



# Vermont Department of Health – H.91

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# Current Activity: Outreach Workers

- Embedded in VDH-DSU Preferred Providers and Syringe Services Programs
- In FY24, 1119 contacts via outreach workers
- To date, in FY25 there have been 491 contacts (incomplete data reporting)
- Outreach locations/populations targeted include unhoused individuals
- Outreach locations:
  - Shelters
  - Food shelves/free meal programs
  - Transit stations
  - Encampments/campgrounds
  - Social service and public safety entities that serve/encounter unhoused individuals
  - Hotels/motels
  - Drop-in centers
  - Libraries
  - Community resource centers
  - Other areas where unhoused individuals congregate

# Current Activity: Intersection of Treatment and Housing

Providers in the VDH-DSU preferred provider network are required to address housing for those they serve.

Per the preferred provider treatment standards:

“all Preferred Providers must provide case management services, as appropriate, that provide goal-oriented and individualized support focused on improving self-sufficiency for the person served through assessment, planning, linkage, advocacy, coordination, and monitoring.” **One required component is “securing housing”.**

Additionally, certified intensive outpatient programs must “have direct affiliation with (or close coordination through direct referral to) more and less intensive levels of care and **supportive housing services.**”

## Current Activity: Expanded Services at Hubs

In 2023, the Legislature appropriated \$4.6 million for a two-year Hub and Spoke expansion pilot to facilitate quality improvement and support a more integrated and effective system of care model.

Enhances the quality and level of care provided to individuals with an Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) diagnosis, poly-substance use and other co-occurring mental health and physical disorders.

Provides care that this high-risk population may not otherwise receive, thereby stabilizing mental health and physical health, which may be barriers to accessing or maintaining housing

# Current Activity: Distribution of Harm Reduction Packs

- Harm Reduction Packs include naloxone, fentanyl test strips, rescue breathing mouth barriers, and educational information.
- Packs are distributed through multiple locations including
  - Hotels/motels
  - Probation and Parole offices
  - Syringe Service Programs (SSPs)
  - Recovery centers
  - Shelters
  - Libraries
  - Food shelves
  - Economic Services district offices
  - Community centers
  - Town offices
  - Other social service providers

# Current Activity: Recovery Housing

Recovery residences are:

- Sober living environments that support transitions from active use to recovery to independent living
- Typically, a single-family home shared by roommates who commit to abstinence from illicit substances

Other characteristics:

- Residents are connected to recovery and treatment services in the community
- Length of stay is typically six months to a year

VDH currently funds 12 certified recovery residences that have a total 104 beds of recovery housing

Additional 8 beds coming online in March

There is need for more recovery housing

# Current Activity: Recovery Centers

Recovery Centers focus on the Substance (A)buse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) four dimensions of recovery:

- Health
- Home
- Purpose
- Community

When housing is identified as a need for someone receiving services at a recovery center, staff work closely with them to identify supports for housing, and short-term shelter options if needed.

## Current Activity: VT Helplink

Launched in March 2020 to provide a single point of contact for Vermonters needing treatment, recovery, and other resources related to substance use and mental health.

VT Helplink's call center is staffed by certified Screening & Information Specialists, under the supervision of Master's-level clinicians.

Available 24/7/365

In addition to the call center, individuals can contact via text or web chat

Call (or text "LINK" to) 802-565-LINK (5465) | 833-565-5465 | [VTHelplink.org](https://VTHelplink.org)

