



Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care, Inc.

Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care

Introduction & Overview

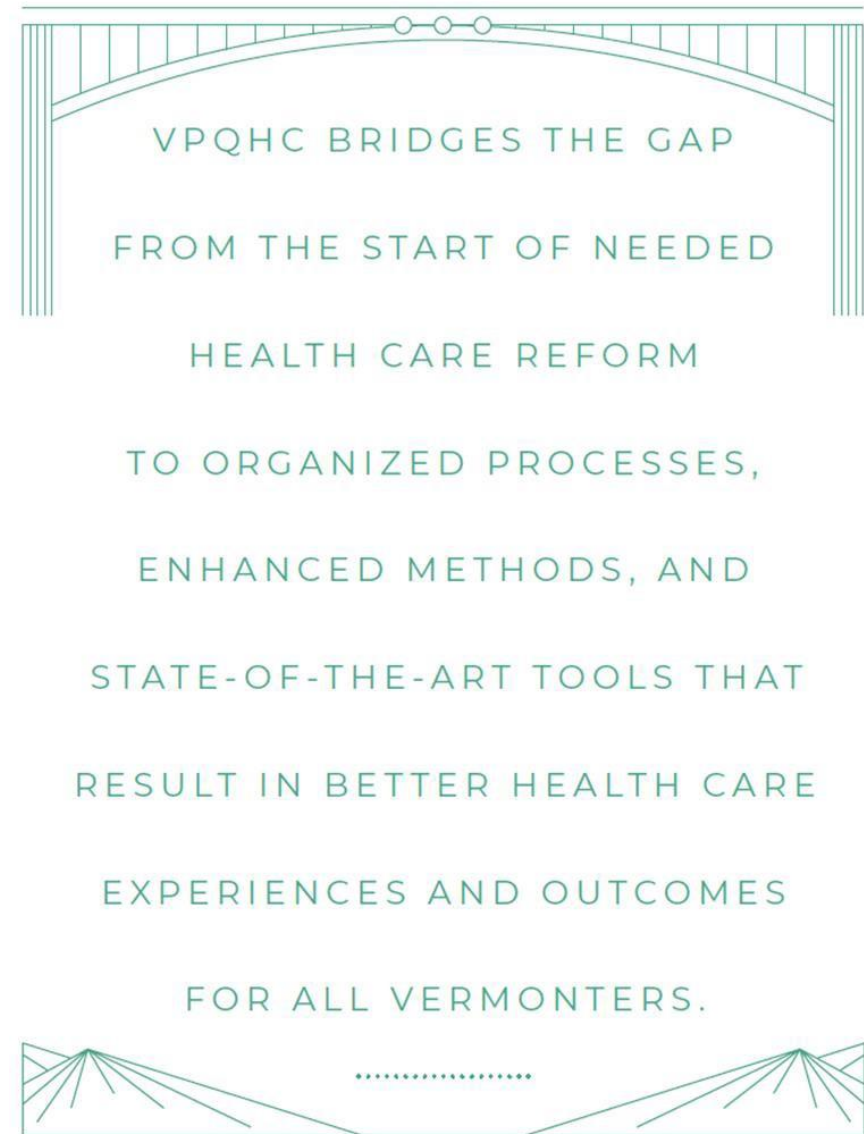
Senate Committee on Health & Welfare

February 12, 2025

About VPQHC

VPQHC is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization founded in 1988 and designated in 1989 by the Vermont Legislature as an independent, non-regulatory, peer review committee. Vermont's 9416 statute established VPQHC as the statewide quality organization in 1995.

VPQHC's **mission** is to improve healthcare quality in Vermont by studying the system and making it work better.



Our People

~15 FTEs

Decades of
experience in
healthcare quality,
and decades of
experience in direct
healthcare delivery
across the
continuum of care



Greta Spottswood,
MD, MPH
VTCPPAP Medical
Program Director



Morgan Bedard,
MSW, CPHQ,
LSSGBH, CLHP
Quality
Improvement
Specialist



Deana Chase,
LICSW, ACM, CCM
Quality Improvement
Specialist – Suicide
Prevention Initiatives



Annie Quinn
VTCPPAP Program
Manager & Design
Specialist



Patrice Knapp, RN,
MSN, CPHQ
Strategic Quality
Improvement
Consultant



Mary McQuiggan,
LICSW
Director of
Programs



Ellen Arrowsmith,
LICSW
VTCPPAP Program
Director



Sarah Nelb
Marketing &
Training
Coordinator



Hillary Wolfley,
MSPH
Executive Director



Angela Morgan, RN,
CPHQ
Quality
Improvement
Specialist - Program
Director: SANE
Initiative



Randall Messier, MT,
MSA, PCMH CCE
Quality Improvement
Specialist



Bill Marcinkowski
Information Systems
Manager



Ali Johnson, MBA
QI Specialist



Bonnie Collins
Program Coordinator &
Executive
Administrative
Assistant

Robert Turanu,
MSA
Director of
Finance
(not pictured)

VPQHC Board of Directors

CHAIR - Jason Minor, Director, Continuous Systems Improvement, James M. Jeffords Institute for Quality, University of Vermont Medical Center

VICE CHAIR - Mary Kate Mohlman, PhD, MS, Vermont Director of Public Policy, Bi-State Primary Care Association

TREASURER - Todd Bauman, Executive Director, Northwestern Counseling & Support Services

SECRETARY - Otelah M. Perry, MS, MT, MB (ASCP), CMQOE (ASQ), Director of Quality, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center

Jessa Barnard, Executive Director, Vermont Medical Society

Kelly Dougherty, Deputy Commissioner, Vermont Department of Health

Grace Gilbert-Davis, MSA, CHE, CHC, Corporate Director of Healthcare Reform, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont

Mike Fisher, MS, BA, Chief Health Care Advocate, Vermont Legal Aid

Emma Harrigan, Director of Policy Analysis and Development, Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems

David Healy, Vice President and Senior GIS Applications, Stone Environmental (retired)

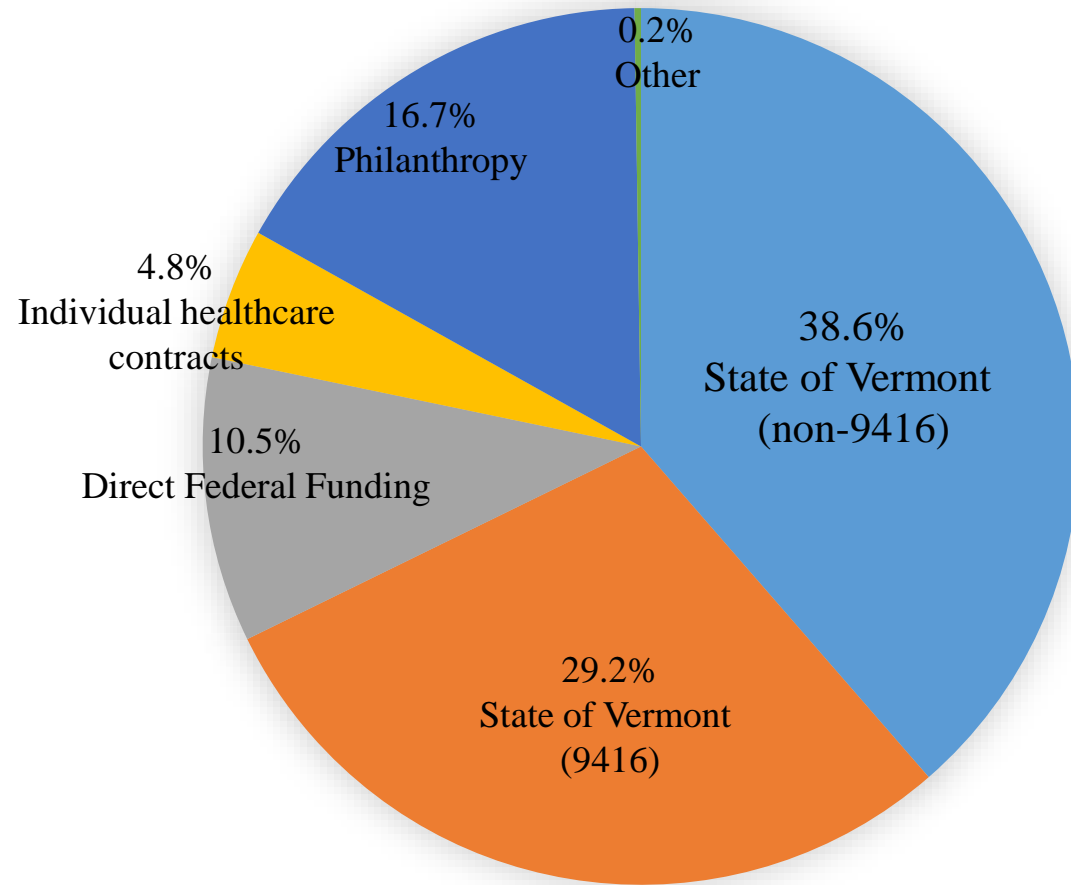
Kristy Hommel, MS, Mental Health Educator, Advocate & Public Speaker

Pat Jones, MS, BS, Project & Operations Director, Vermont Agency of Human Services

Lila Richardson, Esq., Attorney, Vermont Legal Aid (retired)

VPQHC Funding

VPQHC FY2025 Budget by Funder



VPQHC's 9416 contract provides \$660,000 in annual funding. Per funding requirements, this contract cannot exceed 75% of VPQHC's total operating budget. Currently, it accounts for 29% of the organization's total operating budget.

"Quality in healthcare means doing the right thing, at the right time, in the right way, for the right person—and having the best possible results."

— Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
(AHRQ)

Quality Improvement (QI) science is a systematic approach to improving processes, outcomes, and efficiencies in healthcare. It applies evidence-based methodologies, data-driven decision-making, and continuous iterative testing to enhance the quality, safety, and effectiveness of services.

**Six Domains of
Healthcare Quality:
What they mean &
patient perspective**

EFFECTIVE

It should actually help people get better.

“The provider gave me the right treatment, explained my condition, and set up a follow-up plan.”

TIMELY

It should not take too long to get care

“I was seen right away, and they didn’t waste time getting me the care I needed.”

EQUITABLE

Everyone should get the same great care, no matter who they are or where they live.

“I got the same quality care as everyone else, no matter my background, insurance, or language.”

EFFICIENT

It should avoid waste and use resources wisely.

“Everything moved smoothly, and I didn’t have to wait or take unnecessary tests.”

SAFE

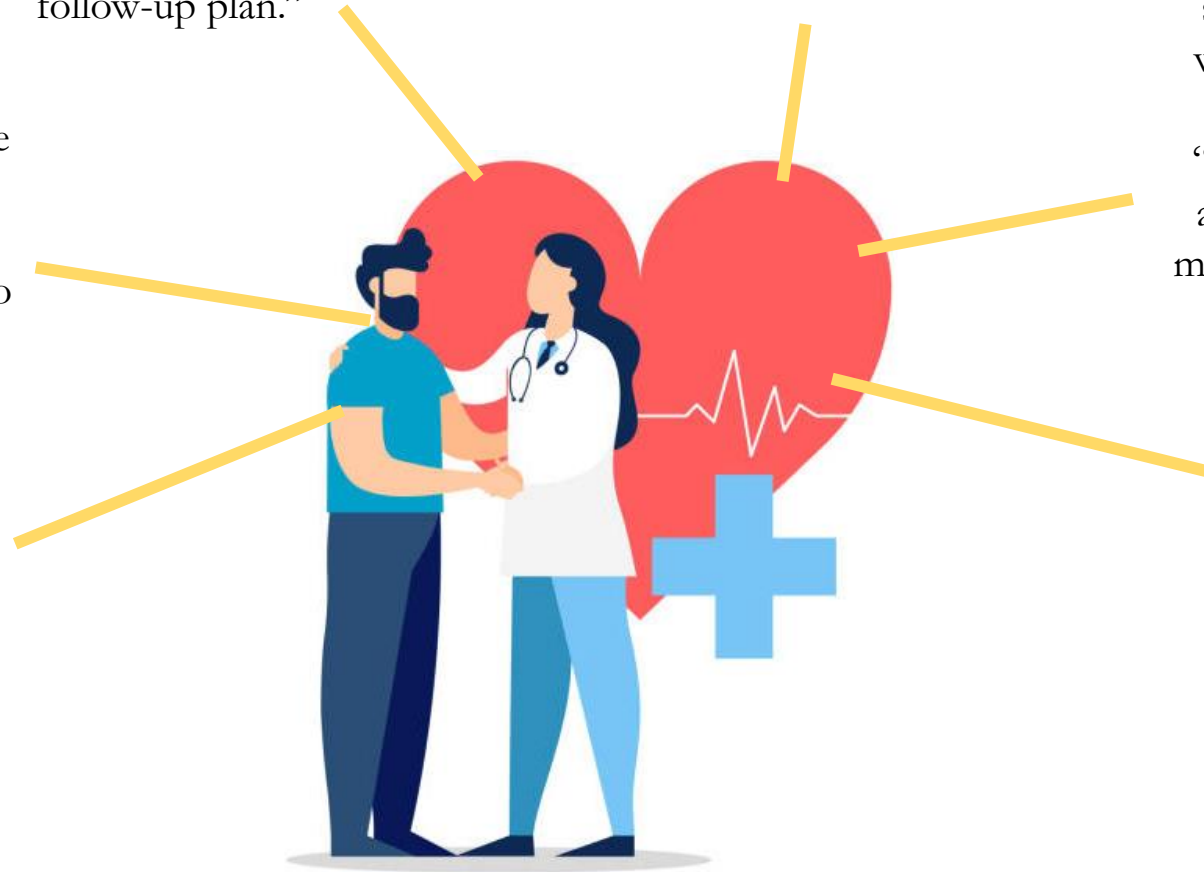
It should not cause harm

“I felt confident knowing the care team followed the right steps to check my condition and keep me safe.”

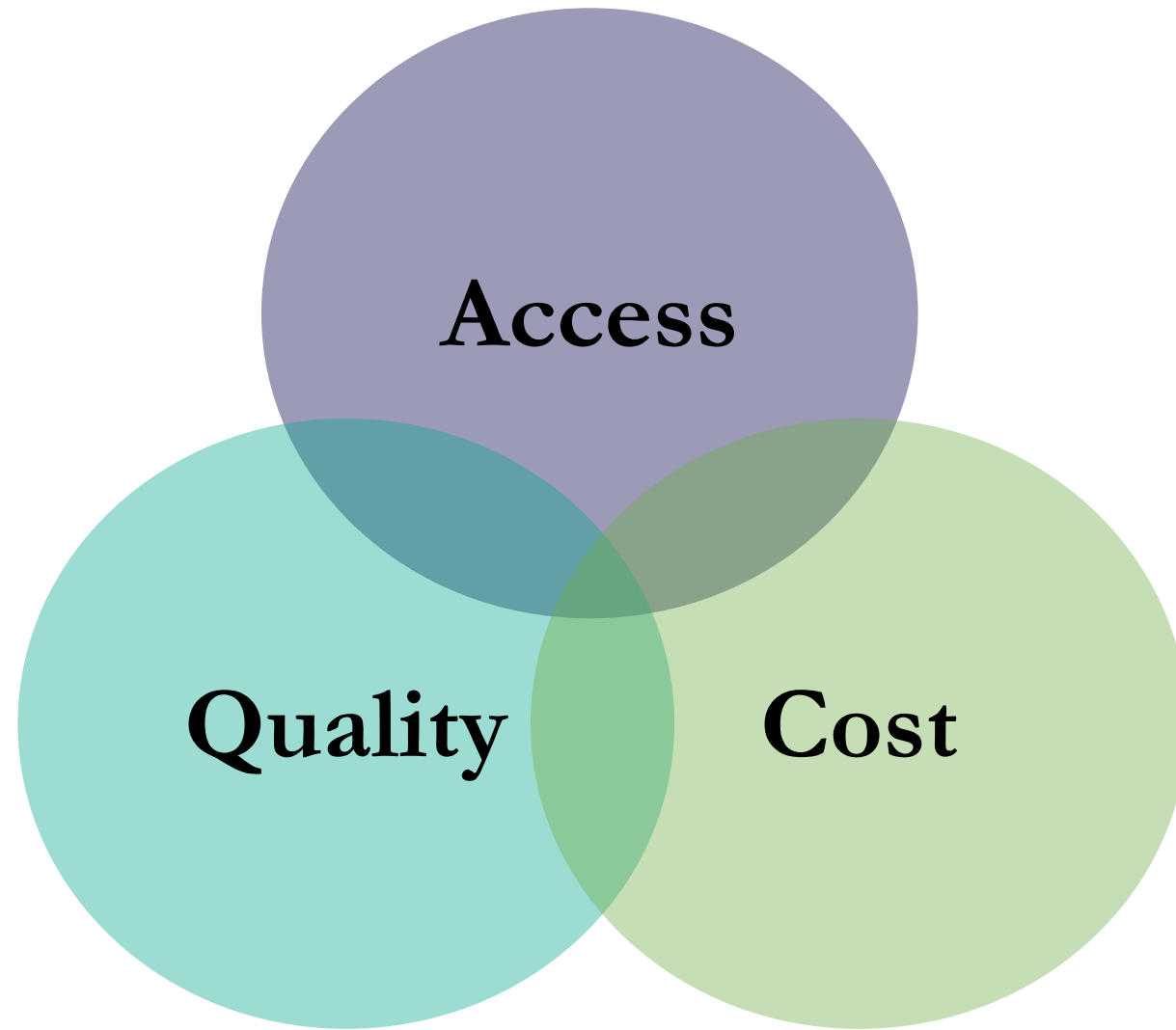
PATIENT-CENTERED

It should focus on what each person needs and wants.

“They listened to my concerns, explained things in a way I understood, and made sure I knew what to do next.”



A well-balanced
healthcare system
must prioritize
quality alongside
access and cost.



VPQHC: A Legacy of Advancing Health Care Quality in Vermont

1988
VPQHC is founded as an independent nonprofit dedicated to improving the quality and efficiency of Vermont's healthcare system, governed by a coalition of providers, insurers, payers, employers, and consumers.

1990-1991
VPQHC receives a grant to advance continuous quality improvement (CQI) in Vermont hospitals, launching quality improvement projects in obstetrics, cardiology, orthopedics, mental health, AMI, CHF, patient satisfaction, and pneumonia.

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 register, and collaborates with the Vermont State Police on patient safety.

1995
Vermont Statute 18 V.S.A. 9416 mandates VPQHC to implement and maintain a state quality assurance system, reinforcing its role in evaluating and improving health care services.

1997-2000
Focus on pediatric asthma, diabetes, stroke, and heart disease outcomes, launches multiple health initiatives, and develops state guidelines for heart failure.

VPQHC Select Reports and Resources



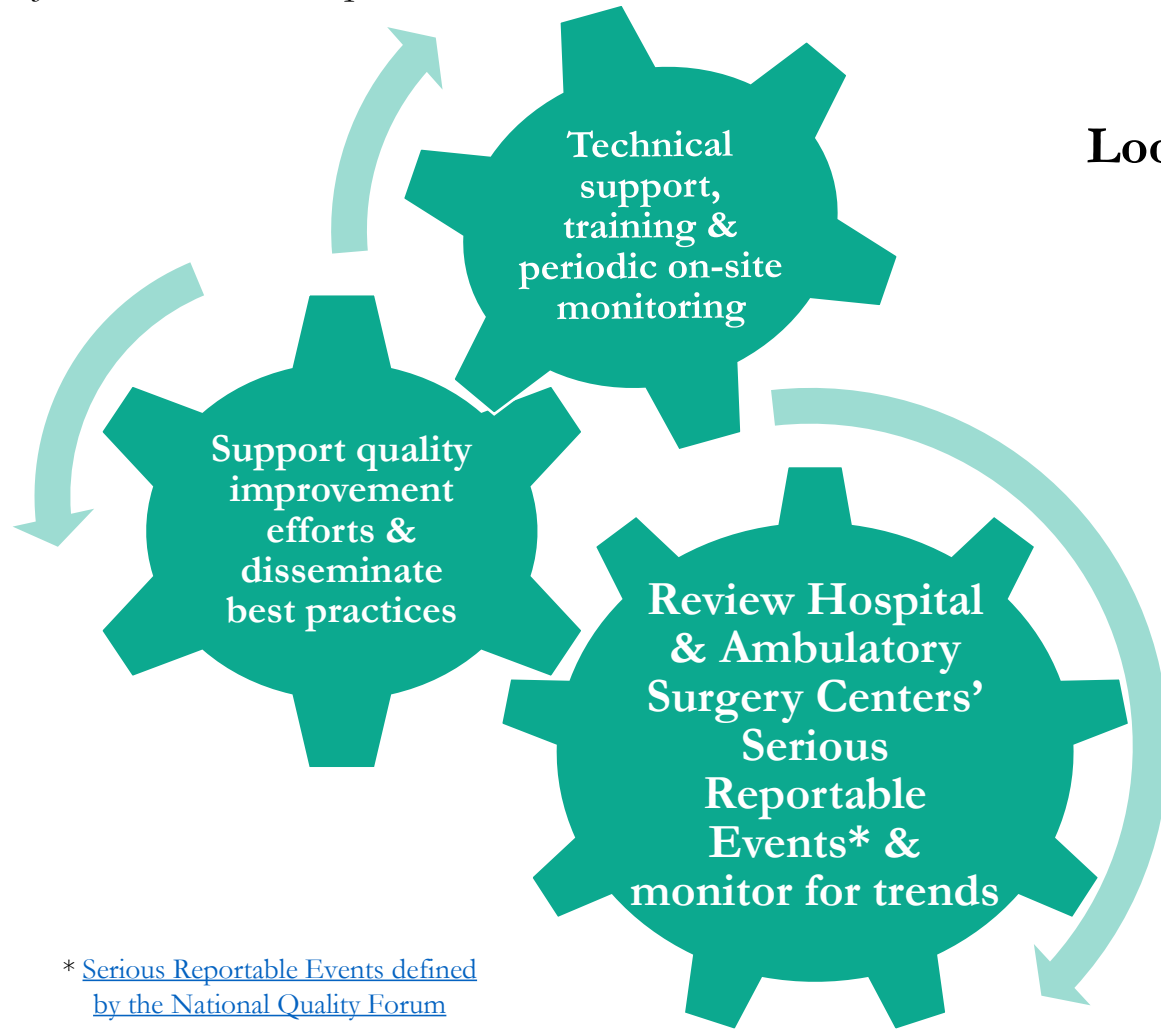
#	Initiative	Funder	Description
1	Vermont Department of Corrections - External Quality Review Program	Vermont Department of Corrections	
2	Vermont Department of Health - 9416 Contract	Billback funding (contract overseen by the Vermont Department of Health)	Hospital Quality Directors Learning Network facilitation; Care Management Directors Learning Network facilitation; technical support to Infection Preventionists with submission of HAI & SSI data into NHSN; six-part QI 101 training series for all healthcare providers; telhealth utilization analysis using VHCURES; limited time for general QI technical assistance.
3	Patient Safety Surveillance & Improvement System	Vermont Department of Health	Leads the state's efforts in patient safety through a comprehensive surveillance system, including mandatory reporting, site visits, and the development of preventive strategies to reduce serious reportable events.

VPQHC History & Current Initiatives

- Refer to handout!
- Leading QI Initiatives in VT for 37 years
- 17 current initiatives focused on QI in variety of settings: primary care, hospitals, DAs, independent providers

Vermont Patient Safety Surveillance & Improvement System

Refer to 18 V.S.A Chapter 43A



* [Serious Reportable Events defined by the National Quality Forum](#)

Looking ahead at supporting...

- Culture shift to improve shared learning post-event analysis across facilities
- Facilities streamlining adverse event analysis into existing quality structures

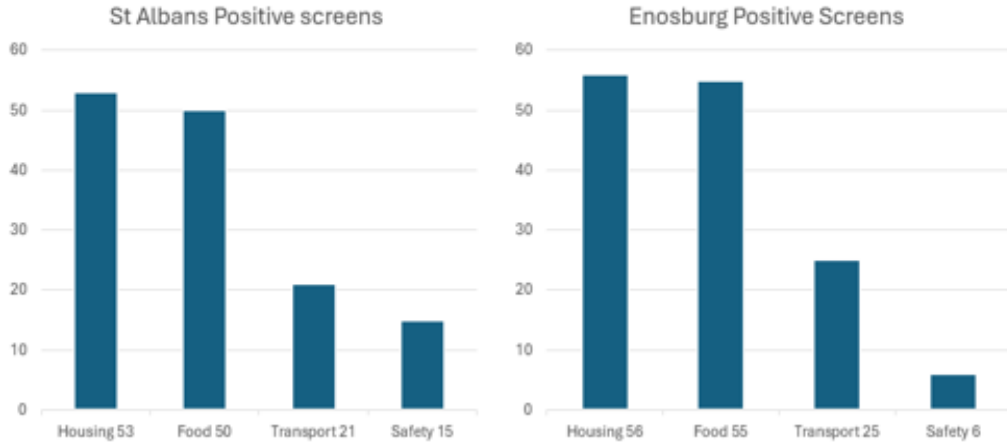
Year	# Safety Events
2020	64
2021	83
2022	124
2023	111
2024	138

[2023 Annual Patient Safety Report is publicly available through VDH](#)

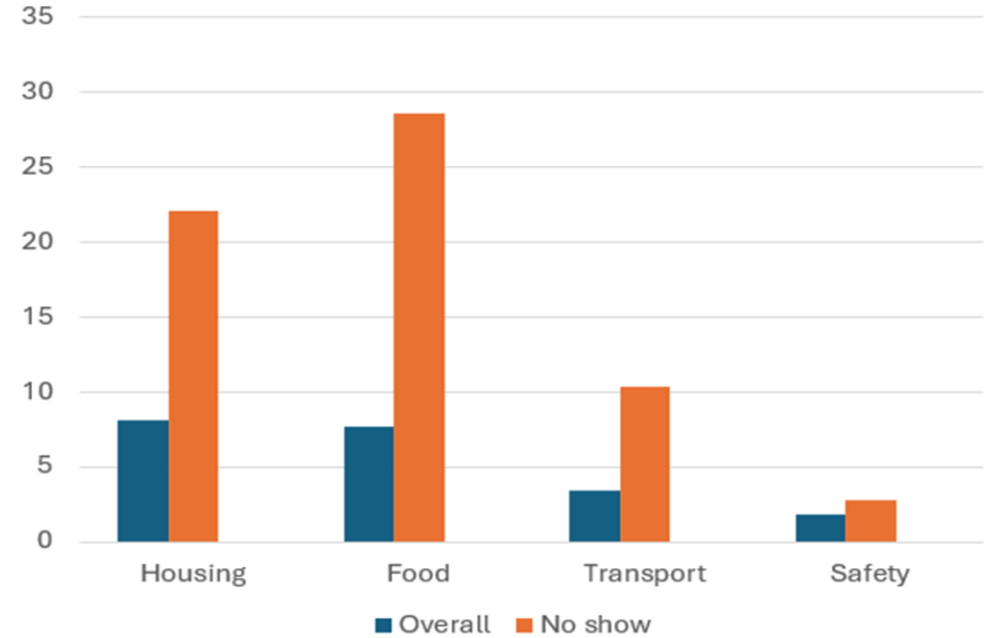
Supporting Primary Care

What have we learned?

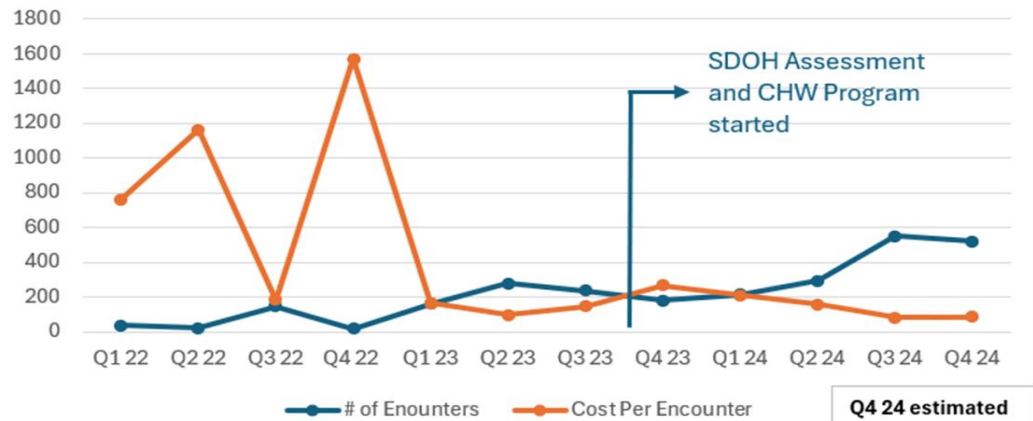
Average 14% positive screens for Health Related Social Needs



Percent Positive screens



of Encounters and Cost Per Encounter



Community Health Worker and MD Provider stepped in to coordinate transportation for Mother and child to go to clinic instead of ER. Cost avoided greater than \$2,000.

- Ambulance ride \$1000 (range \$725-1300)
- ED visit \$1516
- Lab/Bilirubin \$48

TOTAL=\$2564

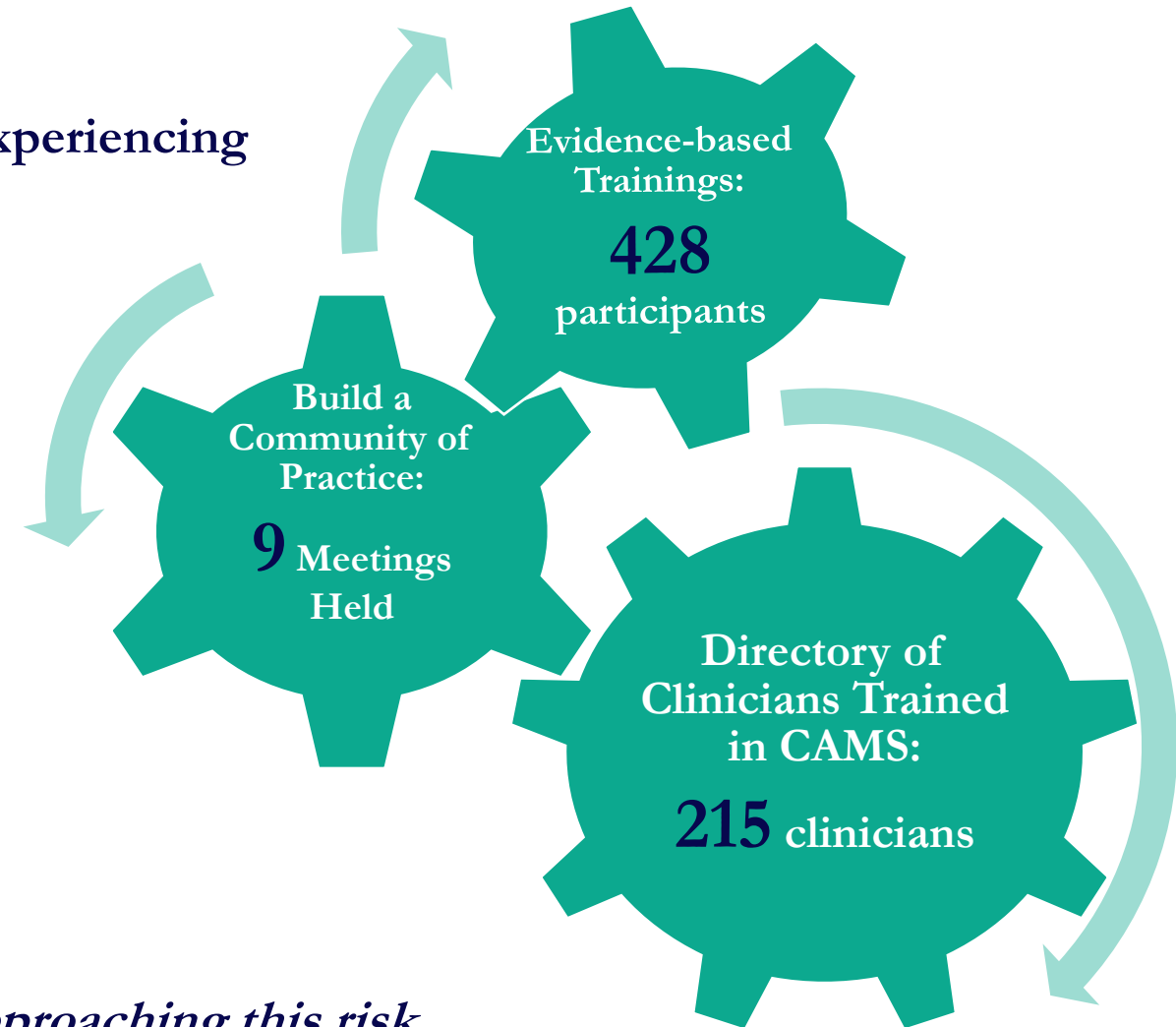
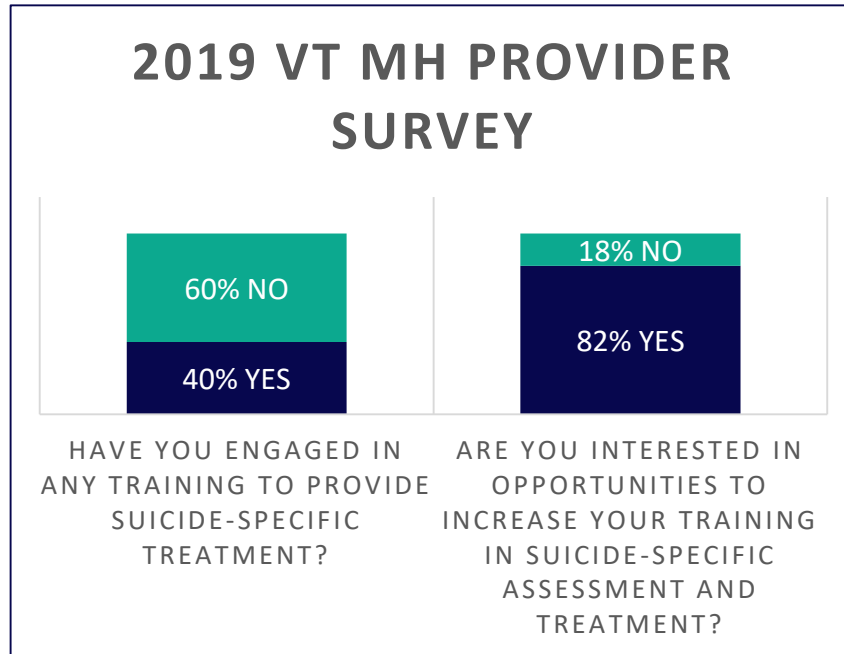
- PMPM for VT Medicaid pediatric patient approx. \$40 (divided by 4 visits that month)=\$10
- CHW time \$50

TOTAL=\$60

(Outside of ACO/capitation=\$180)

Vermont CAMS Training Project: Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality

Increasing the quality of care provided to individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts.



“It is a relief to have a more ‘concrete roadmap’ when approaching this risk assessment and treatment. The trainings were very informative, interactive, and empathetic.”

VPQHC's Strategic Planning

GOAL 1

Expand Impact

Strengthen and grow VPQHC's data-driven quality improvement and patient safety initiatives.

OBJECTIVE

Our **mission** is to reduce harm and save lives by advancing data-driven solutions that improve healthcare quality in Vermont.

GOAL 2

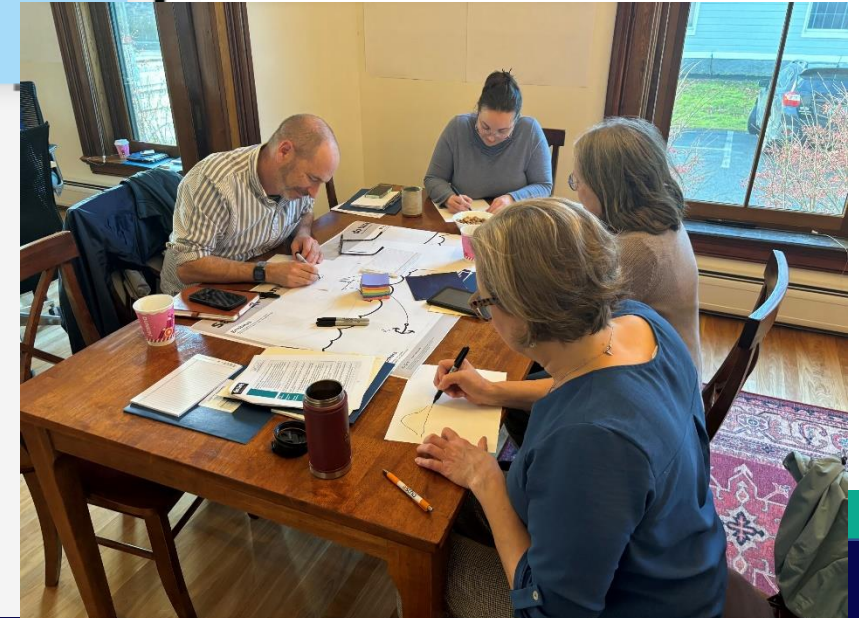
Demonstrate Leadership

Serve as Vermont's leading independent, neutral convener, champion, and trusted voice for healthcare quality.

GOAL 3

Cultivate a Culture of Excellence

Equip Vermont healthcare professionals with the tools and knowledge to drive and sustain a culture of excellence in care delivery.



VPQHC & statewide healthcare quality:

- **Trusted, Neutral Convener** – Brings stakeholders together to assess healthcare quality across the state & drive healthcare improvement.
- **Collaborative Funding Model** – Fosters partnership and alignment.
- **Statewide Reach & Comprehensive Impact** – Works across the entire healthcare continuum.
- **Data-Driven Quality Improvement** – Uses quality measurement for public reporting and direct provider QI initiatives.
- **Independent Evaluation & Recommendations** – Provides objective, data-driven insights.
- **Nimble and Responsive to Vermont-Focused Priorities** - Aligns efforts with the state's most pressing QI needs.

**Please continue to prioritize quality in
healthcare reform discussions, and remember
VPQHC as a key resource to you on
healthcare quality.**

Thank you!

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