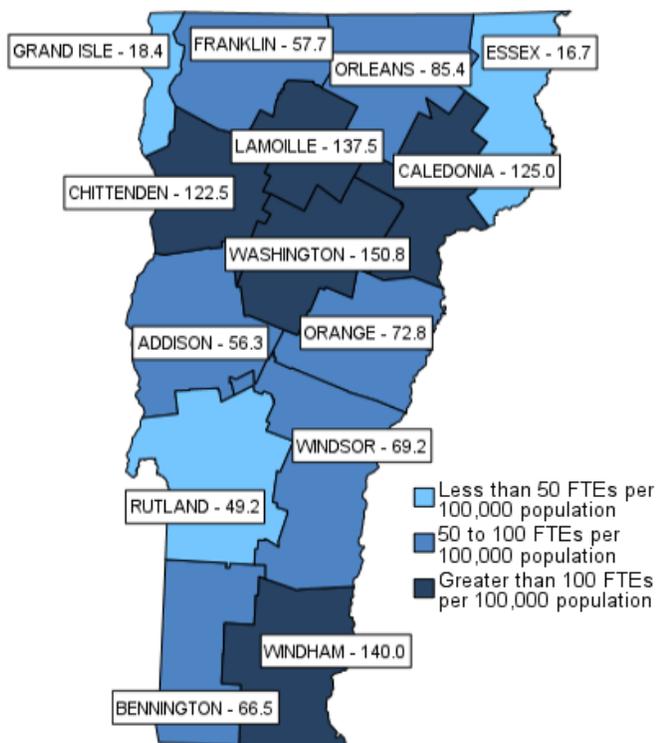


Overview

This census of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors is part of the Vermont Department of Health's healthcare provider data program, which is used to monitor and measure the supply of health care providers in Vermont over time. Vermont mental health counselors are relicensed every two years. Data for this report were obtained during the January 2023 relicensing period and represent a snapshot of the profession at that time.

Mental health counselors diagnose and treat mental conditions, psychiatric disabilities, and emotional disorders; provide professional counseling services; and promote optimal mental health to individuals, couples, families, and groups. They are part of the allied mental health professional workforce in Vermont. To be licensed in Vermont, counselors must have completed a graduate degree with specific mental health counseling focus, have two years (at least 3000 hours) of supervised practice, and pass both the National Counselor Examination and the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination.

Mental Health Counselor FTEs per 100,000 population by County



In Brief

Workforce

Survey period: January 2023
Response rate: 99.7%
Licenses renewed: 1,179
Active in VT: 1,017
Full-time equivalents: 658.6

Demographics

% Female: 76.7%
Median age: 51
% 60 or older: 30.7%

Education and Training

% PhD: 3.1%
% educated in VT: 47.9%
% educated in Northeast: 82.6%

Main Specialties

Psychotherapy: 32.7%
Trauma: 12.1%
Cognitive behavioral therapy: 9.1%
General practice: 26.4%

Current Employment

Accepting new patients: 87.8%
Full-time hours at main site: 24.4%
Plans to increase hours: 10.2%
Plans to reduce hours: 6.8%

Geographic Distribution

(FTE to 100,000 population ratio)
Highest: 150.8, Washington County
Lowest: 16.7, Essex County

Trends in Statewide FTEs

2017: 423.4
2019: 494.1
2021: 547.9
2023: 658.6

Workforce

- During the census period, 1,179 mental health counselors (MHCs) renewed their licenses and 1,175 completed the workforce survey for a response rate of 99.7%. There were four MHCs who renewed their licenses but did not fill out the survey.
- Of the 1,175 survey respondents, 1,017 (86.6%) indicated that they are active and providing direct patient care in Vermont as mental health counselors.
- 971 mental health counselors reported doing their work via telehealth.
 - 950 (97.8%) of these are active primarily in Vermont and are included in this report.
 - 21 (2.2%) are not active or work in multiple states and are considered inactive for this report.
- Of the 158 inactive respondents, 57 (36.3%) indicated that they plan to start providing direct patient care in Vermont within the next 12 months.
- The remainder of this report is based on the 1,017 mental health counselors who are active and providing direct patient care in Vermont.

Demographics

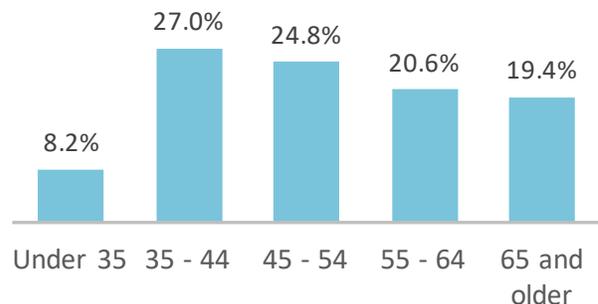
Gender

- 76.7% of the mental health counselors in Vermont are female.
- 20.3% are male.

Age

- 35.2% were younger than 45 years old.
- 19.4% were 65 years of age and older.

Age Distribution of VT MHCs



Race and Ethnicity

Respondents were asked to select their race and could select multiple responses or choose not to answer. Therefore, numbers may not equal the total number of mental health counselors.

- Of the 1,017 mental health counselors, 934 are white (91.8%), 1.2% are Black, 0.7% are American Indian or Alaskan Native, 0.5% are Asian, and none are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Nine MHCs selected another race that was not listed (0.9%), and 54 preferred not to answer or were missing data for race.
- Eighteen mental health counselors (1.8%) indicated that they are Hispanic, Latino/a, or of Spanish origin, and 951 (94.3%) are not. Forty-eight mental health counselors preferred not to answer or were missing data for ethnicity.

Education and Training

- All MHCs must have a master’s degree to be licensed.
 - 31 (3.1%) had a PhD.
- 82.6% completed their education in the Northeast.

Highest education level completed	Number	Percent
Vermont	477	47.9%
Northeast excluding Vermont	345	34.7%
Midwest	41	4.1%
South	63	6.3%
West	67	6.7%
Foreign Country	2	0.2%

Additional licenses

- Many MHCs maintain more than one mental health care license.
 - 181 are substance abuse and/or addiction counselors
 - 28 are art therapists
 - 9 are psychologists
 - 6 are school counselors
 - 17 are marriage and family therapists
 - 8 are psychoanalysts

Practice Characteristics

Specialties

Psychotherapy, trauma and cognitive behavioral therapy are the most common specialties. Of the active MHCs, 268 said they are in general practice with no specialty.

Number of sites

- 10.1% (103) of mental health counselors practice at more than one location.
- 0.5% (5) of those practice at 3 or more locations.

Practice Setting

- For mental health counselors’ main practice location, the most common setting is individual private practices, followed by outpatient mental health clinics.

Main Setting	Number	Percent
Community health center	68	6.7%
Mental health clinic	117	11.5%
Methadone clinic	3	0.3%
Primary or specialist medical care	18	1.8%
Specialized substance use treatment facility	10	1.0%
Criminal Justice	5	0.5%
Hospital: psychiatric	12	1.2%
Private practice - individual	490	48.3%
Private practice - group	48	4.7%
Residential setting	10	1.0%
School-based mental health service	76	7.5%
In-home setting	35	3.4%
Distance Counseling	45	4.4%
Other setting	78	7.7%

Access to Care

- 87.8% accept new clients.
- 78.6% participate in Medicaid.
- 71.3% accept new Medicaid clients.
- Medicare does not reimburse mental health counselors directly so MHCs accepting Medicare must be able to bill using another provider type or provide services under supervision of a covered license type.
 - 18.1% participate in Medicare.
 - 16.8% accept new Medicare clients.

Current Experience

Years in Practice

- Median number of years licensed in VT: 13

In the next 12 months

- 79.2% of MHCs plan to continue working as they had been.
- 10.2% plan to increase their hours.
- 6.8% plan to reduce their hours.

Years Licensed in VT	Number	Percent
0 to 5 years	284	28.6%
6 to 10 years	243	24.5%
11 to 15 years	155	15.6%
16 to 20 years	106	10.7%
21 to 25 years	89	9.0%
Over 25 years	115	11.6%

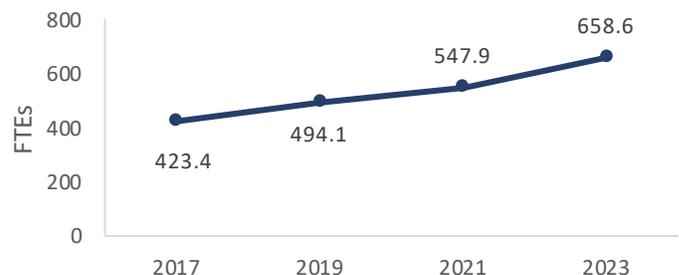
Full Time Equivalent (FTEs)

- 248 mental health counselors (24.4%) work 40 hours or more per week at their main site.
- 658.6 total FTEs are provided by 1,017 mental health counselors.
- 186.1 FTEs, or 28.3% of total FTEs, are aged 60 and older (312 individuals).

Trends in Statewide FTEs

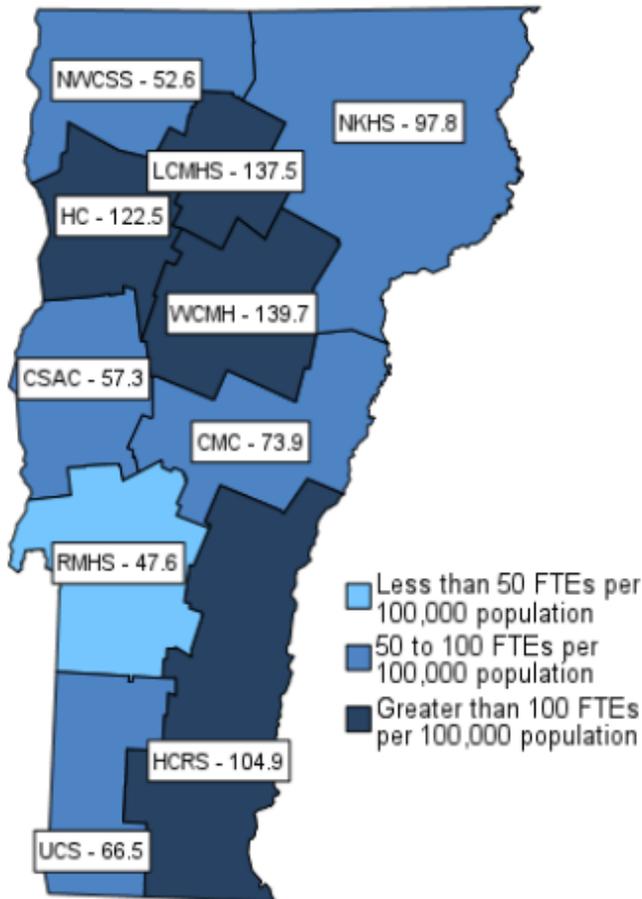
- Mental health counselor FTEs increased steadily from 423.4 in 2017, to 494.1 in 2019 and 547.9 in 2021.
- From 2021 to 2023, MHC FTEs increased by 20.2% to 658.6.

Mental Health Counselors FTEs by Year



Mental Health Counselors 2023

Mental Health Catchment Areas FTEs per 100,000 population (see Appendix for details)



- Rutland Mental Health Services (RMHS) has the lowest ratio of 47.6 FTEs per 100,000 population.
- The highest ratio is 139.7 in Washington County Mental Health Services (WCMH) area, followed by Lamoille County Mental Health Services (LCMHS) with a ratio of 137.5.

Key Takeaways

- The number of FTEs per 100,000 population increased in all Vermont counties from 2017 to 2023.
- The percent of MHCs who are under age 45 is increasing.
- A number of counselors indicate a desire to serve Medicare clients, but an inability to do so due to their practice structure and Medicare's reimbursement and billing requirements. The percent of MHCs saying that they serve Medicaid patients in Vermont has decreased over time.
 - 18.1% participate in Medicare in 2023 compared to 24.6% in 2019.
 - 16.8% accept new Medicare clients in 2023 compared to 23.2% in 2019.
- The Covid-19 pandemic brought about a large shift in telework. Responses to this 2023 survey indicate that 93% of mental health counselors active in Vermont practice remotely for at least part of their work and plan to continue to do so.

For more information, contact: AHS.VDHPPhysicianCensus@vermont.gov

Appendix

Active Mental Health Counselors

A mental health counselor who reported working in Vermont as such (regardless of how many hours) is considered active. MHCs who reported that their work was done remotely out of state were considered inactive for this report.

Census

The census was taken during the biennial mental health counselor relicensing process which ended on January 31, 2023. The data include all licensed mental health counselors except for new licensees enrolled less than three months before the renewal date (November 2018 – January 2023), as their license was valid until the next renewal date of January 31, 2025. Census questions available upon request.

Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

Full time is defined as 40 or more working hours in Vermont per week, 48 weeks or more per year. Reporting more than 40 hours per week is defined as one FTE regardless of the number of hours over 40 per week worked.

Main Practice, Site, Setting, and Specialty

The main practice site, setting, or specialty of an individual refer to the practice site, setting, or specialty with the greatest number of reported annual hours.

Map Quartiles

For county map, colors define quartiles. The lowest 25% of FTE equivalents to population ratio is displayed in the lightest color, the middle 50% in medium, and highest 25% in the darkest color.

Mental Health Catchment Areas

There are 10 designated agencies across the state of Vermont responsible for helping their local populations access mental health services among other things. When determining shortage areas for mental health care providers, the designated agency catchment areas are the dividing lines for Vermont.

Mental Health Catchment Area	Abbreviation
Clara Martin Center	CMC
Counseling Services of Addison County	CSAC
Howard Center	HC
Health Care and Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont	HCRS
Lamoille County Mental Health Services	LCMHS
Northeast Kingdom Human Services	NKHS
Northwestern Counseling and Support Services	NWCSS
Rutland Mental Health Services	RMHS
United Counseling Services	UCS
Washington County Mental Health Services	WCMH

Mental Health Counselors 2023

Missing data

Unless otherwise noted, missing data are excluded from tables. Thus, totals may vary from table to table.

Population Estimates

Population estimates are for July 2022 and were provided by the Department of Health.

States

States were grouped into the following regions:

Northeast	Midwest	South		West
Connecticut	Illinois	Alabama	North Carolina	Alaska
Maine	Indiana	Arkansas	Oklahoma	Arizona
Massachusetts	Iowa	Delaware	South Carolina	California
New Hampshire	Kansas	Florida	Tennessee	Colorado
New Jersey	Michigan	Georgia	Texas	Hawaii
New York	Minnesota	Kentucky	Virginia	Idaho
Pennsylvania	Missouri	Louisiana	Washington DC	Montana
Rhode Island	Nebraska	Maryland	West Virginia	Nevada
Vermont	North Dakota	Mississippi		New Mexico
	Ohio			Oregon
	South Dakota			Utah
	Wisconsin			Washington
				Wyoming

Weekly Hours

Average weekly hours are based on hours and weeks reported, adjusted to a full-time 48-week working year (hours * (weeks/48)). Thus, the average weekly hours for an individual working 40 hours a week for half the year (24 weeks) is 20.