

Legislative and Advocacy Updates

Certificate of Need Reform Bill Signed into Law on May 13!

Governor Scott signed H.96, the HealthFirst-led bill that significantly increases the monetary thresholds before a healthcare-related project is subject to Vermont's Certificate of Need requirements. While the thresholds weren't increased as high as we were pushing for, this is still a win for Vermonters as it will improve access and affordability as Vermont gains more lower-cost options for care.



State Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Includes Funding for Primary Care

Thank you to HealthFirst members who reached out to legislators to advocate for primary care funding for the state fiscal year 2026 budget which runs from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026. It helped! The final budget includes:

- \$4.4M to continue Blueprint for Health Community Health Team (CHT), Primary Care Medical Home (PCMH) and SASH program (covers the full need)
- \$3.95M in "bridge funding" for primary care payments currently disseminated through OneCare including PHM and CPR program payments (out of full need of \$5.5M)
- Start up funding for the Maple Mountain Residency Program, contingent on further information on whether the federal government can match these funds

In addition, as part of a settlement between UVMHC and the GMCB, \$11M will be distributed to non-hospital primary care practices. Logistical details are not yet known.

Note that the budget does **not** include money to continue the Blueprint Mental Health Expansion Pilot.

Historic Legislative Session includes Several Healthcare Reform Bills Intended to Reduce Vermont's High Healthcare Costs



- **S.126** aims to transform VT's health care system by directing the Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB) to set hospital prices by FY2027 using "reference-based pricing" (RBP) and to establish hospital global budgets starting in 2028. There is language that allows for GMCB to also establish RBP for non-hospital healthcare professionals. The bill also calls for the creation of a Health Care Delivery Advisory Committee as well as a Vermont Steering Committee for Comprehensive Primary Health Care. These committees will work with the Agency of Human Services and others to develop a Statewide Healthcare Delivery Plan by 2027. This bill was signed into law on June 12th. **Want to engage? We are looking for a PCP to work with us on the PC Committee that will begin meeting in Sept 2025. Contact Susan for details.**
- **H.482** was signed into law on June 6 and allows the GMCB to reduce hospital reimbursement rates if a health insurer is at risk of insolvency. It also gives GMCB the ability to assign an independent observer if a hospital is not complying with budget orders. This represents a significant expansion of GMCB's powers and aims to provide more immediate support to BCBSVT as it borders on insolvency.
- **H.266** was originally crafted to protect those intended to benefit from the federal 340B drug pricing program. However, after legislators learned that VT hospitals charge the highest prices in the nation, by far, for drugs, they expanded the bill to address this. The bill caps what a hospital can charge for a prescription drug administered in an outpatient or office setting to 120% of the average sales price (ASP). The cap provision begins in Jan 2026 and the bill also requires hospitals to report on their 340B program. The bill was signed by the Governor on June 11th.

Also, on May 13th the Governor signed **S.28**, a bill that strengthens the State's shield laws protecting access to reproductive and gender affirming care services.

At the Federal Level...



The House of Representatives passed a budget reconciliation bill that the Congressional Budget Office estimates will reduce health care system spending by \$1 trillion over the next ten years and will cause more than 11 million people to become uninsured. It's now up to the Senate, who will likely amend the bill. For more details on the health provisions in the current version of the bill, see KFF's useful [tracker](#).

Related, the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions committee (HELP) is looking for healthcare provider input on the potential impact this bill will have on your practice and patients. Details [here](#).

GMCB Insurance Rate Review Hearings

MVP and BCBSVT submitted their 2026 individual and small-group health insurance premium rate filings to the GMCB on May 12. MVP is asking for 6.2% and 7.5% increases in the individual and small group markets, respectively. BCBSVT requested 23.3% and 13.7% increases.

Now the GMCB will embark on an extensive process to review the rate requests, which includes input from insurance experts, the state's Healthcare Advocate, and the public. The GMCB will announce approved rates sometime in August.

We encourage you to share your perspectives on the rates. You can submit public comments as directed [here](#) or you can attend the public comment forum on Thursday, July 24 at 4:00. See related press release [here](#).



New Members!



- **Jada Khosla, MD, May Carlet, DNP, and Irene Chamberlain, PA-C** of [Partners of Integrative Healing](#) joined in May. New HealthFirst practice!
- **Minta Trivette, APRN** recently joined [Richmond Family Medicine](#).
- **Jillian Kaplita, MD** is now practicing at [Eye Care Associates](#) in Middlebury.
- **Thomas Davis, PA** has joined [Four Seasons Dermatology](#). Four Seasons also has added a new location at 253 Stratton Rd in Rutland. phone: 802-864-0192; fax: 802-860-4919

Welcome to the HealthFirst Vermont independent practice tribe!



Announcements from Members

IN OFFICE INFUSION SERVICES available for patients



VERMONT
GASTROENTEROLOGY

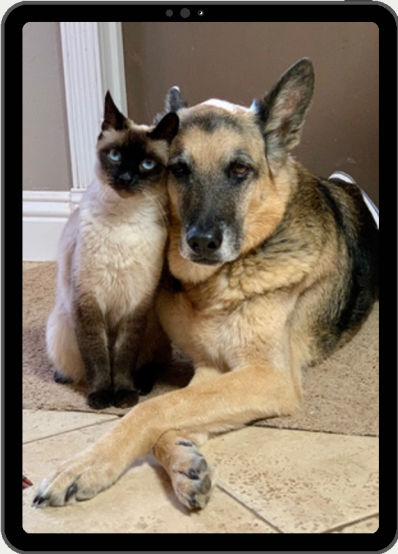
875 Roosevelt Hwy #132
Colchester, VT
802-864-7483

Available medications include Avsola, Cimzia, Cosentyx, Entyvio, Illumya, Omvoh, Orencia, Remicade, Rituxin, Simponi Aria, Skyrizi, Stelara, Tremfya, Zinplava, Zolair

Dr. Mary Stanley is helping to spread the word about three fun events to support suicide prevention efforts. Perhaps your practice can form a team or help to sponsor an event!

- August 2:** Pickle for Prevention - event details [here](#)
- September 20:** Pedal for Prevention - event details [here](#)
- October 18:** Out of the Darkness Walk - event details [here](#)

Support for Practices



I couldn't resist sharing this picture of my friend's dog & cat. These two are serious buddies! They even groom each other! ~Susan

NEW Member Benefit: HR Support with Triumph HR!



You can now access FREE on-demand HR consulting support on common, day-to-day HR needs such as:

- Employee relations or compliance questions
- Leave of absence & accommodations support
- Policy reviews and general HR guidance

To take advantage of this benefit, email **Christina** for details.

More in-depth requests, such as full handbook overhauls or internal investigations, are available but may be billable to the practice. Reilly will connect with us to ensure these needs are appropriately scoped and resourced. This helps ensure all member practices have equitable access to support.

We're thrilled to offer this service and hope practices find it valuable. Please reach out with any questions or comments!

Member Benefit: Coding Support!

There are still plenty of spots left for HealthFirst member practices to get free access to CodingIntel's live monthly webinars, on-demand webinars and courses.

Activate your free access today!

Note that this benefit will expire on January 6, 2026.

Already using the benefit? Please let us know what you think [here!](#)

Provider Stabilization Grant Funds Available through DVHA

Vermont's 2026 Fiscal Year Budget includes \$10M for "Provider Stabilization Grants". Funds are available to Vermont Medicaid participating providers with proven stabilization needs and a planned path to sustainability. Independent practices, FQHCs, residential treatment facilities, and other providers of healthcare and human services are eligible to apply. Apply now! The program will close once the \$10M is awarded. Application and additional information [here](#).

Board Meetings

The last BOD meeting of 2025 will be held on the Wednesday Sept 24 from 6:30 – 8:30 PM. Reach out if you would like to join!



Upcoming Meetings and Events



Coffee Chats

Coffee chats are a chance for HealthFirst practice managers and owners to discuss any practice related issues. **Second Tuesday of each month from 12:15 – 12:45 PM via Zoom.**



Stopping Fraud before it strikes – Tools for Banking Security

Tues Jun 24, 2025 12:15 PM – 1:00 PM

Proactive fraud prevention starts with the right tools. From transaction alerts and two factor authentication to cash management fraud prevention tools such as positive pay and debit blocker, help your business detect suspicious activity before it strikes. You're committed to putting patient care first, empower your staff with tools to protect your business accounts – because the best fraud defense is early detection.



NOVEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Fri Nov 7th 11:30 – 2:00 Practice Manager Forum

Details TBD, subject to change

Sat Nov 8th 10:00 – 2:00 Annual Member Meeting

Details TBD, subject to change

Both events at the Country Club of VT in Waterbury, VT

VMS Launches New Physician Leadership Development Course - Apply Today!

The Vermont Medical Society is partnering with UVM Professional and Continuing Education (PACE) to offer a new statewide physician leadership development course running from Sept 2025 until Mar 2026. The course is designed to empower physician leaders in VT with the skills, knowledge, practical experience, and networking opportunities needed to foster effective team success. Course information and FAQs here.

VMS is now accepting interested applicants! Apply here. Applicants submit a brief statement of interest in the course and a CV. If there are more interested candidates than seats, VMS will select participants with the goal of wide representation from practice types, specialties and locations. Contact Stephanie Winters at swinters@vtmd.org with questions.

Key dates:

- **Applications due July 1, 2025**
- Selected candidates informed by July 18, 2025
- Registration and \$3,400 in tuition due by August 22, 2025
- Course begins September 12, 2025, in-person at Topnotch, Stowe

Enjoy your Summer!

