *2024 Annual Report*

Central Vermont Medical Center



2024

THE
University of Vermont
HEALTH NETWORK

Central Vermont Medical Center

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A Message From Leadership



Anna Noonan, RN, BSN, MS
President and Chief Operating Officer
Central Vermont Medical Center

Central Vermont Medical Center is dedicated to enhancing the health and well-being of our communities. Every three years, we conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to gather input from community members, partner organizations, and government agencies. This feedback, along with relevant data and existing resources, helps us identify regional priorities.

Our Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) outlines strategies to address these needs over a three-year cycle with support from community programs, organizations, agencies and systems. This collaboration is key to the success of our efforts to improve community health and address the needs identified in the CHNA. We utilize this annual report to track and share out highlights and progress from our work.

CVMC is dedicated to inclusivity and ensuring that the voices of those most affected are central to our strategy development. While we are making significant progress, we acknowledge that this is an ongoing journey. This report showcases the excellent work happening daily. We are proud of our collaborative efforts to improve community health and are excited to share our 2024 accomplishments with you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anna Noonan". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "A" and "N".

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

The 2022-2025 Community Health Needs Assessment identified priority areas of need for those who choose to live and work in central Vermont. Based on CVMC's existing expertise and resources, the medical center is best positioned to lead efforts in the following areas:

- Chronic Disease Prevention
- Mental Health
- Substance Use Disorders
- Social Drivers of Health

ABOUT US

Central Vermont Medical Center is the primary health care provider for 66,000 people who live and work in the 26 communities of central Vermont. We provide a comprehensive range of services through our hospital, 27 community-based medical practices and 153-bed skilled nursing facility.

For over half a century, CVMC has been a cornerstone of care in central Vermont, committed to nurturing a healthy community through innovative health care solutions, advanced treatment options and educational initiatives that empower individuals to lead healthier lives, while also driving economic growth and stability in the region.

As a dedicated partner and fiscal sponsor for THRIVE, the accountable community for health in central Vermont, CVMC is committed to supporting the advancement of collaborative partners' work. This is a recognition that no single organization has the ability to change population outcomes, however, when many organizations and individuals come together, the resulting collective impact is greater than any individual action taken alone.

Summary of Accomplishments

Highlights of 2024

- On July 10-11, 2024, central Vermont experienced severe flooding for the second year in a row, affecting homes, businesses, and water sources, and increasing mental health needs. Leaders from THRIVE and a multi-sector partnership quickly coordinated a response, earning the 2024 Vermont Public Health Champion Team Award.
- CVMC promotes Job Shadow programs with local high schools and has a newly renovated clinical classroom to enhance learning. Staff dedicate thousands of hours mentoring students and non-traditional learners.
- The Central Vermont Prevention Coalition (CVPC) continues to fight stigma around substance use. Dr. Javad Mashkuri, an Emergency Medicine physician at CVMC, received the Davida Coady Gorham Medical Professional of the Year Award for his work in addiction medicine.
- CVPC secured a 5-year and \$1.875 million SAMSHA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Admin.) Grant: FUTURE VT—Families Uniting to Understand and Resolve Substance Use Effects in Vermont.
- CVMC participated in the statewide program **Always Ready for Children**, in which hospitals undergo a 100-point readiness assessment that evaluates their ability to care for pediatric emergencies based on personnel qualifications, equipment availability and established protocols. CVMC's ED achieved the program's **Innovator** level recognition—the highest standard of pediatric readiness.
- **Project BEACON** strengthened relationships between EMS, recovery, and harm reduction, fostering collaboration at the state level. About 25 EMS providers trained in Project BEACON, 100 in “Caring for People Who Use Drugs,” and 75 attended Stephen Murray’s keynote.
 - **Population:** Overdose survivors in Central Vermont who refuse transport to the CVMC Emergency Department.
 - 88% of patients refusing transport accepted a Leave Behind Kit,
 - 62% received BEACON kits,
 - 15 phones were distributed
 - Overdose survivors engaged in recovery support.
- **The Nalox Box Project** Installed 18 boxes at 3 locations and co-hosted overdose prevention training for 30 food pantry managers. Established 3 sites to have naloxone (Narcan) available at all times.
 - One pantry shared with us that a young man took Narcan for his neighbor, serving as an example of how important it is to shift stigma and encourage community support

Investments

Central VT Prevention Coalition (CVPC): \$25,000

The UVM Health Network Community Benefit Investment dollars were used to support the coordination of the coalition and contributed in the following community projects:

- NaloxBox project: Ensuring access to emergency use naloxone in community organizations and businesses.
- Project BEACON: A community based post-overdose response initiative connecting survivors to harm reduction, treatment, and recovery resources.

Community Investments: \$6,500

- Event sponsor of Barre Heritage Festival, Barre's free 4-day cultural celebration, supporting a community with higher poverty levels and social health challenges.
- Sponsor of It Takes a Village – A free family event on 5/11/24 by Good Beginnings of Central Vermont.
- Annual contribution to VT Ethics Network, ensuring access to a vital statewide healthcare resource.
- Sponsor of Vermont Mountaineers – Providing family-friendly entertainment and youth baseball camps, strengthening community ties.
- Sponsor of annual diaper drive fundraiser with Family Center of Washington County.
- Co-hosted a screening of Just Getting By with Capstone Community Action, highlighting the challenges and resilience of low-income Vermonters and the need for more support.

TOTAL: \$31,500

Key Community Partnerships

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| • THRIVE | • Capstone Community Action | • Elevate Youth |
| • Central Vermont Prevention Coalition (CVPC) | • Vermont CARES | • Montpelier & Barre Police Departments |
| • Family Center of Washington County | • Turning Point Center of Central Vermont | • District 6 EMS |
| • Vermont Foodbank | • BAART/Central Vermont Addiction Medicine | • VAMHAR |
| • People's Health and Wellness | • Washington County Mental Health Services | • Agency of Human Services |
| • Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce | • Montpelier and Barre Community Justice Centers | • Vermont Department of Health |
| • Good Beginnings of Central Vermont | • Downstreet Housing & Community Development | • Montpelier Food Pantry |
| | | • Mosaic |
| | | • Washington County Diversion Program |

Work in Progress/Anticipated for 2025

We will conduct our next Community Health Needs Assessment to identify current needs, existing resources, and collective strategies that CVMC and our community partners can support to improve the health and wellness of central Vermonters.

Top priorities that will continue to be addressed:

- Food security
- THRIVE
- Central VT Prevention Coalition (CVPC)
 - Future VT
 - ROAD
- **FUTURE VT:** Grant kick-off October 1 and formed a steering committee and held 3 meetings and the grant kick-off was October 1
 - Reduce youth cannabis and alcohol use through trauma-informed, recovery-centered approaches.
 - Increase capacity of CVPC and its partners to implement community based substance misuse services at the family level.
 - Reduce onset and progression of youth cannabis and alcohol use through evidence based strategies in schools and communities
 - **Population:** Rural youth ages 12-18 and their families, children living with parents with a Substance Use Disorder (SUD), LGBTQ+ youth, and children living in poverty within Washington County plus five towns in Orange County, Vermont.
- **ROAD** (Refocus on Alcohol Dependence) program collaboration continues with CVMC and several key community partners to improve access to treatment and services for alcohol use disorders.
 - ♦ Reduce alcohol use disorder progression by initiating treatment in the ER, ensuring smooth transitions to specialty care, and supporting long-term recovery. Develop the Hub and Spoke model for AUD and outpatient detox services.
 - ♦ Increase referrals and timely access to specialty substance use treatment.
 - ♦ Connect CVMC ED patients with Peer Recovery Services.
 - ♦ Reduce alcohol use among ROAD participants.
 - ♦ **Population:** Rural Vermonters with Alcohol Use Disorder (particularly in Central Vermont) ages 18+

Calendar Year 2024: Work to Date



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



GOAL: Create a care environment that honors the diversity of our community, continually expands cultural knowledge, and adapts services to meet the culturally unique needs of patients, Woodridge residents, staff and our community.

Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

OBJECTIVE 1: Increase cultural awareness and humility among staff and providers.

Strategy 1: Provide opportunities for leadership, staff, providers and community stakeholders to connect, share and learn via cross-cultural engagement in a safe, inclusive environment.

- Continued to focus on diversity, equity and inclusion and fostering a strong culture as an employer.
- New employees are offered an opportunity to attend our Human-to-Human connection course, which empowers staff with an understanding of the CVMC culture and how we show up each day for our patients and each other.
- Staff are given tools and techniques for navigating challenging situations in a productive way, with an emphasis on de-escalation and safety.

Strategy 2: Incorporate diverse stakeholders on hospital-wide committees to develop organizational priorities for ensuring high-quality care.

- Patient and Family Advisors have been recruited to sit on committees and bring the patient experience to improvement efforts.
- In 2024 we expanded our # of PFA engagements by 51%, with more than 41 engaged.

Strategy 3: Monitor and track patient experience surveys to ensure members of the BIPOC community who receive care at CVMC experience equitable care.

- Providing care that is patient and family centered is a core value at CVMC.
- Patient experience data from across the organization is reviewed with leaders at least monthly with targeted strategies developed specific to each environment.
- Surveys have now been updated to allow for electronic responses to broaden the feedback captured.

BY THE NUMBERS

51%

Expansion of Patient and Family
Advisor Engagements

Exceeded
FY2024 goal of
25%



Chronic Disease Prevention



GOAL: Identify barriers and change processes to ensure equitable access to health care and community-based services.

Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

OBJECTIVE 1: Promote UVM Health Network population health management strategy through improved communication and coordination of care.

Strategy 1: Continue the development and implementation of our primary care delivery model and the UVM Health Network Population Health Services Organization (PHSO). The aim is to create an extended care team of resources including: care coordination, social services, health coaching, and mental health and resource coordination to positively impact clinical health outcomes for our patients, Woodridge residents and our community, while maximizing the value of the services we provide.

- Primary care practices have added RN care managers who are using clinical care pathways to engage with patients and additional care team members, such as a diabetes educator or wellness coach, to navigate with the patient towards better health.
- Clinical pathways have been developed for diabetes, hypertension and work is underway on a pathway for congestive heart failure.
- Continued promotion and use of e-Consults, and expansion of included specialties, is helping to improve access to specialty care from within Primary Care. This service allows a PCP to ask a specialist very targeted questions related to a patient's care, receive guidance from the specialist and be able to start a care plan without a long wait.

OBJECTIVE 2: Reduce disparities in chronic disease prevalence and death rates.

Strategy 1: CVMC Primary Care and community partners will identify collaborative opportunities to improve care and services.

- The increasing prevalence of new types of non-healing wounds prompted a **Community-Based Xylazine Response**. In May 2024, Central Vermont Prevention Coalition conducted a **Xylazine Survey** that gathered insights from 167 respondents. Results were shared with stakeholders and demonstrated the need for more education and guidance on how to care for these wounds. Trainings included Xylazine 101 for CVPC members and wound care for 40 clinicians. A low-barrier care site was established in central Vermont and materials were compiled into a repository for stakeholders to access.
- In September CVMC received primary stroke certification from the Joint Commission.

Mental Health



GOAL: Strengthen and support community initiatives that promote mental wellness, recovery and resilience.

Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

OBJECTIVE 1: Improve access to mental health services and support the continuum of care.

Strategy 1: Advance mental health integration within our primary care practices and leverage the PHSO mental health resource model to extend resources in our primary care practices.

- CVMC has adopted the model of Primary Care Mental Health Integration in all its primary care clinics, recognizing conditions like anxiety and depression are common and can impact your overall health.
- Through this model, primary care providers have access to psychiatric consultation and a collaborative care mental health clinician who works with the care team and patient to develop and track progress through an individualized care plan.

OBJECTIVE 2: Support access to mental wellness services within the community.

Strategy 1: Work with community partners to support community mental health education and mental wellness programs (e.g., physical activity, yoga, meditation).

- CVMC is a consistent supporter of the Vermont Corporate Cup Challenge, promoting all employees to take part in promoting wellness.



Social Drivers of Health



GOAL: Strengthen and support community initiatives that create social conditions that promote health.

Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

OBJECTIVE 1: Support policies and infrastructure that create healthy communities.

Strategy 1: Conduct SDoH patient screening and partner with community agencies to align referrals and care management resources to meet identified needs.

- In 2024 we standardized our approach to screening for social drivers of health in our primary care sites as well as our inpatient hospital. When a need is identified our team of care managers work with the patient as well as community organizations to overcome barriers for that patient to have the ability to live a healthy life.
- CVMC was awarded a \$10,000 grant to partner with Community Rides Vermont to provide community members transportation to medical appointments using Gopher, a transportation service with a fleet of zero-emission electric vehicles serving central Vermont. In the first 6 months of the partnership around 50 individuals were served, covering a span of nearly 950 miles.
- We expanded from 3 SASH housing sites to all 6 SASH sites in Barre for a total of 12 sites this year. Despite the repeated flooding in Barre this year, the program continued without interruption.

Strategy 2: Serve as the convener for THRIVE, the regional Accountable Community for Health.

- THRIVE partners meet monthly, or more frequently, to connect on community needs, strategies underway and identify opportunities for additional support or advocacy.

BY THE NUMBERS

50+

Individuals received free rides associated with their healthcare, covering a span of nearly 950 miles. In the first 6 months of our partnership with Gopher,

Strategy 4: Partner with Vermont Youth Conservation Corps to continue the Health Care Share program to connect patients with fresh local food.

- The 2024 season of CVMC's Health Care Share program was a great success thanks to our 13-year partnership with Vermont Youth Conversation Corps, and our committed staff, volunteers, and program participants. Through this program VYCC provided 199 shares every week for 19 weeks June through October and an additional holiday share in November.
- Expanded from 9 to 12 sites.
- The total number of shares increased from 165 to 199 this year as well, reaching a total of 419 household members.

Strategy 5: Partner with the Vermont Foodbank and sponsor Veggie Van Go food distribution.

- CVMC sponsors monthly Vermont Foodbank Veggie Van Go food distribution on the 4th Friday of the month. In FY2024, we served a total of 5,646 households.

Populations of focus: Individuals who live and work in central Vermont. Patients who are experiencing food insecurity, one or more diet-related illness, or facing other distinct health risks. **(Healthcare Shares)**

Key community partnerships: Vermont Youth Conservation Corp., Vermont Foodbank, Vermont Community Rides

BY THE NUMBERS

5,646

Households served by CVMC-sponsored monthly Vermont Foodbank Veggie Van Go distribution

419

Household members in 2024 through the **Health Care Share program**,

"We ate healthier this summer than we ever have. I'm a single mom with three kids on Reach Up, so food is always hard."

— **Healthcare Share Participant**

89%

Participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement:

"I am more confident in my ability to eat healthy foods"

Substance Use Disorders



GOAL: : Build a seamless network where anyone can access substance use support any-time, preventing initiation and promoting recovery.

Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

OBJECTIVE 1: Improve access to substance use disorder services and supports along a full continuum of care.

Strategy 1: CVMC providers, leaders and community partners will collaborate and support stronger integration of substance use interventions.

OBJECTIVE 2: Promote a "community-wide systems" framework for the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders.

Strategy 1: CVMC serves as the convener for the Central Vermont Prevention Coalition (CVPC).

- Lead a collaborative network to address substance use, enhancing community health and resilience.
- Convene inclusive partners to address regional challenges, eliminate stigma, provide education, and advocate for Central Vermont's needs through a collaborative network. Monthly meetings included 30 organizations, with two new members.
- CVPC completed its first strategic plan, guiding efforts through FY26.
- Staff presented at national conferences and secured \$2M in grants.
- CVPC aligned with Region 1 for prevention work and helped address substance use concerns after the July 2024 floods.
- CVPC led initiatives like ROAD, Project BEACON, NaloxBox, Recovery Coaches in the ED, RAM, and xylazine care.

BY THE NUMBERS

In collaboration with **Central Vermont Prevention Coalition**, distribution of NaloxBox can be found in

8 sites in our community with
11 more pending

Members of the **ROAD team** interacted with

253 patients in the **CVMC ED**
17% successfully engaged in treatment

CONTACT

Michelle Gilmour, MS, PMP

Quality Data Manager

(802) 371-4196

Michelle.Gilmour@CVMC.org

The University of Vermont Health Network-Central Vermont Medical Center

UVMHealth.org/CVMC

*This report was created in collaboration with UVM Health Network
Community Health Improvement team.*

