



**Testimony of Vermont Care Partners
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Julie Tessler, Executive Director, Vermont Care Partners: Vt Council
Heidi Hall, Chief Financial Officer, Washington County Mental Health Services
Mary Moulton, Executive Director, Washington County Mental Health Services

Introduction

Vermont Care Partners is a statewide network of sixteen designated and specialized service agencies providing mental health, substance use, and intellectual and developmental disability services. For an overview of service network please see our website: www.vermontcarepartners.org

The impact of COVID-19 on mental health, substance use disorders and developmental disabilities has been significant. The trauma it is causing will have lasting impacts long beyond the point when the pandemic is over on Vermonters and their demand for services.

The Vermont Care Partners network is grateful for the flexibilities and CRF funding granted by the legislature and implemented by AHS, DMH, DAIL, and VDH which enabled up to make the necessary adjustment to continue serve Vermonters throughout the pandemic. We are also grateful for the partnerships and support of our health care and community-based partners. Together Vermont is showing just how committed we are to those in need.

Sources of Funds

- Local Community members and business supported agencies donations of face masks, meals, water, hand sanitizer, etc. as well as some financial support.
- State administered Health Care Provider Stabilization Funds (CARES)
- Community Foundation Grants
- Federally administered Health and Human Services Stimulus Funding (CARES)
- Other federal and local grants
- Payroll Protection Program - only for a few agencies with under 500 employees.

Use of Funds

- Communications and trainings with staff, clients, and public
- Hazard Pay for employees providing Face to Face care to clients
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and sanitizing supplies, including air purifiers
- Information Technology - telehealth equipment, Wi-fi connectivity, Zoom, etc., staff and clients
- Payments to Share Living Providers (DS) and other Home Care Providers (MH)
- Crisis Stipends for Parents (DS)
- Social Distancing and Remote work location equipment including shelter for clients who need to be quarantined, rental of space to provide day supports while remote learning, tents, and outdoor equipment, etc.
- Increases in Program Support supplies and materials (activity bags, food, outdoor equipment, etc.)
- Transportation – special features