

# Agenda At-A-Glance

Time	Event
7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	<b>Conference Registration</b>
7:30 - 8:30 a.m.	<b>Continental Breakfast/Exhibitor Availability</b>
8:30 - 8:45 a.m.	<b>Welcoming Remarks and Updates from the Health Department</b>   Patsy Kelso, PhD
8:45 - 9:45 a.m.	<b>Plenary I - Immunizations in 2025: Protecting Health Along the Storm Front</b>   Dr. Bob Hopkins
9:45 - 10:45 a.m.	<b>Plenary II - When Flu Flew the Coop: Current Status of Avian Influenza A (H5N1) in Livestock, Wildlife and Humans</b>   Emily Buskey, DVM, David Sausville, CWB, and Natalie Kwit, DVM, MPH, DACVPM
10:45 - 11:00 a.m.	<b>Transition Break with Refreshments/Exhibitor Availability</b>
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<b>Session I</b>
12:00 - 1:15 p.m.	<b>Lunch Buffet</b>
1:15 - 1:30 p.m.	<b>Transition Break/Exhibitor Availability</b>
1:30 - 2:30 p.m.	<b>Session II</b>
2:30 - 2:45 p.m.	<b>Transition Break with Refreshments/Exhibitor Availability</b>
2:45 - 3:45 p.m.	<b>Session III</b>
3:45 p.m.	<b>Evaluation and Adjourn</b>

# Full Agenda Morning

Time	Event		
7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Conference Registration		
7:30 - 8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast/Exhibitor Availability		
8:30 - 8:45 a.m.	Welcoming Remarks and Updates from the Health Department   Patsy Kelso, PhD		
8:45 - 9:45 a.m.	Plenary I - Immunizations in 2025: Protecting Health Along the Storm Front   Robert Hopkins, MD, MACP		
9:45 - 10:45 a.m.	Plenary II - When Flu Flew the Coop: Current Status of Avian Influenza A (H5N1) in Livestock, Wildlife and Humans   Emily Buskey, DVM, David Sausville, CWB, and Natalie Kwit, DVM, MPH, DACVPM		
10:45 - 11:00 a.m.	Transition Break with Refreshments/Exhibitor Availability		
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Session I	Adirondack ABC	Adirondack D	Montpelier
	I Was a Mother who was Skeptical of Vaccines for 12 Years. How Did I Change My Mind? Heather Simpson and Lydia Greene	Tracking Trouble: Innovations in Infectious Disease Surveillance from Sewers to Syndemics Yvonne Boire, BSN, RN, Lynn Blevins, MD, MPH, and Daniel Daltry, MSW	Introduction to Infodemiology: The Study of the Spread of Information Julie Corwin, MA

# Full Agenda Afternoon

Time	Event		
12:00 - 1:15 p.m.	<b>Lunch Buffet</b>		
1:15 - 1:30 p.m.	<b>Transition Break/Exhibitor Availability</b>		
1:30 - 2:30 p.m. <b>Session II</b>	<b>Vaccine Confidence</b> Benjamin Lee, MD, Sarah Nowak, PhD, Heidi Schumacher, MD	<b>Immunization Program 101</b> Merideth Plumptre, RN, and Katie Mahuron, RN, MPH	<b>Bugs and Bunnies: One Health Investigations in Vermont</b> Natalie Kwit, DVM, MPH, DACVPM, and Katie Strelau, PhD
2:30 - 2:45 pm	<b>Transition Break with Refreshments/Exhibitor Availability</b>		
2:45 -3:45 p.m. <b>Session III</b>	<b>From Viruses to Superbugs: Unraveling Infectious Disease Outbreaks and Investigations</b> Laura Ann Nicolai, MPH, Christine Connor, MSN, Allison Lafferty, MD, and John Davy, PhD	<b>Immunization Registry/ Immunization Data</b> Craig Morrill, MPH, Jason Pope, BS, CMA, and Denise Kall, PhD	<b>Vaccine Coalition</b> Private Meeting
3:45 p.m.	<b>Evaluation and Adjourn</b>		

# Conference Session Details

8:45 - 9:45 a.m. | **Plenary I**

## **Immunizations in 2025: Protecting Health Along the Storm Front**

Dr. Robert Hopkins

We are in a challenging time and space to provide vaccine protection to the individuals and families in our communities. In this presentation, I will review current challenges, opportunities and communication techniques to help participants 'arrive at the goal' of providing evidence-based immunization to their patients.

9:45 - 10:45 a.m. | **Plenary II**

## **When Flu Flew the Coop: Current Status of Avian Influenza A(H5N1) in Livestock, Wildlife and Humans**

Emily Buskey, DVM, David Sausville, CWB, and Natalie Kwit, DVM, MPH, DACVPM

Experts from Vermont Department of Health, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, and Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife will provide an overview of the current avian influenza A (H5N1) “bird flu” outbreak. H5 bird flu is widespread in wild birds worldwide and is causing outbreaks in poultry and U.S. dairy cows and human cases in U.S. dairy and poultry workers. Speakers will describe the current status of H5N1 in livestock, wildlife, and humans and how Vermont is preparing to respond to detections in dairy cattle or humans.

Adirondack ABC | 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | **Session I**

## **TRACK 1 - I Was a Mother who was Skeptical of Vaccines for 12 Years. How Did I Change My Mind?**

Lydia Greene and Heather Simpson

Before children, Lydia had a career in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). How did she become opposed to vaccines? We'll discuss the interactions with health care workers that helped and didn't help, and how her journey influences her practice as a health care worker today. In addition, Heather was initially skeptical of vaccines, but her journey led her to research extensively, ultimately changing her perspective and inspiring her to help others navigate vaccine misinformation.

# Conference Session Details

## Continued

Adirondack D | 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | **Session I**

### **TRACK 2 - Tracking Trouble: Innovations in Infectious Disease Surveillance from Sewers to Syndemics**

Participants will gain insight into current trends and testing recommendations in the fields of TB and HIV and will learn more about existing and emerging opportunities for wastewater surveillance to provide early warning to public health and communities.

#### **Segment 1: TB or Latent TB? That is The Question: Next Steps After the IGRA**

Yvonne Boire, BSN, RN

Screening for tuberculosis infection in targeted populations is a key component of tuberculosis elimination, but sometimes knowing who should be tested is easier than knowing what to do once they test positive. Learn more about who is being tested in Vermont and explore steps and considerations after patients test positive. Attendees will get a brief introduction to resources and will learn how the Health Department can provide support.

#### **Segment 2: From First Blush to Flush: The Emergence of Wastewater Surveillance in Vermont**

Lynn Blevins, MD, MPH

First launched during COVID-19, wastewater surveillance has continued to expand. Learn more about the current applications of wastewater surveillance and what the future holds in Vermont for monitoring infectious diseases after the flush.

#### **Segment 3: HIV in Vermont: Where Are We Now?**

Daniel Daltry, MSW

Biomedical interventions have improved HIV prevention and care, yet new infections continue to occur. During this presentation, attendees will gain the latest state of the state perspective on HIV in Vermont today, HIV trends, and the importance of offering HIV testing opportunities.

# Conference Session Details

## Continued

Montpelier | 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | **Session I**

### **TRACK 3 - Introduction to Infodemiology: The Study of the Spread of Information**

Julie Corwin, MA

In the same way epidemiology studies the spread of diseases, infodemiology is a public health discipline that studies the spread of information to improve health. Infodemiology is a relatively new field of research that spans disciplines like psychology, marketing, communication, journalism, and information science. Explore the social, behavioral, and cognitive factors that influence people to believe and share misinformation. Gain insight into tools and methods for collecting, monitoring, and analyzing health information online to inform public health interventions. Learn practical skills in how to respond and address false health information.

Adirondack ABC | 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. | **Session II**

### **TRACK 1 - Vaccine Confidence**

Benjamin Lee, MD, Sarah Nowak, PhD, and Heidi Schumacher, MD

This session will highlight a project between Vermont Department of Health and Vermont Child Health Improvement Project (VCHIP) to develop a targeted training to support child-serving providers in promoting vaccine confidence among families with children. The VCHIP team will engage child-serving professionals from health care, education, community health and other fields to provide basic education in vaccines, share best practices in communicating with families about vaccine effectiveness, and connect participants with well-vetted resources.

Adirondack D | 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. | **Session II**

### **TRACK 2 - Immunization Program 101**

Merideth Plumpton, RN, and Katie Mahuron, RN, MPH

Gain an in-depth understanding of the Vermont Immunization Program's structure and how it ensures widespread access to vaccines. Learn about the scientific process behind vaccine approval, from clinical trials to regulatory review. Address common concerns surrounding vaccine safety with a focus on evidence-based information. Summary of upcoming vaccines in development, including those for emerging diseases, novel pathogens, and even efforts to improve existing vaccines.

# Conference Session Details

## Continued

Montpelier | 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. | **Session II**

### **TRACK 3 - Bugs and Bunnies: One Health Investigations in Vermont**

Natalie Kwit, DVM, MPH, DACVPM, and Katie Strelau, PhD

During this session, participants will hear how to use One Health principles in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of zoonotic and vector-borne diseases of concern in Vermont.

#### ***Segment I: Powassan Virus Disease***

Katie Strelau, PhD

Powassan virus (POWV) is a tickborne flavivirus that can cause severe neuroinvasive disease with 10% mortality and frequent neurologic sequelae. Before 2023, the last POWV disease case reported in Vermont was in 1999. We describe two cases of POWV disease with delayed diagnosis.

#### ***Segment II: Increase in Eastern Equine Encephalitis Virus Activity - Vermont 2024***

Katie Strelau, PhD

Eastern equine encephalitis virus (EEEV), a mosquito-borne alphavirus, can cause severe neuroinvasive disease; approximately one-third of patients with neurologic disease die, and half of survivors experience long-term neurologic sequelae. We describe an increase in EEEV detections in mosquitoes, humans, and animals and the state's response during 2024.

#### ***Segment III: Wabid Wabbits: Increase in Rabies and Spillover to Non-Traditional Pets - Vermont 2024***

Katie Strelau, PhD

Rabies is a zoonotic viral disease transmitted primarily through direct exposure to the saliva of infected mammals into bite wounds. The virus affects the central nervous system and is nearly 100% fatal once clinical symptoms appear. We describe an increase in animal rabies cases in Vermont and an investigation of a rare infection in a domestic rabbit.

# Conference Session Details

## Continued

Adirondack ABC | 2:45 - 3:45 p.m. | **Session III**

### **TRACK 1 - From Viruses to Superbugs: Unraveling Infectious Disease Outbreaks and Investigations**

In this session participants will learn more about ongoing and emerging disease concerns and how public health collaborates with clinicians and community partners to investigate and respond here in Vermont.

#### ***Segment I: Measles***

Laura Ann Nicolai, MPH

Measles cases have been increasing across the U.S. Nearby outbreaks and international travel have led to three cases in Vermont since 2024. During this presentation participants will learn more about the role of the Health Department when measles is suspected and what resources are available to help prepare for the possibility of future cases.

#### ***Segment II: PEP by the Pool: Hepatitis A at a Camp for Adults***

Christine Connor, MSN, MPH, RN

Hepatitis A can spread through contaminated food and water, yet most adults are not protected through vaccination. Postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) with vaccine or immune globulin can effectively prevent infection following an exposure, yet administration can be challenging, especially for persons with special needs. Participants will learn how epidemiologists assess opportunities for transmission and identify close contacts of infected individuals. This presentation highlights the challenges in notifying contacts who should receive PEP in a camp setting for adults with disabilities as well as the inter-department collaboration efforts needed to successfully administer it.

#### ***Segment III: Multidrug-Resistant Superbugs and the Complicated Webs they Weave***

Allison Lafferty, MD

Participants will learn about MDROs and how they intertwine with antimicrobial stewardship. We will discuss the impact of microbes such as carbapenemase-producing organisms and *Candida auris* on Vermonters, the measures used to contain them, and prevention through stewardship.



# Conference Session Details

## Continued

### **Segment IV: What Can We Learn from COVID-19 Deaths Five Years Later?**

John Davy, PhD

COVID-19 mortality was a major public-facing indicator of COVID-19 burden during the pandemic, and remains of interest. Public discourse about COVID-19 death counts reflects diverse understandings of the shifting role of COVID illness in these deaths. This presentation will include a look back at COVID-19 deaths in Vermont since 2020 and what efforts might be needed to better educate Vermonters on the burden of COVID-associated mortality moving forward.

Adirondack D | 2:45 - 3:45 p.m. | **Session III**

### **TRACK 2 - Immunization Registry/Immunization Data**

Craig Morrill, MPH, Jason Pope, BS, CMA, and Denise Kall, PhD

Review of Immunization Registry reports including vaccines due and IQIP reports, how to export reports to Excel, and to look at common code guidance and forecaster issues, along with a brief intro/discussion of bi-directional. Overview of datasets available on immunization data, such as the Vermont Immunization Registry(IMR), the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), alongside IMR coverage reports and published data products. These datasets encompass a variety of vaccines and include various variables such as demographic information, risk factors, and chronic disease prevalence. These data can be used to see trends, identify groups at risk, and measure if our vaccine outreach efforts are working. Attendees will gain insights into how these datasets can be instrumental in shaping public health strategies and improving immunization coverage.

Montpelier | 2:45 - 3:45 p.m. | **Session III**

### **TRACK 3 – Vaccine Coalition - Private Meeting**

# Exhibitors

Visit our exhibitor tables to discover the impactful work being done by local organizations across Vermont to encourage immunization and prevent the spread of infectious disease.

## Table 1 | **University of Vermont Medical Center - Comprehensive Care Clinic**

The Infectious Disease Clinic at the University of Vermont Medical Center performs about 1,500 inpatient consultations yearly from all hospital departments and specialties for a wide diversity of clinical illnesses. The outpatient clinic is active daily, providing care for persons with HIV and general infectious diseases, assisting with home intravenous antibiotic therapy and counseling and prevention for international travelers in the travel clinic.



**Contact info:** Devika Singh, [Devika.Singh@uvmhealth.org](mailto:Devika.Singh@uvmhealth.org)

**Website:** [TinyURL.com/4zn8spws](https://TinyURL.com/4zn8spws)

## Table 2 | **Vermont Language Justice Project (VLJP)**

The Vermont Language Justice Project allows people with language access needs the ability to make informed decisions about their health and safety, as well as navigating everyday life in the USA. We do this by creating public service videos in 21 of the languages spoken here in Vermont.



**Contact info:** Alison Segar, [asegar@cctv.org](mailto:asegar@cctv.org)

**Website:** [VTLanguageJustice.org](https://VTLanguageJustice.org)

## Table 3 | **Vermont State School Nurses' Association (VSSNA)**

VSSNA provides the school nurses of Vermont with the resources, information, and best practices to enable them to deliver exceptional and professional health care to Vermont children. VSSNA is a non-profit, member supported and led association.



**Contact info:** Kelly McGovern, [kmcgovern@vssna.org](mailto:kmcgovern@vssna.org)

**Website:** [vssna.org](https://vssna.org)

## Table 4 | **Association of Africans Living in Vermont (AALV)**

The AALV helps new Americans from all parts of the world gain independence in their new communities through a range of integration services, including bridging case management, workforce development, behavioral health awareness, and interpreter services programming. With support from our multicultural, multilingual staff, our clients are able to smoothly transition to living and working in Vermont.



**Contact info:** Jacob Yacouba Bogre, [jbogre@aalv-vt.org](mailto:jbogre@aalv-vt.org)

**Website:** [aalv-vt.org](https://aalv-vt.org)



# Exhibitors

## Continued

### Table 5 | **Migrant Health Programs - Bridges to Health**

UVM Extension Migrant Health Programs address individual and systemic barriers faced by im/migrant workers and families which prevent them from attaining their full potential for health and well-being. The primary program is Bridges to Health which improves quality of life at an individual, household and population level by utilizing Community Health Workers who serve as liaisons, cultural brokers, health educators, advocates, patient navigators, interpreters, and outreach coordinators between individuals and community-based organizations to promote health, reduce disparities, and improve service delivery.



**Contact info:** Naomi Wolcott-MacCausland, [nwolcott@uvm.edu](mailto:nwolcott@uvm.edu)

**Website:** [uvm.edu/extension/migrant-health-programs](https://uvm.edu/extension/migrant-health-programs)

### Table 6 | **Open Door Clinic**

The Open Door Clinic provides access to free, quality healthcare services to those who are uninsured or underinsured in a compassionate, respectful and culturally sensitive manner until a permanent healthcare provider can be established.



**Contact info:** Heidi Sulis, [hsulis@opendoormidd.org](mailto:hsulis@opendoormidd.org)

**Website:** [OpenDoorMidd.org](https://OpenDoorMidd.org)

### Table 7 | **Planned Parenthood of Northern New England (PPNNE)**

Planned Parenthood works to protect and expand access to sexual and reproductive health care and education, and provides support to its member affiliates.



**Contact info:** Allison Smith, [Allison.Smith1@ppnne.org](mailto:Allison.Smith1@ppnne.org)

**Website:** [PlannedParenthood.org/planned-parenthood-northern-new-england](https://PlannedParenthood.org/planned-parenthood-northern-new-england)

### Table 8 | **Howard Center Safe Recovery**

Howard Center helps people and communities thrive by providing supports and services to address mental health, substance use, and developmental needs. We offer a variety of services and programs for substance use recovery, including counseling, residential programs, and short and long-term treatment.



**Contact info:** Dan Hall, [danh@howardcenter.org](mailto:danh@howardcenter.org)

**Website:** [HowardCenter.org](https://HowardCenter.org)



# Exhibitors

## Continued

### Table 9 | **Green Mountain Self-Advocates (GMSA)**

The purpose of Green Mountain Self-Advocates is for people with developmental disabilities to educate peers to take control over their own lives, make decisions, solve problems, and speak for themselves and to educate and make the public aware of the strengths, rights, wants, and needs of people with developmental disabilities. We help self-advocates by letting them say what they believe.



**Contact info:** Max Barrows, [max@gmasvt.org](mailto:max@gmasvt.org)

**Website:** [gmsavt.org](http://gmsavt.org)

### Table 10 | **Vermont Public Health Association (VtPHA)**

As the state's only public health membership organization, the Vermont Public Health Association is the virtual and physical gathering place for public health advocates committed to the wellbeing and resilience of all Vermonters.



**Contact info:** Karen Topper, [topper@gmsavt.org](mailto:topper@gmsavt.org) and Dan Olson, [dolson@vtpha.org](mailto:dolson@vtpha.org)

**Website:** [vtpha.org](http://vtpha.org)

### Table 11 | **Vermont Department of Health Infectious Disease Epidemiology Program**

### Table 12 | **Vermont Department of Health Immunization Program**

