



Children with Special Health Needs (CSHN) Connection November 2024



AHS - VDH CSHN
AHS

Dear Colleagues and Community Partners,

It is that time of year when many of us prepare for shorter days, colder temperatures, time inside with family, and yes, winter weather. We are reminded to turn to gratitude. We set aside time to appreciate the big and small stuff that we enjoy in our lives, the people, and hopefully the community that we create for ourselves.

In our world of healthcare and social service, we are all part of a community of care, a network of providers that support the health and well-being of the folks in our communities. We've recently seen times of hardship and devastating weather events; that communities working together can be a great source of strength, survival, and resilience.

This edition of CSHN Connections provides some weather event resources for families and communities as we enter Winter. Serious weather events can impact families with medically complex children and children with disabilities quite differently. Our hope is that planning and prevention, and knowing the resources available, will help mitigate some of the more serious risk.

From all of us here at CSHN, we extend our thanks to you for the work you do each day and your commitment to the well-being of your communities. May the next few months bring moments for gratitude amidst the season's celebrations.

CSHN Connections Team

Table of Contents

Program Spotlight: CSHN Health Systems Team
Community Partner Spotlight: Vermont WIC Program
CSHN Updates
Resources for Families
Policy Corner
Community Happenings

CSHN Program Spotlight: Health Systems Team



Our small, but mighty team is relatively new to CSHN, so we wanted to take the opportunity to (re)introduce ourselves. The Health Systems Team was formed in 2023 and works to improve access and equity for the Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) population. We collaborate with community and intergovernmental partners to address systemic gaps, generating resources and advance the system that supports families.

Examples of what we've been up to:

- Updating and creating resources for families and community partners
- Developed internal systems of data maintenance and tracking
- Current projects include assisting partners for CYSHCN in state custody and developing a statewide resource guide.
- Supporting related work around Pediatric Feeding Disorder and families moving to Vermont with CYSHCN.

If you have a health system issue you would like to report or discuss, please contact AHS.VDHCSHN@vermont.gov.

To learn more about our program and available resources visit our [website](#).

Community Partner Spotlight: Vermont WIC Program

Vermont WIC is a public health nutrition program whose mission is to assure healthy pregnancies and birth outcomes and healthy growth and development for infants and children up to age 5. WIC does this by providing nutritious foods, information and education on healthy eating, breastfeeding/chestfeeding promotion and support, and referrals to health care and community social service resources.

Individuals who live in Vermont who are pregnant or recently pregnant, and caregivers of children under 5, including parents, grandparents, and foster parents, can apply to WIC. Applicants must meet federal income guidelines or be active on Medicaid, 3SquaresVT, or Reach Up.

WIC clinics are offered statewide through [12 Vermont Department of Health Local Health Offices](#) and at outlying sites. Families who participate in WIC attend appointments about every 6 months. A nutrition professional conducts a nutrition and health assessment, issues a monthly food package based on nutrients critical for times of rapid growth and development, provides family-centered nutrition counseling, and makes referrals to other health and social services. Foods on the WIC food package include fruits and vegetables, whole grains, eggs, yogurt, milk, cereal, peanut butter and beans, and infant foods.

The WIC program has been supporting the health of families for 50 years! [Learn more about the WIC program and how to refer here.](#)



CSHN Updates



CSHN's Webpage Updates: Resources for Families and Providers

Our team is in the process of updating and adding to our library of helpful resources. These resources can be found on our main webpage by expanding [Resources for Families and Providers](#) to view or download.

What's new in the resource library?

- What is Disabled Children's Home Care? information sheet
- An updated Autism infographic for families awaiting an Autism evaluation or after receiving results
- Incontinence Supplies from Medicaid resource

We'll let you know when new resource information is posted.

Have an idea for a new resource? You can email us at the address at the end of this newsletter.

Children's Personal Care Services

Children's Personal Care Services (CPCS) will hold an Assessor Training on Wednesday, December 4th, 1PM-3PM on Microsoft Teams. If you work with children, youth, or young adults under age 21 and would like to become a CPCS Assessor, please email AHS.VDHCPCS@vermont.gov to register for this training. Please visit [Children's Personal Care Services](#) for program eligibility requirements and additional information.

CSHN Family Partner Program

Did you know CSHN has a Family Partnership project?

Vermont's Children with Special Health Needs (CSHN) program partners with parents and caregivers to inform short-term projects and programmatic needs. An implementation team representing multiple CSHN programs formed a team that conducted a statewide recruitment process and in Fall 2024 CSHN was able to launch this work with families.

The implementation team identified equity, belonging, authenticity, and trust as the core values to guide this collaborative work.

We know that creating a Family Partnership Program is meaningful for families who utilize CSHN programs and services as an essential part of increasing health equity and improving services for all. As such, the CSHN team aims to utilize a relationship-based approach to shift from *engagement* toward *partnership*.

The excitement about opportunities these partnerships bring, and the impact the CSHN Family Partner program has already had on informing projects.

Stay tuned, and please be in touch should you have any questions about this project!

Resources for Families

Preparedness for Winter or Other Weather Events

Flooding is over for now but need for assistance continues. VT's Department of Mental Health offers a webpage with updates and other information for Flooding Resources for People with Disabilities. [Flood Resources for Children, Youth, Parents and Other Caregivers](#).

As Vermont families prepare for winter, the following information that might help our CSHN families.

We all can be affected by weather-related emergencies long after an event. Children with intellectual or developmental disabilities can be affected by traumatic stress. Here are some tips from emergency preparedness partners:

[A Fact Sheet for Parents and Caregivers of Children with Intellectual or Developmental Needs](#)

Individuals needing assistance during a disaster can complete [Citizens Assistance Registry for Emergencies form](#). In Vermont, Emergency Management Directors can help at the town level: [VEM Public Contacts](#) to find your town.

Families needing translatable information can access these recommendations from VEM:

- [People with disabilities](#) (translatable into 11 languages)
- [Kids](#) (translatable into 11 languages)
- [Winter Weather](#) (translatable into 11 languages)
- [Power Outages](#) (translatable into 11 languages)

Severe Weather Resources for Families with Children and Youth with Special Health Needs:

[Emergency Preparedness Tips for Parents of Children with Special Healthcare Needs | Blogs | CDC](#)

[Microsoft Word - Emergency Preparedness for Families Toolkit Revised 06 08 11 Prepare with Pedro | Ready.gov](#)

And finally, the Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) here in Vermont has volunteers trained to help guide individuals with disabilities through the process of filling out the Green Mountain Guide to Emergency Preparedness, if they cannot do so on their own. Volunteers are trained on issues related to Access and Functional Needs, as well as home preparedness planning. Anyone interest in getting assistance can email the general MRC mailbox at: AHS.VDHDEPRIPMRC@vermont.gov to be assigned an AFN program member for assistance.

Please consider sharing these resources with the families you serve and others at your organizations.

Policy Corner



Vermont Policy Updates

Wheelchair Component Prior Authorization - Change to Health Care Administrative Rule 4.210 Wheelchairs, Mobility Devices and Seating Systems

- Vermont Medicaid program removed the prior authorization requirement for wheelchair components and accessories that are exact replacement as part of

wheelchair repairs. Previously, prior authorization was required for all repairs greater than \$500.

- Effective September 1, 2024.
- Providers are expected to continue to maintain documentation of medical necessity for repairs.
- To read Global Commitment Register 24-033: [24-033-F-GCR-PA-Wheelchair Repair.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#)

COVID Test Kits Coverage Change

Effective October 1, 2024, Vermont Medicaid is discontinuing coverage of over-the-counter COVID-19 self-diagnostic antigen tests in the pharmacy benefit at the end of the COVID coverage period. Coverage will remain in place for tests administered by Medicaid enrolled providers including in a medical provider's office or clinic, or as inpatient or outpatient hospital services.

- The GCR 24-102 can be found here: [24-102-F-GCR-COVID-19-OTC-Test-Coverage-Change.pdf](#)

Community Happenings

Inclusive Arts Vermont presents CYCLES. From their website "....this exhibition features the art of 25 Vermont artists with disabilities. The theme emerged from community input. The artwork expresses cycles of nature. Cycles of the body, mind, and spirit. Experiences of repetition, circular shapes, and more. The exhibition will tour the state between February 2024 and December 2024, kicking off at the University of Vermont's Davis Center. Cycles will then travel to Montpelier, Brattleboro, St. Johnsbury, and return to Burlington."

[CYCLES: 2024 Exhibition - Inclusive Arts Vermont](#)



Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports

From their website: "Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports is committed to empowering individuals with disabilities. We promote independence and further equality through access and instruction to sports and recreational activities regardless of ability to pay."

[Winter - Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports](#)

November is **Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month**. To learn more about CSHN's Palliative Care program, please see our [webpage](#).

CSHN supports children with complex, chronic health conditions and/or developmental disorders, ages birth to-21, and their families, with flexible, experienced, and proactive services. If you'd like to learn more about CSHN programming and resources, please see the [CSHN Website](#).

Do you have feedback or content for this newsletter? Please [let us know](#)!



VERMONT

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



This email is generated through State of Vermont's use of Microsoft 365 and may contain content that is controlled by State of Vermont.