

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to ask you to reconsider an important part of the mental health funding which has been cut from the budget. I'm speaking about the grant to The Vermont Education Recovery Project which sponsors and supports the on going training of WRAP facilitators.

Let me introduce myself. I'm Rene Rose and have worked at Northeast Kingdom Human Services for the past 25 years. I've worked in the CRT program, a program for those with intensive mental health needs, and Emergency services

I trained as a WRAP facilitator in 2013 and since then have co-lead groups at NKHS in the CRT program and at our crisis bed and in the community in St Johnsbury and Newport.

What is WRAP and why is it so important? WRAP is an evidence based non diagnostic program that fosters individual empowerment with the support of the group and the facilitators. The north star of WRAP (and key to the approach) is asking participants," What are you like at your best" and working together on wellness tools based on the values of personal responsibility, support. hope and education

An important aspect for legislators to know is that WRAP is cost effective. Over the years, I've seen costly hospital stays minimized or prevented, folks returning to work and many aspects of community life. A study conducted by the Copeland Center in Wisconsin and Vermont of individuals recently in Psychiatric hospitals showed that WRAP is often more effective than case management in preventing re-hospitalizations because it provides not just the important aspects of Hope and personal responsibility but skills to foster prevention and recovery

Currently, the general fund increase in our budget for in patient beds is 2.8 million. The request for the Copeland Center grant is 60,000. This relatively modest grant will go a long way to provide clients of the mental health system tools to prevent hospitalization and beyond and a variety of effective tools to lead a recovered life.

Thank you for your consideration

Rene Rose, M.A. Northeast Kingdom Humane Services