

Dear Legislators,

I am very fortunate to work as a family medicine physician at Integrative Family Medicine Montpelier, which is a patient centered medical home. A patient centered medical home means that a patient's health care needs can be met at one location and the center addresses all aspects of a patient's health, including the social determinants of health and bio psychosocial barriers to care and impacts on health. For example, our medical home has an embedded community health team and PHSO which includes social workers, case/care managers, nutritionists, wellness coaches, and community health nurses. We also recently expanded from just having a psychologist onsite, to joining the primary care mental health initiative which has brought additional access for our patients to onsite psychiatry and more mental health counseling. Additionally, we also have physical therapy at our medical home.

I recently learned that because VT will not be joining AHEAD until 2027, yet One Care VT will be resolved end of 2025, we will have major gaps in funding primary care programs such as community health team, primary care mental health initiative, and other vital blueprint for health and Medicare primary care programs.

I don't know how I would do my job without the support of our community health team; I communicate with, refer to, or access support from, our CHT team members multiple times a day for care of my patients. They are crucial to providing full wrap around care to our patients which is why and how the care and treatment I provide can be successful. Without them, I would not be able to achieve nearly the degree of positive patient outcomes I currently am able to. Similarly, the addition of the primary care mental health initiative at our clinic this past year has been transformative for our patients. We now have guaranteed access to two psychiatrists (MD, NP) and mental health counselor, which was previously near impossible to acquire for patients (wait time being 6-12 months). This has been outrageously successful for our patients.

I implore all legislators involved in the budgeting and financing for our health care costs to please include in the SFY2026 budget one-time funding of \$5.5 million for primary care programs and \$4.5 million in state funds to continue Medicare-funded Blueprint for Health programs.

Thank you very much for considering this request. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Emily Jones MD  
Integrative Family Medicine Montpelier  
156 Main Street  
Montpelier, VT 05602  
802-223-4738