


**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Representative Alyssa Black, Chair, House Committee on Health Care

FROM: Mark A. Levine MD, Commissioner of Health 

DATE: February 11, 2025

SUBJECT: Follow-up information requested – Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Adjustment

Below is the information requested during my testimony on January 23, 2025, about the Health Department's fiscal year 2025 budget adjustment proposal.

1. *The General Assembly enacted legislation in 2023 to encourage safe storage of firearms. What has the Health Department been doing to encourage safer firearms storage?*

The Health Department has provided approximately 2,500 gun locks to community partners for distribution. Separately, the GunSafe VT campaign has enabled the distribution of over 4,000 gun locks. We've worked with the Vermont Program for Quality in Healthcare (VPQHC) to establish agreements with all 14 of Vermont's emergency departments hospitals to train their core ED staff on Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM). Over 400 hospital staff across the 14 hospitals have completed the CALM training. We've also helped VPQHC to distribute over 200 free gun locks to Emergency Departments for their staff to distribute to patients who own firearms. We've worked with the Center for Health and Learning to develop and promote community guides to promote Safe Storage/Lethal Means Safety. The Health Department's webpage on firearm safety and safe storage of firearms can be found [here](#).

2. *Provide information about the number of health professionals who have benefited from the educational assistance programs included in the Health Department budget.*

The Health Department budget includes funding for loan repayment and forgivable scholarship programs for Health professionals, including physicians, nurses and mental health professionals. Between the fiscal years 2012 and 2024, those programs have helped 2,190 professionals.

