

Testimony at Statehouse on Community Nurse Pilot--- S.231 --- Feb 28, 2024

Phil Hobbie
220 Brothers Road; Hartland, VT 05048
802-291-3323 phobbie@hartlandvt.org
Member of AiH Board
Chair of Hartland Selectboard

Professional background; 40 years in Information Technology with business systems and over 30 years higher ed systems

My work as a select person is about building and maintaining community. I work with the Town commissions and committees as well the many volunteer groups to run as well as enrich the Town. Of course, the Selectboard must keep the public buildings and roads maintained, provide core services like safety, fire, ems and library services, etc. For me, the goal of building community has me making decisions considering the economic realities as well as the physical and mental health of our Town.

Today, I am here to represent Aging in Hartland and our community nurse program.

Aging in Hartland is ten years old.

As Katie and Jill will / have described, we have two community nurses, a part time administrator, and many volunteers. We have an online referral system, volunteers to help with referrals, a system to track donors and volunteers and the nurses use the RedCap system.

Our budget includes an appropriation from the Town, private donations, grants and income from fundraising events and an annual appeal. The appropriation from Hartland is roughly 35% of AiH's revenue. I think it is very significant that our Town chooses to support AiH to the extent that it does.

I would like to reference some thinking on the topic of community and relate this to community nurses. Peter Block in his book "Community: The Structure of Belonging" offers many suggestions on ways to create and build vital communities.

In the book he talks about our love of problems. As a society we believe that defining, analyzing, and studying problems is a path to a better world.

The creation of a community nurse pilot will enable more definition of the benefits and liabilities of town community nurse programs. But, I want to speak to the core of Block's premise that often we do not need more studies and the answer is in front of us.

Aging in Hartland's community nurse program works.

The program is over ten years old.

We have built trust in the community nurse program in our Town. Our referrals to the community nurse program continue to increase.

We have programs that the community is aware of, participates in and values.

Please consider our community nurse program as an example of why funding and conducting a state wide set of pilots is valid as well as important.

Respectively submitted,
--Phil Hobbie