

Nellie Marvel

From: James, Nissa <Nissa.James@vermont.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 6:38 AM
To: Virginia Lyons
Cc: Nellie Marvel; Backus, Ena; Harte, Alison; De La Bruere, Andrea; Gustafson, Cory
Subject: DVHA/AHS Response: Impact of COVID-19 on VT Providers

Dear Chair Lyons,

Last week, you posed a question pertaining to the impact of COVID-19 on the health care workforce in Vermont and whether the Agency of Human Services had observed a loss in providers. I am writing to provide the following information:

Vermont Medicaid: Increase in Providers Participating with the Vermont Medicaid Program Observed Over the Last Year

Vermont Medicaid-participating providers are required to notify Vermont Medicaid 30-days in advance of terminating their participation with Medicaid. As a result, our Director of Provider Services has confirmed that we have not lost any providers due specifically to the COVID-19 public health emergency (i.e., there are always providers who end participation throughout any given year for reasons like retirement, moving out of state for employment elsewhere, etc.). In fact, in the last year, Vermont Medicaid has actually observed an increase in the number of providers participating with the Vermont Medicaid program.

Additionally, the Director of Health Care Reform coordinated with the Vermont Medical Society and Health First to confirm the following information regarding the impact of COVID-19:

- The Vermont Medical Society responded that it was not aware that any practices had closed due to the pandemic.
- Health First, the independent practice association, indicated that they were aware of a primary care provider in Chittenden County and an ophthalmologist in the Northeast Kingdom who have closed but the providers were not part of Health First. Health First further noted that the Association had two physicians who retired early due to the pandemic (one was a solo practitioner). Finally, Health First reported that a couple of providers have stepped away from practice due to the pandemic but their practices have remained open (just at a decreased capacity). The implication is that these providers will return to practice at some point.

Please let us know if we may be of further assistance or if additional information is required.

All my best,

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Nissa L. (Walke) James, Ph.D. | DVHA
Health Care Director
Department of Vermont Health Access
Mobile: (802) 798-2705
Email: nissa.james@vermont.gov

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