

Alexander McCracken

From: Stephanie Winters <swinters@vtmd.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 7:51 PM
To: Virginia Lyons; David Weeks; Ruth Hardy; Martine L. Gulick; Terri Williams
Cc: Alexander McCracken; Holmes, Breena W
Subject: [External] Support for Childcare and Maternal Child Health Connection with Department of Health

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Senator Lyons and Members of the Senate Health and Welfare,

On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics Vermont Chapter I wanted to reach out today as you work on marking up S.56.

We are so happy to see childcare getting the attention it deserves. We know how important childcare is for families and for the early development of our children. Any increases to access for Vermont families and support for our childcare educators and workers is incredibly important.

In reviewing the bill we notice that it includes moving the Maternal Child Health (MCH) Department from the Vermont Department of Health to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) - Page 28 lines 12-14. We are concerned about this proposal and would ask that you remove this section and leave the organization of the Vermont Department of Health intact. The relationship between VDH and MCH is an intentional relationship to make sure children are part of our integrated system of clinical medicine and public health.

Maternal Child Health goes way beyond early childhood. It is federally funded population health and prevention field of public health and is integrated into the delivery of health care to children. It works closely with pediatricians, family medicine physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants to improve outcomes for children. MCH also focuses on policy and system work, including behavior change through communication and social marketing (substance use, tobacco, healthy eating, physical activity, environmental health etc).

MCH work is centered on the life course model and spans a huge body of work, included but not limited to: family planning, pregnancy, perinatal and infant health, early childhood, school and adolescent health, and young adults. In Vermont, that includes family planning, domestic and sexual violence prevention; child and youth injury prevention.

MCH oversees the Outreach and Informing mandate of EPSDT (Children's Medicaid), as well as determining the Medicaid periodicity schedule for health and oral health and also Medicaid administration efforts in schools. MCH houses The State School Nurse Consultant role and is grounded in Medicaid policy, and supports our public health and healthcare efforts with schools (standards of practices, school nurse orientation, School Nurse leadership/workforce development, Essential School Health Services.

MCH also has Oversight of the Title X federal family planning services system and partners with DMH on Perinatal psychiatry consultation and the Child Psychiatry Access Program.

As you can see, the Maternal Child Health Division is a robust and comprehensive part of the Vermont Department of Health and uses the connections with all other departments within VDH to amplify the voice for children and families in

health care, public health and school health. To remove MCH from VDH would be to separate it from its closest partners within VDH – Immunization Dept., WIC, Tobacco Prevention, Substance Use, Reproductive Health, etc.

Dr. Breena Holmes, AAPVT President-Elect and past MCH Director is copied on this email and is happy to speak to you on the history of Maternal and Child Health, including Children with Special Health Needs and **why it is essential that it stay in public health (VDH).**

Thank you!

Stephanie



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