

VPQHC: A Legacy of Advancing Health Care Quality in Vermont

1988

VPQHC is founded as an independent nonprofit dedicated to improving the quality of Vermont's healthcare system, governed by a coalition of providers, insurers, payers, employers, and patients.

1990-1991

VPQHC receives a grant to advance CQI training in Vermont hospitals, launches quality improvement projects in obstetrics, cardiology, orthopedics, mental health, AMI, CHF, patient satisfaction, and pneumonia.

1995

Vermont Statute [18 V.S.A. 9416](#) mandates VPQHC to implement and maintain a statewide quality system, reinforcing its role in evaluating and improving health care services.

1997-1999

Focus on pediatric asthma, diabetes, stroke, and heart disease outcomes, launches mental health initiatives, and develops state guidelines for heart failure care.

2003-2005

VPQHC launches the Vermont Community Diabetes Collaborative, expands Chronic Care Collaboratives for diabetes and heart disease (this provides the foundation for the Blueprint for Health), and introduces ExCEL for end-of-life care (Excellent Collaboration for End-of-Life Care).

2011

VT Senate Resolution 196 honors Dr. Cyrus Jordan & Helen Riehle for advancing health care in Vermont. VPQHC supports RRMCC's palliative care evaluation and leads VT's unique HAI prevention initiative statewide.

2015

VPQHC facilitates the Integrated Care Management (ICM) initiative and leads the new Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Program (MBQIP). Launched the Vermont Hospital Quality Directors peer learning network.

1989

The Vermont Legislature amends [Statute § 1441](#), granting VPQHC peer review status, solidifying its role in health care quality improvement. VPQHC launches statewide quality efforts, implements a health care database, and provides continuous quality improvement (CQI) training.

1992-1994

VPQHC improves Vaginal Birth After Cesarean (VBAC) rates, develops Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, and pediatric ear infection, guidelines, establishes the first adverse drug-event registry, and collaborates on Vermont's mammography registry.

1996

VPQHC releases its first Vermont Health Care Quality Report, providing public insight into health care quality.

2000-2002

VPQHC launches Vermont's first statewide colorectal cancer QI initiative, hosts the Birth Project Conference, enhances maternal and child health with American Academy of Pediatrics, and becomes Vermont Medicaid's External Quality Review Organization (EQRO).

2006-2010

VPQHC launches a statewide learning community for QI, expands patient safety initiatives, and evaluates palliative care and chronic care programs.

2012-2014

VPQHC manages the Patient Safety Surveillance and Improvement System (PSSIS) under the Vermont Department of Health and develops the Statewide Surgical Services Collaborative to reduce complications and healthcare costs. VPQHC establishes the Vermont Hospital Quality Directors learning Network.

2016-2019

VPQHC supports Vermont hospital report cards ([18 V.S.A. § 9405b](#)), supports rural hospitals in CMS compliance, and expands mental health and substance use disorder initiatives. Launched the Vermont Hospital Care Management Directors Peer Learning Network.

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2020

VPQHC pivots to pandemic response by supporting telehealth, assisting the Vermont Department of Health hotline, launching health equity training, and enhancing telehealth access with 1,325 iPads distributed to 58 healthcare organizations across Vermont. VPQ expands suicide prevention efforts with CAMS training for independent mental health providers in Vermont.

2023-2024

Developed the Vermont Hospital Quality Framework to establish meaningful metrics reflecting the hospital healthcare delivery system. Welcomed the Vermont Consultation & Psychiatry Access Program to VPQHC. Launched the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Care Collaborative & Innovation Network under a HRSA grant. Continued to manage Starting Over Strong (SOS) VT. Trained hospital EDs across Vermont in trauma responsive care with an expert clinician & peer-led training team.

2021-2022

Launches the Vermont Emergency Telepsychiatry Network (VETN), the Suicide Prevention in EDs QI Initiative, and the Hospital Health Equity QI Initiative. Thousands of pediatric comfort kits distributed to support children boarding in Vermont EDs. Recognized as "Vermont's Community Star" by the National State Offices of Rural Health in 2022. Supports peer-revised research on children boarding in Vermont EDs.

2025

Began leading the Center of Excellence for Suicide Prevention with Center for Health & Learning, launched six-part "back to basics" QI 101 Training open to all Vermont healthcare providers. Launched the DBT Training Institute, and starts supporting transformation in partnership with the Rural Health Redesign Center.

VPQHC Current Initiatives

#	Initiative	Funder	Description
1	Vermont Department of Corrections - External Quality Review Program	Vermont Department of Corrections	Conducts independent assessments of healthcare quality within Vermont's correctional facilities, including continuous quality improvement, and morbidity and mortality reviews.
2	Vermont Department of Health - 9416 Contract	Billback funding (contract overseen by the Vermont Department of Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vermont Hospital Peer Review Network Hospital Quality Directors Peer Learning Network Care Management Directors Peer Learning Network Technical assistance to hospitals for reporting HAIs and SSIs into NHSN Six-part QI 101 training series open to any Vermont healthcare professional Telehealth utilization analysis; general QI technical assistance.
3	Patient Safety Surveillance & Improvement System	Vermont Department of Health	Manages state's PSSIS program, through a comprehensive surveillance system, including mandatory reporting, site visits, fostering a learning health system, and the development of preventive strategies to reduce serious reportable events.

VPQHC Current Initiatives cont.

#	Initiative	Funder	Description
4	Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant & Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Program (MBQIP)	Vermont Department of Health - State Office of Rural Health	Support Critical Access Hospitals with technical assistance in quality measurement and improvement, including benchmarking reports, shared learning, and targeted quality improvement support.
5	Suicide Prevention in Emergency Departments Quality Improvement Initiative	Vermont Department of Health Four Pines Fund	Multi-year initiative to improve suicide care strategies within EDs to ensure evidence-based practices are implemented at every stage of patient care.
6	Starting Over Strong - VT (SOS-VT)	Vermont Department of Mental Health	Manage initiative providing crisis counseling and technical support during emergencies, including Vermont's recent catastrophic flooding, extending services to affected communities and supporting mental health providers in Vermont.
7	Trauma Responsive Care Training Initiative	Vermont Department of Mental Health	Lead specialized training for healthcare providers to enhance trauma-responsive care, equipping healthcare environments to support individuals experiencing trauma, with a team of two clinician trainers and one peer support specialist.
8	Vermont Statewide Postvention Pilot Program	Vermont Department of Health Vermont Department of Mental Health Four Pines Fund	Partner with four Designated Agencies to assess and enhance postvention supports, developing plans to strengthen resources within their agencies and communities.
9	Vermont Emergency Telepsychiatry Network	Vermont Department of Mental Health	Helps Vermont emergency departments provide timely psychiatric care via telehealth for individuals with mental health needs.
10	Centers of Excellence for Suicide Prevention	Vermont Department of Mental Health	Design & deliver a suicide care quality improvement initiative for primary care and Designated Agencies, providing suicide prevention training to enhance provider competence and confidence, and offering CAMS training to Vermont mental health clinicians.
11	Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Care Collaborative & Innovation Network	Health Resources & Services Administration	A multi-year initiative uniting key partners to support and empower nurses providing specialized, compassionate care to sexual assault survivors. Collaborating with five rural hospitals, the network focuses on three core goals. Organizational partners include the VT Network, VAHHS, and Bi-State Primary Care Association.
12	Jaspr Health Pilot Program	Four Pines Fund	A two-year pilot program supporting Vermont hospital EDs in adopting and implementing the Jaspr Health platform to improve care for patients experiencing suicidality, breaking down financial barriers to participation via grant funding.
13	Vermont Consultation & Psychiatry Access Program (VTCAP)	Vermont Department of Mental Health Four Pines Fund	VTCAP provides healthcare providers with real-time psychiatric consultation, education, and resource support to enhance mental health care for children, adolescents, and perinatal patients across Vermont.

VPQHC Current Initiatives cont.

#	Initiative	Funder	Description
14	CAMS & DBT Training Initiatives	Four Pines Fund	Providing Vermont providers with access to evidence-based suicide care training in Collaborative Assessment & Management of Suicidality (CAMS) and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), at no or significantly reduced, cost.
15	Howard Center QI Support	Howard Center	Providing quality improvement & compliance assessment support for Howard Center's bed-based programs.
16	Northwestern Medical Center QI Support	Northwestern Medical Center	Providing quality improvement and facilitation support to Social Determinants of Health collaboratives and Monarch Maples practice.
17	Healthcare Provider Transformation Technical Assistance	Subcontractor to Rural Health Redesign Center (AHS)	Support healthcare provider transformation through learning collaborative facilitation and quality improvement technical assistance.

VPQHC Select Reports and Resources

TRAUMA RESPONSIVE CARE FOR EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS:
TOOLKIT
2024

VPQHC
Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care, Inc.

IMPACT REPORT
2022

VPQHC
Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care, Inc.

A review of CMS' Hospital Star Rating and Preview Reports

Kathy Rauch, Vice President, Quality Advocacy, Research and Innovation

Vermont Emergency Telepsychiatry Network (VETN)
2023 Evaluation

Background
The Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care, Inc. (VPQHC) designed the Vermont Emergency Telepsychiatry Network (VETN) to be a statewide system where children, adolescents, and adults presenting to Vermont Emergency Departments (EDs) with acute mental health crises will receive timely specialized psychiatric assessment via video conferencing technology. In October 2023, an average of 28 patients of all ages were boarding in Vermont EDs on any given day, awaiting transfer or discharge to mental health care. Furthermore, in October 2023, one out of seven ED beds, on average, was occupied by a patient waiting for mental health care. VETN has six areas of focus:

- Program Management
- Hospital Assistance
- Training
- Program Evaluation
- Demonstration Projects
- Legislation and Appropriation

VPQHC contracted with RTI International (RTI) to:

- evaluate VETN Advisory Board's composition and members' satisfaction and engagement;
- evaluate the VETN demonstration project at two participating hospitals to assess provider/staff and patient satisfaction and preferences.

Key Findings

Vermont Patient Safety Surveillance & Improvement System

2023 Report

Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care, Inc.
Vermont Department of Health

2024

VERMONT
TELEHEALTH SERVICES

Before and During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care, Inc.
Policy Integrity, LLC

2024 VERMONT HOSPITAL QUALITY PROFILES

2024 profiles on Vermont hospital participation in VPQHC statewide quality improvement initiatives, as well as a small subset of publicly-available quality metrics.

Brattleboro Memorial Hospital	Copley Hospital	UVMH – Central Vermont Medical Center	Gifford Medical Center
Grace Cottage Hospital	Mt. Acute Hospital and Health Center	North Country Hospital	Northwestern Medical Center
Northern Vermont Regional Hospital	UVMH – Porter Medical Center	Rutland Regional Medical Center	Springfield Hospital

2022
Report of the Vermont Hospital Quality Framework Workgroup

VERMONT PROGRAM FOR QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE, INC.
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