



Prevention works.
Treatment is effective.
People recover.

The Department of Health, Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs (ADAP)'s Annual Overview provides a look at our impact during the past year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this issue will cover both state fiscal years 2020 and 2021.

During this time, we have been responsive to the changing needs of Vermonters. Though 93% of ADAP staff were deployed at some level to various COVID-19 response teams, our division continued to support prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery programs to ensure continuous service.

We have continued to dedicate substance use services to rural communities, with the goal of increasing access for all Vermonters. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted health disparities that impact all aspects of public health in Vermont, including the effects of substance misuse. We have learned more about these disparities and addressed them in our work.

We recognize that our programs are only successful if they have a strong workforce and through ongoing training and professional development opportunities, we support Vermonters working in the field of substance use prevention, treatment and recovery. Like many other fields, the substance use disorder field is experiencing challenges to workforce recruitment and retention, and we are committed to increasing our investment in these efforts.

To strengthen the impact of our services we continue to coordinate with our colleagues within the Health Department, throughout state government and with our statewide partners to align efforts.

During these past two years, we have remained responsive to substance use trends and emerging issues. With alcohol the #1 substance of misuse, cannabis use on the rise and opioid misuse and overdose remaining a concern, we remain committed to using evidence-based strategies and promising practices to positively impact Vermonters.

CYNTHIA SEIVWRIGHT, MA, LCMHC
ADAP DIVISION DIRECTOR, SSA

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ADAP has been responsive, adaptable and successful.

We stepped up to serve Vermonters in an emergency

93% of our staff have been deployed to the COVID-19 response through the Health Operations Center (HOC) at some level. They have worked over 23,000 hours providing support in contact tracing, symptom monitoring, call centers, testing and vaccine clinics, outbreak mitigation, school assistance, logistics and many other sections of the pandemic response.

Services stayed open

- 100% of substance use disorder treatment providers remained open including outpatient, residential and medication for opioid use disorder
- Most prevention services continued with little interruption
- Vermont supported services, including: \$17.3 million for prevention services, \$6.1 million for intervention, \$72.5 million for treatment and \$10.5 million for recovery and housing services over two fiscal years
- People who needed to quarantine, isolate or were at high risk from COVID-19 and receive medication for opioid use disorder were able to continue to do so through curbside and home delivery

Services expanded

- Personal protective equipment (PPE) was purchased for health care workers, including substance use disorder treatment providers who continued to provide vital in-person treatment
- Treatment and recovery services added telemedicine and other remote services wherever possible
- Prevention consultants provided education to communities and parents on the impact of COVID-19 on youth mental health and substance use
- VT Helplink, our centralized alcohol and drug support center, launched, providing mental health and substance use referrals and quickly adding support for health care workers burdened by the pandemic VTHelplink.org



93%

OF OUR STAFF HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED TO THE COVID-19 RESPONSE AT SOME LEVEL

“Shifting gears...in May 2020 to assist with COVID test sites and the traveler hotline was **both rewarding and difficult.**”

ROBIN RIESKE, ADAP PREVENTION CONSULTANT



ADAP is striving to meet the needs of all Vermonters.

We reach rural communities

- VT Helplink received over 54,000 calls and website visits and made close to 4,000 referrals to treatment and recovery services
- \$2 million of federal grant funding has supported prevention services in rural areas
- Over \$850,000 has been spent to distribute life-saving Narcan® (naloxone) and fentanyl test strips through ADAP efforts
- Virtual trainings resulted in an increase in attendance of up to 200% for some events

We understand that people are at different stages of change

- Recovery coaches in emergency departments have connected with over 2,700 people in need of substance use services
- Young adult messaging provides tips to prevent binge drinking and mixing alcohol with opioids
- Two messaging campaigns focusing on prescription drug storage and disposal and addressing young adult opioid misuse were added to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Opioid Resource Exchange which is a resource for all states [ORE.CDC.gov](https://www.ore.cdc.gov)
- *End Addiction Stigma* focuses on reducing the stigma associated with people who struggle with substance use disorder EndAddictionStigmaVT.com
- *Know OD* gives tips on how to reduce fatal opioid overdose for people who use heroin and other opioids KnowODVT.com
- *Let's Talk Cannabis* provides science-based information to increase awareness about the health implications of cannabis use LetsTalkCannabisVT.com



We have services focused on people who are disproportionately impacted by substance use

- We provide information and support training on the impact of substance use among older Vermonters
- Cultural brokers, members of some of our new Vermonter communities, provide culturally sensitive substance use information and referral to services
- Over \$100,000 has supported LGBTQ+ activities such as Friday Night Group, summer camp and community education through grants to Outright Vermont
- *Rocking Horse* and *Moms in Recovery* programs provide support for people who are pregnant or parenting and are dealing with their own or a loved one's substance use

healthvermont.gov/RockingHorse



“[Stacy’s story] was Seven Days’ **most popular native article in 2021.**”

SEVEN DAYS
[on the End Addiction Stigma campaign]

[Read the Story](#)

54,000+

CALLS AND WEBSITE VISITS TO VT HELPLINK

\$2 million

IN GRANT FUNDING TO SUPPORT RURAL PREVENTION SERVICES

4,000

REFERRALS TO TREATMENT & RECOVERY SERVICES THROUGH VT HELPLINK



Preventing and addressing substance use early reduces more serious health outcomes.

Prevention funding reaches whole populations

Unlike individual-based services, prevention services focus on community level changes to decrease substance use early in life, decreasing the likelihood of substance misuse later in life

Community prevention organizations are provided with support and training to serve people across the state

- 12 community-based prevention consultants have served over 30,000 Vermonters and continue to support local organizations to increase their capacity to reduce substance use
- Community organizations and schools have received over \$3 million in funding to address youth and young adult substance use in schools and rural communities
- The *Listen Up* project lifted youth voices through a statewide musical tour performed by 31 teens with the help of over 800 teen writers and attended by almost 1,500 people [ListenUpVT.org](https://www.listenupvt.org)

We work to prevent substance use to improve the health of Vermonters

- Messaging to teens at higher risk of alcohol and cannabis use highlights relatable consequences of use
- There were over 3 million views of alcohol and cannabis prevention messaging focused on youth and young adults at higher risk of substance use
- *ParentUp* provides tips and resources for parents to talk to their children about substance use [ParentUpVT.org](https://www.parentupvt.org)
- *Do Your Part* provides information on safe storage and disposal of medications. Vermonters have safely returned over 12 tons of medications through promoted kiosks, mail-back envelopes and national Take Back Days [healthvermont.gov/DoYourPart](https://www.healthvermont.gov/DoYourPart)



“...the musical effectively catalyzes the conversations teens, their parents, school mentors, and communities need to be having about the complex issues.”

DR. MARK LEVINE, VERMONT HEALTH COMMISSIONER
[on the Listen Up project]

ADAP invests in the substance use workforce by supporting continued education

We support a high-quality workforce

- Almost 2,000 people attended hub and spoke learning collaboratives
- 144 Vermonters were provided over \$34,000 in scholarships to attend two regional programs on addiction best practices
- The Vermont Recovery Coach Academy trained over 300 Vermonters to help people in recovery
- Trainings in prevention skills, ethics, sustainability, and equity; as well as the College Symposium and Cannabis Conferences occurred virtually

We are committed to addressing the decline in number of people in the workforce

We work with statewide partners to assess and address workforce recruitment and retention challenges

ADAP coordinates within the Health Department and with our statewide partners to strengthen our services

We collaborate with partners across the state

- The Social Autopsy project was conducted with several state departments to determine where opioid use intervention strategies could be integrated into other state services
- The Substance Misuse Prevention Oversight and Advisory Council supports a holistic approach to addressing substance use prevention with members from a range of disciplines
healthvermont.gov/SMPC
- We continue to coordinate with departments within the Agency of Human Services and other state agencies

We work with our Health Department colleagues on overlapping issues

Four campaigns integrate substance use information with messaging from four other divisions at the Health Department:

LetsTalkCannabisVT.com

KnowODVT.com

1MoreConversation.com

healthvermont.gov/HealthyAtHome



One More Conversation
Can Make the Difference

[Healthy at Home](https://HealthyAtHome.org)

3 million

VIEWS OF YOUTH AND YOUNG
ADULT ALCOHOL AND CANNABIS
PREVENTION CAMPAIGN VIDEOS

“Virtual offerings allowed more people to access intensive training programs...greatly benefitting Vermont’s behavioral health professionals and provider agencies.”

DENISE ADAMS, ADCARE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NEW ENGLAND

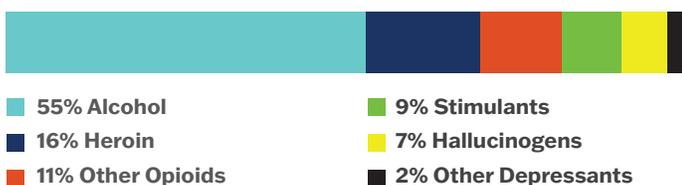
ADAP's priorities are responsive to substance use trends and emerging issues.



Alcohol is the #1 substance of misuse in Vermont and we are helping people connect with services

Source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health

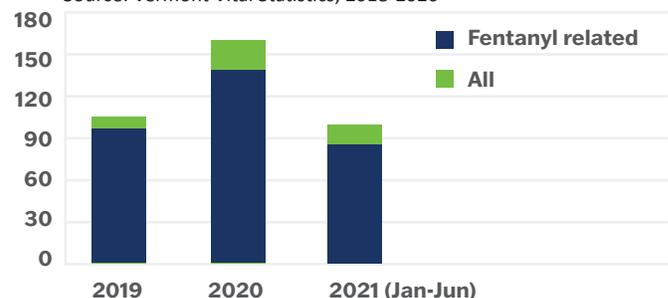
More people (55%) are connecting with VT Helplink for help with alcohol than any other substances and over 1,600 people accessed recovery coaches in Emergency Departments



Opioid overdose has increased, but more people are seeking help and we have expanded treatment and harm reduction services

Fentanyl is driving opioid fatalities

Source: Vermont Vital Statistics, 2018-2020



- 27% of people connecting with VT Helplink are seeking help with opioids
- Through Emergency Departments, people have rapid access to medication for opioid use disorder and recovery coaches who connected with nearly 800 people about opioid misuse
- Over 8,000 Narcan® (naloxone) kits and over 48,000 fentanyl test strips have been distributed through ADAP efforts
- The Social Autopsy project reviewed the history of contact with state agencies among people who died of opioid overdose to find opportunities to integrate prevention and response efforts into existing programs — see the reports released in 2020 and 2021



Cannabis use has increased and we're committed to providing science-based information to help people make safe choices



Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2019 and Young Adult Survey 2020

- Vaping as the primary method of use by youth has increased by more than 8 times from 2017 to 2019
- Messaging has been developed for teens, parents, people who are pregnant or parenting, and adults to address cannabis use and health impacts



If you or a loved one is struggling with alcohol or drug use, **visit VTHelplink.org or call 802-565-LINK for free and confidential help.**

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