

**DRAFT HHC language for HAC COVID relief bill**

Sec. A. GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD; DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH;

HEALTH CARE DISPARITIES; DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

(a) The sum of \$66,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Green Mountain Care Board in fiscal year 2021 to provide the State share pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 9374(h) for updates to the Vermont Healthcare Claims Uniform Reporting and Evaluation System (VHCURES) to improve data collection related to health equity.

(b) The sum of \$134,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health in fiscal year 2021 for collection and analysis of demographic data, including race and ethnicity data, regarding Vermont residents who experience health disparities.

Sec. B. DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH; EMERGENCY OUTREACH

SERVICES GRANTS

The sum of \$300,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Mental Health in fiscal year 2021 for grants to peer-led and -impacted member-led organizations for emergency outreach services to address COVID-19-related needs. Of these funds, the Department shall allocate \$150,000.00 to peer-support organizations and \$150,000.00 to organizations supporting the needs of LGBTQ youths.

Sec. C. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH; HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE

DEVELOPMENT; PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN SCHOLARSHIPS

(a) The sum of \$1,825,257.00 in Global Commitment investment funds is appropriated to the Department of Health in fiscal year 2021 for three years of scholarships for medical students who commit to practicing primary care in this State in accordance with 18 V.S.A. § 33. The Department shall use \$608,419.00 of the Global

Commitment investment funds for the scholarships in fiscal year 2022, \$608,419.00 in fiscal year 2023, and \$608,419.00 in fiscal year 2024.

(b) 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 155, Sec. 7a (repeal of 18 V.S.A. § 33 on July 1, 2022) is repealed.

Sec. D. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH; HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE

DEVELOPMENT; NURSING SCHOLARSHIPS

(a) The sum of \$3,107,871.00 in Global Commitment investment funds is appropriated to the Department of Health for three years of additional scholarships for nursing students pursuant to the program established in 18 V.S.A. § 31 and administered by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. The Department shall use \$1,035,957.00 in Global Commitment investment funds for the scholarships in fiscal year 2022, \$1,035,957.00 in fiscal year 2023, and \$1,035,957.00 in fiscal year 2024.

(b)(1) First priority for the scholarship funds shall be given to students pursuing a practical nursing certificate who will be eligible to sit for the NCLEX-PN examination upon completion of the certificate.

(2) Second priority for the scholarship funds shall be given to students pursuing an associate's degree in nursing who will be eligible to sit for the NCLEX-RN examination upon graduation.

(3) Third priority for the scholarship funds shall be given to students pursuing a bachelor of science degree in nursing.

(c) To be eligible for a scholarship under this section, applicants shall:

(1) demonstrate financial need;

(2) demonstrate academic capacity by carrying at least a 2.5 grade point average in their course of study prior to receiving the fund award; and

(3) agree to work as a nurse in Vermont for a minimum of one year following licensure for each year of scholarship awarded.

(d) Students attending an accredited postsecondary educational institution in Vermont shall receive first preference for scholarships.

(e) There shall be no deadline to apply for a scholarship under this section.

Scholarships shall be awarded on a rolling basis as long as funds are available, and any funds remaining at the end of each fiscal year shall roll over and shall be available to the Department of Health in following fiscal year for additional scholarships as described in this section.

***Sec. E. Need to appropriate GF dollars for State match for scholarships?***

Sec. F. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH; LONG-TERM CARE AND LICENSED  
PRACTICAL NURSING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The sum of \$2,000,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health in fiscal year 2021 to establish a partnership program between skilled nursing facilities in this State and Vermont Technical College (VTC) to bring VTC's practical nursing program to the skilled nursing facilities in order to train current employees, such as nursing assistants, to become higher level providers. The funds shall be used to cover trainees' tuition and fees and to provide a stipend to help meet their living expenses, such as housing and child care, while attending the program. The funds shall also be used to support VTC's instructional, program, and administrative costs.

## Sec. G. DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH; HOUSING SUPPORTS

The sum of \$4,000,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Mental Health in fiscal year 2021 for grants to stakeholder organizations to provide housing supports in community settings. The Department shall give priority to proposals:

(1) from peer-run or peer-directed housing organizations;

(2) in underserved regions of the State, such as the Northeast Kingdom;

(3) from organizations that demonstrate the greatest ability to respond immediately to the need for housing supports;

(4) that employ or build on successful, evidence-based models of supportive housing, such as Housing First;

(5) that will not require additional State funds for operating costs in future years or that can redirect current expenditures, or both;

(6) that create movement within the current system of care, such as those that would move individuals out of hospitals and other restrictive settings and back into a community setting; and

(7) that focus on equity and on providing patient-centered care.

## Sec. H. DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH; DESIGNATED AND

## SPECIALIZED SERVICE AGENCIES; CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The sum of \$850,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Mental Health in fiscal year 2021 to provide funds to the designated and specialized service agencies to enable them each to hire an additional case manager to provide case management services to Vermont residents who may not previously have been part of an

agency's case load but whose lives have been significantly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and who are now urgently in need of these agencies' supports.

Sec. I. DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH; WORKFORCE TRAINING AND  
WELLNESS SUPPORTS

The sum of \$150,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Mental Health in fiscal year 2021 for training and wellness supports for front-line health care workers to help them meet Vermont residents' current mental health needs, such as training for emergency department personnel responding to an increased demand for crisis services as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and training on trauma-informed and trauma-specific care for mental health professionals responding to the surge in mental health treatment needs. These workers would also benefit from wellness supports as they continue to care for people in crisis while experiencing their own stress, anxiety, and trauma as a result of the pandemic.