



Cathedral Square

Advancing Healthy Homes, Caring Communities & Positive Aging since 1977

TO: Chairman Black and members of the House Health Care Committee
FROM: Molly Dugan, Director of Policy, Cathedral Square
RE: SASH® gap funding request- SFY 2027 budget
DATE: February 18, 2026

I am writing to respectfully request that you include an add of **\$2.55m in the House Health Care Committee's budget memo to the House Appropriations Committee to fill a gap in SASH (Support and Services at Home) funding expected in the last half of SFY 2027.** This funding is crucial to ensure there is no interruption of services and support to the over 5,000 older Vermonters and those with disabilities who rely on the SASH model to remain healthy, safe, and thriving in their homes and communities across Vermont.

Your committee supported gap funding last year when it was decided that the AHEAD model implementation (the intended federal funding replacement source for the All-Payer Model which ended 12-31-25) would not begin until the beginning of 2027. We now know that the AHEAD model has been pushed back another year to begin January 2028. Unfortunately, the Governor's proposed 2027 budget did NOT include gap funding to bridge SASH this additional year. We understand from the Administration that they are considering the use of the Rural Health Transformation Grant funds to cover the gap. However, as your committee knows, there are several unknowns about the RHT program requirements that are still being sorted out including whether funds can be used in Chittenden County, provider cap details, etc. SASH needs a Plan B.

SASH runs out of the non-profit affordable housing network (twenty-one organizations) in all counties of the state and has been doing so for fifteen years. It is a homegrown model that has been nationally replicated and recognized for its innovative value-based payment approach and proven results such as:

- Saving health care spending by reducing unnecessary hospitalizations and emergency department visits.
- Delaying nursing home placements-participants can live at home longer.
- Reducing loneliness and improving quality of life.
- Advancing regional, integrated, person-centered care for vulnerable populations.
- Lowering chronic disease burdens and strengthens coordinated care for complex conditions such as COPD, diabetes, CHF, hypertension, mental health needs, and substance use disorder.
- Supporting sustainable workforce development and expanding technology adoption in rural communities- SASH provides work for over 200 staff in all parts of the state.

Thank you for considering adding this budget request to your recommendation memo. SASH is making an everyday difference in people's lives throughout the state AND saving precious state dollars through its prevention and evidence-based practices and integration with community providers, hospitals, and long-term care facilities.

Please reach out to me with any questions- I can be reached by phone (text is fine) at 802-578-6074 or email to dugan@cathedralsquare.org.