



## Federal Grants Help Vermont Fight Substance Abuse

With Vermont ranked high on the list of states with problems in underage alcohol and marijuana use, 18-25 year-old marijuana use, and 15-25 year-old binge drinking, several major grants have been secured to address the problems, including a five-year \$9.9 million grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to increase early intervention and treatment of young adults at risk for substance abuse.

The SAMHSA grant is administered by the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs (ADAP) and works with current medical providers to increase screening of the target audience using the SBIRT model, a national, evidence-based program. SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment) relies on motivational interviewing to regularly screen patients whose substance use puts them at risk; they receive either a brief intervention or brief treatment. The grant will be used to provide psychological, social and behavioral counseling; those who need medication for addiction will be referred to additional services for care.

Ultimately, preliminary screenings

will be done on one-sixth of the state's population. This approach is different from most other interventions because it is aimed at "risky" users rather than users who would qualify for a substance abuse diagnosis. Fletcher Allen Health Care, Vermont National Guard, the University of Vermont Student Health Center, and Central Vermont Medical Center, as well as other primary care and medical providers around the state, are involved in the grant implementation.



The Health Department "Vermont Youth Treatment Enhancement Program" is divided into two programs known as the "Seven Challenges" for those under 18, and "Seeking Safety" for those ages 18-24. An estimated 1,060 youth will receive treatment, including grant-funded and private/third party payer services. Adjustments will then be made to the service system to replicate and expand the use of these practices across the state. A goal is to make short term intervention and referral to treatment a continuum, with care coordination helping providers to develop relationships and to have resources for substance abuse and alcohol abuse treatment. The grant extends Vermont's progress under the Blueprint for

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## From the Editor

One of the major Vermont Department of Health (VDH) goals for improving the health of Vermonters is to reduce the prevalence of individuals with or at risk of substance abuse or mental illness.

This issue discusses substance abuse in Vermont, its associated difficulties, and what Vermont is doing to address the problem. The Office of Primary Care's "Bridging the Divide" interprofessional conference in November focused on fostering collaboration between primary care, mental health, substance abuse and behavioral health and was attended by 115 health professionals from the aforementioned disciplines.

We also bring attention to the Health Department initiative to increase early intervention and treatment of young adults at risk for substance abuse, funded by a \$9.9 million Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant.

On January 23 at 6 pm, the UVM College of Medicine will show "The Hungry Heart," a 90-minute documentary about patients struggling with prescription drug addictions. Pediatrician Fred Holmes, MD, an authority on adolescent addiction, is featured in the film and will participate in this event. The primary audience for this screening will be medical students, but the invitation is open.

Other *Primarily Vermont* highlights include a successful AHEC CollegeQuest experience for 24 high school seniors, and Primary Care Rounds.

Wishing you a happy and healthy 2014! ■

*Elizabeth Cote, Director, UVM College of Medicine, Office of Primary Care and AHEC Program*

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Health Initiatives by further integrating behavioral health, primary care, and physical health to focus on substance abuse risk for all Vermonters.

“Acting on early warning signs of addiction, before it becomes a life-long problem, is a core mission of public health,” states Harry Chen, MD, Vermont Health Commissioner. “This grant will enable us to fill an unmet need for screening an estimated 18,000 people each year who may not have received help.” Vermont is one of five states to receive this grant in 2013, and is the 13th state to receive a statewide grant.

Another part of the Vermont Youth Treatment Enhancement Program grant was announced this fall for Centerpoint Adolescent Treatment Services (with sites in Winooski and South Burlington), and Washington County Youth Services, based in Montpelier. The two organizations will collaborate on the four-year, \$3.8 million grant with the Health Department through its ADAP office.

Another SAMHSA grant to the University of Vermont College of Medicine SBIRT Collaborative is directed by Rodger S. Kessler, PhD, Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine. That grant provides funding to train future primary care health providers in SBIRT technique.

Governor Peter Shumlin has noted that “Substance abuse is one of the most serious problems facing Vermont, a threat that drives up crime rates in communities and destroys the lives of too many of our neighbors and family members. The timing of the federal support couldn’t be better.” ■



## “The Hungry Heart” Coming to UVM

Kingdom County’s moving film, “The Hungry Heart,” a 90-minute documentary that provides an intimate look into the often hidden world of prescription drug addiction through the world of Vermont pediatrician Fred Holmes, MD who works with patients struggling with this disease, will be shown at the University of Vermont for medical students and others as space permits, on January 23 at 6 p.m. at Carpenter Auditorium.

Dr. Holmes prescribes suboxone to his patients struggling with prescription drug addiction. Much like methadone, suboxone helps many addicts in their recovery process; for some taking suboxone is a crucial stepping stone to long term recovery, for others it is a crutch. For others, suboxone is abused and diverted onto the street. Through the film we see Dr. Holmes dealing with these challenges and trying to make sense in the midst of many contradictions.

Most importantly, as the film progresses we begin to see the simple but profound relationship that Dr. Holmes creates with each patient. The film shines a light on the healing power of conversation and the need for connection that many of these young addicts yearn for but do not have in their lives.

In addition, the film interviews a number of older addicts who talk about their recovery process. The road to recovery includes both success stories as well as relapses, downfalls and tragic losses. Throughout the documentary, we see the many faces and diverse populations of addiction, and their continued efforts toward recovery.

The UVM “Hungry Heart” event is sponsored by the Office of Primary Care, the Office of Medical Education and the Department of Family Medicine. ■



Katie Tanner, patient, Fred Holmes, MD, and Nicky Hayden, LPN.

### PRIMARILY VERMONT

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The Vermont Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Network presents the

# Vermont Geriatrics Conference

April 8, 2014

Capitol Plaza Hotel - Montpelier, Vermont

For information, contact UVM Continuing Medical Education:  
<http://cme.uvm.edu> or 802-656-2292



*CollegeQuest Students (from left to right) Jeremy Ducharm, Quinn LaCasse, Annie Nelson, Sara Ferorelli and Mariah Armstrong check a patient's vital signs at the UVM Clinical Simulation Laboratory.*

## CollegeQuest Prepares Twenty-Four High School Seniors for College and Careers

Vermont high school seniors who want to go into health care careers got an early start this summer preparing for college. Two dozen students spent six weeks learning about the vast variety of fields in health care and living like a college student at the College of St. Joseph in Rutland, Vermont. The program, CollegeQuest to Health Careers, is free to students who qualify, and is making a difference for students who want to study health sciences after high school.

"This was the best six weeks of my life," said Kasie Cahill, a senior at Hazen Union High School. "I couldn't ask for a better place, teachers, leaders or peers. I learned so much that I am now confident to go into college."

CollegeQuest students meet health professionals from different disciplines, research the college pathway to the career of their dreams, and work on applications to the colleges of their choice. Students visit health science programs at regional colleges, study human biology, and spend time doing dissections and other lab activities.

"Meeting people that work in the health care field was very helpful and got me excited about pursuing a career," said Sheila Dragon, a senior at Enosburg Falls High School. "I don't know if I would be able to reach my goals without the information I received in this program."

Thanks to the generosity of the Health Careers Opportunity Program at the federal Bureau of Health Professions, students also earn a \$1,485 stipend for successfully completing the program.

"We've found that after CollegeQuest, students plan to take more advanced math and science courses heading into their senior year, are more knowledgeable about career opportunities in health care, and have more confidence in preparing a college application," says Nicole LaPointe, executive director of the Northeastern Vermont Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and the CollegeQuest project director. "In fact, all of the CollegeQuest program participants who graduated from high school in 2013 enrolled in college the following fall!"

When choosing a location to practice, health care professionals are influenced by where they were raised and educated. This is why the Vermont Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) invest in motivated Vermont students to grow the future health care workforce of the state. With program partners like the Community College of Vermont (CCV), the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) and the University of Vermont (UVM) College of Medicine, students at CollegeQuest are improving their chances of success. ■

## Seventh Graders Teach Med Students

Second year UVM College of Medicine students learned about adolescence in their "Generations" course with Professor Charlotte Reibeck, MD, from 88 seventh graders at Vergennes Union Middle School. They presented "Through the Eyes of a Seventh Grader" this fall at the College of Medicine, discussing topics ranging from suicide to eating disorders, smokeless tobacco, and energy drinks. Several students self-identified as having personal experience with their topics including eating disorders, cutting, ADHD, and anxiety. Following the event, the medical students and middle-schoolers had lunch in small groups where they continued their discussions. ■

## Outreach Effort Attracts 105 High School Students

A "Focus on Health Careers" Conference sponsored by the three regional AHECs attracted 105 Vermont high school students from 30 different schools to a day-long event at Norwich University this fall to learn about health care careers. Below, students (at left) work with two pharmacy doctoral students from the Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, simulating filling capsules with medication at the pharmacy learning booth. ■



## Winter Briefs

### Vermont Gets Three New Community Health Centers

Three new community health centers have been funded in Vermont, bringing to 11 the total number of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC). They are: Battenkill Valley Health Center in Arlington, VT; the Mountain Health Center in Bristol; and the Gifford Medical Center in Randolph. An Essex County site in Canaan, VT will open as part of a grant to the Indian Stream Health Center headquartered in nearby Colebrook, NH.

To qualify as an FQHC, the centers must provide comprehensive primary care, mental health counseling, and dental services to patients. The \$2.4 million Health and Human Services Department funding for the three new Vermont centers will serve about 33,000 additional patients. The federally-funded but locally run centers are open to everyone and care for patients covered by Medicaid, Medicare and private insurance as well as those who have no insurance.

### Governor's Health Care Workforce Work Group Convenes

The Governor's Health Care Workforce Work Group had its first meeting at which [Mary Val Palumbo, DNP, APRN](#) was elected co-chair of the group; [David Reynolds](#), the other co-chair, announced he was retiring as Deputy Director of Health Reform in November. A new co-chair will be chosen at the January 15 meeting.

### New Methadone Clinics in Rutland, South Burlington

Two additional methadone clinics opened recently in Rutland and South Burlington, bringing the total number to eight in Vermont. The Howard Center now operates a clinic in the UHC Building in Burlington, and the new Center on Dorset Street in South Burlington, which are expected to reduce the waiting list of patients. The West Ridge Center for Addiction Recovery in Rutland anticipates it will serve 400 patients by the end of this year.

### Substance Abuse Treatment Centers Go Tobacco-Free

Vermont wants to ban smoking at substance abuse treatment centers for both employees and recovering addicts by July 2014. Vermont Department of Health Deputy Commissioner Barbara Cimaglio said, "We want to have treatment providers that provide substance abuse treatment implement tobacco-free campus policies. The reality is that more people with addiction die from tobacco and the related diseases than they do from alcohol or drugs." The Health Department will make programs like "Quit Tobacco" available to patients who need help quitting, and employees at treatment centers will also receive training and support to help with the transition. Other states, including New York, have had similar policies in place for years.

### Statewide Preceptor Program for Nurses

A statewide preceptor program that trains new nurses and therapists is now available to members of the Vermont Assembly of Home Health Agencies (VAHHA). The program is a three-month intensive training that provides the information necessary to assure that new staff are qualified to provide effective home health care. "The most important aspect of this program is that the training is consistent from one agency to the next. That assures that all home care patients, regardless of where they live, are served by highly skilled and highly trained staff, whether the staff nurse is a new graduate or a seasoned staff member," said Peter Cobb, VAHHA Director. Each agency has at least one nurse preceptor who received intensive training about the program, which was developed by Sue Boyer and the Vermont Nurses in Partnership, a not-for-profit organization that develops programs and resources to support nurse development.

### UVM Health Behaviors Research Center Funded

A new five-year, \$11.5 million Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will establish the Vermont Center on Behavior and Health at the University of Vermont. The Center, which will be led by UVM faculty members [Stephen Higgins, PhD](#), and [Philip Ades, MD](#), is one of only three in the nation addressing the challenge of behavioral health from a behavioral economics perspective. "Unhealthy personal behaviors – substance abuse, physical inactivity, obesity – account for 40 percent of premature deaths in the United States annually and substantially increase healthcare costs and health disparities by being overrepresented among economically disadvantaged populations," says Higgins, UVM professor and vice chair of psychiatry and director of the Center for Substance Abuse Research and Treatment. "It is our goal to better understand the causes and devise more effective prevention and treatment interventions for such unhealthy behaviors," he explains.

### "In Search of Dental Care" Report

A mal-distribution of dentists, and the relatively low number of dentists nationwide who accept Medicaid mean many do not have access to dental care, according to a recent study by the Pew Charitable Trusts. The report discusses strategies states are using to address workforce shortages and better serve low-income children. The full report is available at: [www.pewstates.org](http://www.pewstates.org).

### Prescription Drug Take-Back Results

Nearly 650,000 pounds of unneeded prescription medications were properly disposed of during the late October "National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day," the second-largest amount of drugs collected since the events began in 2010, according to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Vermont's 60 collection sites gathered 3,430 pounds of unneeded prescription drugs. The event is designed to prevent diversion, misuse and abuse of the drugs.

## Fletcher Allen Among Top University Hospitals

Fletcher Allen Health Care ranked seventh among university hospitals in the country for patient care in the annual "University HealthSystem Consortium Quality and Accessibility Study." Fletcher Allen President and CEO John R. Brumsted, MD, attributes the outstanding patient care ranking to the hospital's conversion to electronic medical records and efforts to reduce central line infections.

## "Health Care in the Two Americas" Scorecard

Findings from the Scorecard on State Health System Performance for Low-Income Populations, 2013 are available in the report called "Health Care in the Two Americas," research supported by the Commonwealth Fund. The report identifies opportunities for states to improve their health systems for economically disadvantaged populations and provides state benchmarks of achievement. It analyzes 30 indicators of access, prevention and quality, potentially avoidable hospital use, and health outcomes; the Scorecard documents health care disparities among states. Vermont places in the top quartile for overall health system performance for low-income populations. The full report is available at [www.commonwealthfund.org](http://www.commonwealthfund.org).

## Naturopathic Physicians (NDs) Can Soon Prescribe in Vermont

Naturopathic Physicians in Vermont will be able to prescribe drugs within their scope of practice starting in 2015, making the state the first in the country to allow NDs the unlimited right to prescribe drugs, according to the Vermont Medical Society. Final regulations were being worked out through the Office of Professional Regulation this fall.

## Web Site Resources

### Public Health Career Info

The Council on Education for Public Health maintains an excellent web site for students interested in undergraduate or graduate degrees in public health, including which schools are accredited: [www.ceph.org](http://www.ceph.org).

### FDA Safe Labeling Changes

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) outlines new safety labeling for neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome, and extended-release and long-acting opioid analgesics to treat pain. Details are at: <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm367726.htm>.

### Oral Health Education Materials

Oral health promotion resources for pregnant women, including tear pads, posters, flyers, web buttons, and banners, have been developed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and are available at: <http://insurekidsnow.gov/professionals/dental/index.html>.

### HIV-Related Online Course

A new CME/CE activity that provides an overview of evidence-based recommendations for routine HIV screening and treatment of newly diagnosed patients, risk assessment, long-term treatment planning, and barriers and clinical practice issues are available at: [www.quintilesmed.com/HIVeBookPro](http://www.quintilesmed.com/HIVeBookPro).

### "Safe Opioid Prescribing" Phone, Android and Web Application

Evidence-based resources for clinicians in safe and effective use of opioid analgesics are now available through a grant funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse. Learn more at [www.safeopioids.org](http://www.safeopioids.org).

The same three-year grant also developed and offers free online training modules including "Treating Addicted Health Care Professionals," available at: [www.pcss-o.org](http://www.pcss-o.org).

### National Drug Threat Assessment

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) recently released the 2013 National Drug Threat Assessment which provides an up-to-date look at the many challenges local communities face related to drug abuse and drug trafficking. It is available at: [www.justice.gov/dea/resource-center](http://www.justice.gov/dea/resource-center).

### New UVM Public Health Graduate Program

The University of Vermont's first online graduate program, the Certificate of Graduate Study in Public Health, graduated its first student this fall, Chelsea Carman. Designed for medical and graduate students, the program is open to those with at least a bachelor's degree. For more information: [www.learn.uvm.edu/health-3/public-health-certificate](http://www.learn.uvm.edu/health-3/public-health-certificate).

## SAVE THE DATE:

# FEBRUARY 19, 2014

## ACCESSIBLE HEALTHCARE: CARING FOR PATIENTS WITH DIFFERING ABILITIES

WHEN: Wednesday, February 19, 2014

TIME: 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM

WHERE: Maple Grand Ballroom, Dudley Davis Center, UVM

### SUPPORTED BY:

- University of Vermont College of Medicine
  - Department of Family Medicine
  - Office of Diversity and Inclusion
  - Office of Medical Education
  - Office of Primary Care and AHEC Program
- College of Nursing and Health Sciences
- TOPMed HRSA Training Grant

## People in the News

Delta Dental Plan of Vermont recently awarded loan repayment grants to



Dr. Ruchi Grover



Dr. Jeri Bullock



Dr. David Jette

Vermont dentists: **Dr. Ruchi Grover** of Highland Dental Center in Newport; **Dr. Jeri Bullock** of Community Health Centers of the Rutland Region; and **Dr. David Jette** of Northern Tier Center for Health in Richford. This is the fourth year in which Delta Dental of Vermont has awarded matching grants to recipients of the Vermont Educational Loan Repayment Program administered by the University of Vermont College of Medicine AHEC Program.

**Scott Strenio, MD** is the new Medical Director of the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) in the Agency of Human Services. **Burton Wilcke**, associate professor and chair of the Department of Medical Laboratory and Radiation Sciences, College of Nursing and Health Sciences at the University of Vermont, has been invited by **Kathleen Sibelius**, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), to chair the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Committee which provides scientific and technical advice and guidance to HHS and others regarding the need for and the nature of revisions to the standards under which clinical laboratories are regulated; the impact on medical and laboratory practice of proposed revisions to the standards and the modification of the standards to accommodate technological advances.

Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice has named **Anthony Williams, MD**, as its new Medical Director for Home Care. Dr. Williams will continue to work as a physician at Central Vermont Medical Center; he has provided health care to central Vermont patients for 25 years. **Patrick Flood** is the new CEO/Executive Director of Northern Counties Health Care, Inc. where he will oversee the organization's primary care, dental care, home health care and hospice divisions. He has over 30 years of experience in the health care field, most recently as Director of Operations for the State of Vermont Division of Economic Services.

The Vermont Medical Society honored five people for outstanding contributions to Vermont residents during its 200th annual meeting this fall. They are: **Mark Nunlist, MD**, a primary care physician at White River Family Practice in Wilder, VT for the exemplary and respectful care he has given patients over 30 years and the role he played in the implementation of the Vermont Blueprint for Health; **Senator Patrick Leahy** as Citizen of the Year, for his efforts in the aftermath of the school shootings in Newtown, CT; **John Bookwalter, MD** received the Distinguished Service Award; he is a retired general surgeon in the Brattleboro area who invented one of the most widely used fixed retractors in the world and is well-known for his love of his patients and devotion to their needs and concerns; **Anya Rader Wallack, PhD** was presented

with the Founders' Award for her many efforts to reform Vermont's health care system; and **Louis Dinicola, MD**, received the Physician Award for Community Service in recognition of decades of service to Randolph's children and families as well as his response to the impact of Tropical Storm Irene.

The Vermont Medical Society also awarded two \$5,000 scholarships at the annual meeting to University of Vermont College of Medicine third year students **W. Christian Crannell** and **Jen Makrides**, both of whom are interested in pursuing careers in primary care.

UVM College of Medicine researchers presented the results of several studies at the annual conference of the North American Primary Care Research Group in Ottawa, Canada this fall. "Integrating Pharmacists Into Primary Care: A Demonstration Emphasizing Population Management" was a poster presentation by **Amanda Kennedy, PharmD, BCPS**, Associate Professor of Medicine; **Connie van Eeghen, DrPH**, presented a session on "Using Lean Management to Improve Opioid Prescribing for Pain in Ambulatory Care;" **Charles MacLean, MD**, Associate Dean of Primary Care, delivered sessions on the "Population Reporting of Opioid Prescribing Using Electronic Medical Record Data" and on "A Tall Tale: Reliability of Height Measurement in an Electronic Medical Record;" **Marie Sandoval, MD** discussed the results of a survey study she and **Mary Val Palumbo, DNP, APRN**, completed titled "What is the Effect of the Electronic Health Record on the Outpatient Office Visit and Student Education?"

**Betty Rambur, PhD**, Professor of Health Policy and Nursing at the University of Vermont College of Nursing and Health Sciences is the 2013 recipient of the Sloan Consortium Excellence in Online Teaching award for her achievement as an online educator who is creative in her approach, uses well-designed course materials and instructional strategies, and has a demonstrated rapport with her students. The Sloan Consortium, based in Newburyport, MA, is a leading professional learning society devoted to advancing quality online education.

**Mary Val Palumbo, DNP, APRN**, Director of AHEC Nursing Workforce Development, has received two grants: The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Advanced Nursing Education Grant to develop an interprofessional practice (IPP) in a virtual environment that will invite innovation in the interprofessional care of elders with multiple chronic conditions; and a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation State Implementation Program grant to implement two recommendations of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Nursing and the Institute of Medicine's report *The Future of Nursing-Leading Change, Advancing Health*. The goals are to ensure nursing representation on committees and boards involved with health care and health care reform by promoting and making available leadership training and mentoring; and to increase the proportion of Vermont nurses with baccalaureate in nursing degrees (BS or BSN) to 80% by 2022. ■

## Ask Dr. Amidon: What is concierge medicine?

“Concierge medicine,” also called “direct medicine,” is a practice model in which physicians are paid a retainer style membership fee by patients in return for improved access to care. The fees are set such that a primary care physician can limit his or her practice to roughly 300-500 patients and thereby offer more personalized primary care services and increased availability. Typical patient panel sizes in primary care are in the 1500-2500 range. There are many variations of the concierge approach. In most models basic preventive services are included in the fee, but there is variability in whether the patient or a health insurer is billed for other services. Patients typically retain health insurance to cover services for other healthcare services such as specialty care, diagnostic testing, hospital services and anything else outside the scope of primary care. The American Academy of Private Physicians estimates there are approximately 3,500 “membership model” physicians practicing in the US.

### How many physicians are practicing with the concierge medicine model in Vermont?

Paul Harrington, executive vice president of the Vermont Medical Society, estimates there are “less than ten physicians practicing concierge medicine in the state. They all seem to share similar characteristics: they’ve been formed by primary care physicians who have practiced in their communities for several decades and have very close relationships with their patients. These physicians have also determined that they’re unable to spend sufficient time with their patients unless they both reduce the size of their panels and they generate an additional source of revenue,” he concludes.

Currently known to practice concierge medicine in Vermont are: David Bisbee, MD (Stowe); Seth Coombs, MD and Bruce Bullock, MD (Rutland); Alicia Cunningham, MD (South Burlington); Keith Michl, MD, (Manchester); and Frank Landry, MD (South Burlington).

### What are some of the pros and cons?

Advantages cited by concierge physicians include greater professional satisfaction, delivery of better, more coordinated care to patients, more time for preventive medicine and wellness service, and in one study by MDVIP, lower health care costs due to decreased hospitalizations and hospital readmissions. Note: a comprehensive literature review of perceptions and patient outcomes was not completed for this article.

Potential disadvantages of the concierge approach include exacerbation of the shortage of primary care physicians (due to smaller panel sizes), concerns around what services should be covered by the membership fee versus an insurance plan, and creation of a multi-class system of medicine based on ability to pay.

Discussion of professionalism versus entrepreneurship is

sparked by for profit incentives derived by companies that own the concierge medical groups, such as Proctor and Gamble’s acquisition of MDVIP.

Medical Doctor Value in Prevention (MDVIP) is a national network of 600 concierge primary care physicians that limits member physicians to a patient panel of 600 or less. Founded in 2000, its headquarters are in Boca Raton, FL.

### What does a typical pathway into concierge practice look like?

Keith Michl, MD, internal medicine physician in Manchester, VT, shares his pathway:



Keith Michl, MD

“Over two years ago, I decided I needed to change my practice style. As an independent, solo internist in Manchester Center for 15 years my practice had grown to nearly 2,000 patients and I was seeing 20 or more patients every day. As my overhead increased and reimbursements decreased, I needed to see more patients every day just to cover expenses. I wasn’t able to give adequate time to individual patients and I was enjoying practicing medicine less.”

“I decided to join MDVIP [a national concierge medical group] and transition to a smaller, personalized practice; to keep my practice size under 600 patients and to deliver more services in the wellness program, I charge a \$1,500 membership fee per year. I am able to be more proactive in managing patients and their problems and feel I have been able to reduce my patients’ need for hospitalization or emergency department visits. I have more time to discuss patients’ problems in detail thus reducing the need for expensive imaging, testing and specialist referrals. I host educational seminars for patients, including healthy cooking demonstrations, exercise programs and even Tai Chi classes. It’s wonderful to be able to see my patients on time and be able to offer same-day or next-day appointments. Practicing in this way has allowed me to be and feel more effective and enjoy doctoring in Vermont much more.”

We thank Dr. Keith Michl for sharing his perspective and story for this article.

(Continued on page 9)

*In memory of one of UVM’s finest teachers, Dr. Ellsworth Amidon (1906-1992). When difficult questions arose, the response often was “Ask Dr. Amidon.” Dr. Amidon was the first chair of the Department of Medicine at the UVM College of Medicine and at Mary Fletcher Hospital, where he was also the medical director.*



## Primary Care Rounds



### Department of Family Medicine

Thomas C. Peterson, MD,  
Professor and Chair

Greetings from the Department of Family Medicine. This has been a very busy, and exciting, past year in the department and across the state.

Like many of you, we find that we are frequently triaging questions from our patients about health care reform. It's a great conversation, and this appears to be a tremendous opportunity to improve the health of the patients that we all serve across Vermont.

In the department we are pleased with the increasing student and resident enthusiasm for family medicine. We are currently interviewing for next year's residency class and have had record numbers of applications from very qualified applicants. This past year a near record number of UVM medical students chose to enter family medicine. These results point to a growing interest in family medicine in Vermont, and bode well for our workforce development across Vermont.

I want to thank so many of you for supporting our student and resident education programs. This past year the Third Year Family Medicine Clerkship was voted by the medical students as the best clerkship at Fletcher Allen Health Care. The students and the department really appreciate the generous and dedicated teaching that you provide in your offices. It makes a tremendous difference.

The department is very proud that **Dr. Anya Koutras** was selected by the Vermont Academy of Family Physicians as their Family Physician of the Year. Anya is an Associate Professor of Family Medicine and a statewide leader in breastfeeding initiatives, and the director of our Fourth Year Family Medicine student curriculum. I'd also like to thank **Norm Ward, MD** for his recent term of service and leadership as president of the Vermont Medical Society.

Within the department we are proud

of our medical home development, by leading in a Fletcher Allen-wide project "Transforming Primary Care", which emphasizes all of the familiar qualities of primary care – and ensuring the patient is the focal point for our clinical services development. I know that many of you are participating in similar projects, and these efforts make me confident that Vermont will continue to lead the way in health and patient care quality.



### Pediatrics

Lewis First, MD, Professor and Chair, Department of Pediatrics, University of Vermont College of Medicine; Editor-in-Chief, Pediatrics

Primary care continues to be a major focus of our Department of Pediatrics as we joined our colleagues in Family Medicine and Primary Care Internal Medicine in our organizational initiative to "Transform Primary Care" into a more highly reliable, patient and family-centered process. While we continue to refine coordinated systems of care, the comments from families, providers, and staff have been positive and a number of metrics confirm the ongoing success of this initiative.

On the inpatient side, we have initiated 24/7 inpatient hospitalist coverage with the arrival of some additional hospitalists—including **Dr. Molly Moore** from Boston Children's Hospital, **Dr. Karin Gray** from National Children's Hospital, and **Dr. Abby Adler** from Massachusetts General Hospital for Children. **Dr. Rebecca Goodman**, another of our hospitalists, has become director of the Newborn Nursery as well to further coordinate systems of care in that area of the children's hospital. To reach the hospitalist on call, simply call Provider Access or Patient Placement Services and they will connect you.

Our plans for the upcoming year also include the recruitment of a new adolescent specialist as well as a pediatric ED specialist—both of whom will be needed to meet residency training requirements and to assist the referring primary care community as needed.

Further news about these new positions will be shared in a future issue of *Primarily Vermont*.



### College of Nursing and Health Sciences

Patricia Prelock, PhD, CCC-SLP, Dean, College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Professor, Communication Sciences, University of Vermont

The College of Nursing and Health Sciences is engaged in a number of cross disciplinary research and service initiatives that play out in the primary care environment. Family Practice has received a three-year grant from SAMHSA to educate residents in Family Practice, PCIM, and graduate students in Counseling, Social Work and Nursing to identify and intervene with individuals with alcohol abuse potential. Screenings and interventions will be initiated in the primary care setting.

The Department of Nursing received a three-year HRSA grant to create models of excellence in treating elders who are frail and live in rural settings. Nurse Practitioner students will be educated to lead teams with PCIM, Pharmacy, Athletic Training, Physical Therapy, Nutrition, Social Work and Communication Sciences and Disorders, in a collaborative effort to optimize care.

With funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Department of Nursing will also examine the nursing workforce and identify educational interventions to prepare the profession for the next 20 years.

Further, the preparation of the nurse practitioner is transitioning to the doctoral level, to accommodate the level of education that is necessary to effectively function in our complex health care environments. The first class of Doctor of Nursing Practice students will be admitted in the fall of 2014.





## Obstetrics, Gynecology & Reproductive Sciences

Ira M. Bernstein, MD, John Van Sicklen Maeck Professor and Chair, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences, Senior Associate Dean for Research, UVM College of Medicine

The OB Department had several significant leadership transitions over the last year. **Dr. Mark Phillippe** stepped down as chairperson in July 2012 and was replaced by **Dr. Ira Bernstein** who now serves as the John Van Sicklen Maeck Professor and Chair. Dr. Phillippe returned to the role of Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences. In August 2012 **Dr. Christine Murray**, after many successful years of service, stepped down as the residency program director and was replaced by **Dr. Elisabeth Wegner**. Dr. Wegner led the program through a successful RRC site visit in October which has led to a four year re-accreditation. The Continuing Medical Education (CME) program at the University of Vermont College of Medicine and Fletcher Allen Health Care, under the direction of Associate Dean for CME and Associate Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences, **Dr. Cheung Wong**, was reaccredited with “Commendation,” the highest accreditation awarded by the

ACCME. Vermont was tops among four states, including Oregon, New Hampshire and Maine and received an “A” on the March of Dimes 2012 Premature Birth Report Card issued in mid-November. Vermont was recognized for its low preterm birth rate.



## Internal Medicine

Allen B. Repp, MD, MS, FHM, FACP, Health Care Service Leader & Division Chief, Primary Care Internal Medicine

Primary Care Internal Medicine had a dynamic year. We coordinated closely with our colleagues in Family Medicine and Pediatrics to transform the way we deliver primary care in our NCQA-recognized Patient-Centered Medical Homes. This transformation included staffing and training to allow us to deliver highly reliable, patient-centered care and to enhance the care of our patient population as a whole. Under the new directorship of **Dr. Mark Pasanen**, the faculty physicians on our 24x7 Hospitalist Service have been involved in several initiatives to improve the patient experience and recently launched a pilot of interdisciplinary team rounding.

We welcomed exceptional new faculty and providers – **Drs. Alison Landrey**,

**Anne Breña**, **Amy Lynn Teleron**, **Shaden Eldakar-Hein** and **Jennifer Borofsky** as well as physician assistants **Rachel Brodie**, **Candis Cousins** and **Alison Hall**.

Division faculty members played pivotal roles in teaching and directing courses for a broad audience of clinical learners. **Dr. Rich Pinckney** was recognized by the Internal Medicine Residency Program as Outstanding Teacher of the Year in General Internal Medicine. Our faculty and providers were also engaged in service at the state and national levels. To name only a few, **Drs. Isaura Menzies**, **Jaina Clough** and **Steve Grant** were appointed to the OneCare Vermont Clinical Advisory Board and Dr. Menzies was also appointed to the Green Mountain Care Board Technical Advisory Group.

**Dr. Mark Pasanen** served as the Governor for the Vermont Chapter of the American College of Physicians and the UVM Medical Alumni President, while **Dr. Patricia King** chaired the Vermont Board of Medical Practice.

We are excited about our upcoming academic and clinical initiatives and look forward to reporting them in the next Primary Care Rounds. ■

(Ask Dr. Amidon continued from page 7)

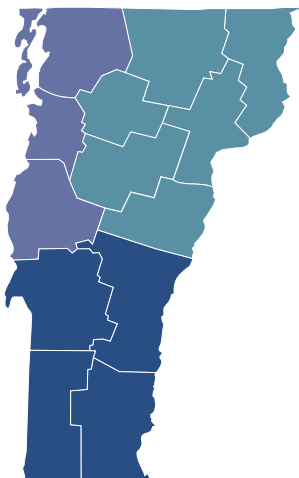
### What are the practice model trends?

Traditional practice models (private, hospital-owned, FQHC-owned) continue to make up the majority of practices. New models such as concierge practice are evolving and health care reform will influence those new models. Most recently in the news has been another model called “MinuteClinics,” a division of the cvs Pharmacy Corporation. Located within retail businesses, these walk-in medical clinics are open seven days a week with no appointment necessary. MinuteClinics have opened in New Hampshire; to learn more about the new Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center-MinuteClinic collaboration, visit [www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/news](http://www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/news).

Primarily Vermont will provide updates about the primary care practice environment as more is learned. ■

## AHEC News From Around the State

For news from Vermont’s three regional Area Health Education Centers, check out their community-based web sites:



- **Champlain Valley AHEC:**  
[www.cvahec.org](http://www.cvahec.org)  
St. Albans  
(802) 527-1474
- **Northeastern Vermont AHEC:**  
[www.nevahec.org](http://www.nevahec.org)  
St. Johnsbury  
(802) 748-2506
- **Southern Vermont AHEC:**  
[www.svahec.org](http://www.svahec.org)  
Springfield  
(802) 885-2126



# Calendar

## JANUARY

- 8 *Achieving Safety – A CO\*RE Community Approach to Comprehensive Pain Management, Improved Patient Care and Community Safety.* Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Colchester, Vermont. Contact: Champlain Valley AHEC: 802-527-1474, ext. 210.
- 9-14 *Physician Assistant Academy of Vermont Winter Conference.* Stowe Mountain Lodge, Stowe, Vermont. Contact: michele@conmx.net

\*For more information call: UVM College of Medicine Continuing Medical Education at (802) 656-2292, or go online to <http://cme.uvm.edu>.

## JANUARY

- 15 *Grand Rounds for School Nurses – “Adolescent Depression.”* All Vermont Interactive Technologies (VIT) sites. Call AHEC: 802-656-2179
- 17-20 *Eastern Winter Dermatology Conference\*.* Stowe, Vermont

## FEBRUARY

- 6-8 *Hospital Medicine 2014\*.* Stowe, Vermont

## MARCH

- 27-28 *Vermont Nurse Practitioners Annual Conference.* Stoweflake Resort, Stowe, Vermont. Contact: Deborah.Wachtel@Vermontmednet.org

## MARCH

- 18 *Grand Rounds for School Nurses – “Autism.”* All Vermont Interactive Technologies (VIT) sites. Call AHEC: 802-656-2179

## APRIL

- 8 *AHEC’s Vermont Geriatrics Conference\*.* Capitol Plaza, Montpelier, Vermont
- 9 *Blueprint for Health Conference\*.* Sheraton Hotel, Burlington, Vermont

## MAY

- 7-9 *Women’s Health\*.* Doubletree Hotel, South Burlington, Vermont

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