

HOW TO GET WHAT YOU NEED

IN

VERMONT

**A Resource Guide
For Those Living With a
Chronic or Life-Threatening
Condition**

Vermont Edition
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INTRODUCTION

Whether you have known for some time, or have just recently learned that you have a chronic condition, it is important that you know that community and statewide resources do exist. This booklet will help put you in contact with resources in Vermont that may be helpful to you. It will also outline what you might be needing at some point during your care, and offer tips on how to think about certain problems you may encounter. For starters:

HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Be aware that finding help can take some time. You may be put on hold and transferred several times before you reach the right person. Be patient and set aside time to make the calls and do the follow up that is necessary. It is also true that, in some cases, the kind of help you need simply isn't available in your area, and solutions will need to be creative.

TAKE CHARGE

Because you know better than anyone what it's like to live with your condition, you need to tell people what it is that you want or don't want. You can not count on someone guessing what it is that you need. Don't be ashamed to ask for help, and when people offer, accept their help and suggest specific things they can do. Self-advocacy will help you take action in order to achieve the best quality of life possible and prepare for the future.

EDUCATE YOURSELF ABOUT YOUR CONDITION

Key to becoming your own advocate is understanding your condition and what's involved in treating it. As an informed person (also referred to as a 'consumer'), you want to find the best possible care for your particular illness. Be sure to read the section *Steps to Receiving Good Medical Care*, on page 9 to assist you.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

Chronic health conditions may have a serious financial impact on you as well as your family. Whether or not you have insurance, how much it covers, and the fact that there may be additional costs for transportation, child care, or housekeeping can be serious concerns. It helps to know that there are some community-based organizations that can help.

YOUR WORK AND YOUR INCOME

While costs increase, income may decrease. If you are currently working, you may be concerned about continuing to work. If you are returning to work, you might be concerned about employment discrimination or losing existing disability insurance. The section on Benefits & Work can help you put these concerns in perspective.

UNDERSTAND HOW TO GET WHAT YOU NEED

This Guide has been developed to support you and help you understand what you may be eligible for and identify where to go for social services (i.e. housing, financial assistance, legal services) in your community.

TAKE NOTES AND RECORD FINDINGS

While we have built in space for you to write in the margins and take notes, you may find it helpful to keep a journal or notebook, where you can record information about visits to your care provider, lab results, dates when you made calls to various services agencies and other information which may be useful in the future.

PASS ON GOOD NEWS

Finally, health care, social services, and community-based resources are constantly changing. If you discover some 'pearl' of an agency, business, or organization that you think would be useful to others, please contact us, and we will share it in our revised editions, on our website, or in the course of building information networks.

LEARNING ABOUT YOUR DIAGNOSIS

There are a variety of places you can go to learn more about your diagnosis—what it means, how it's treated, and how you can take steps to help yourself. Your care provider may give you pamphlets on your condition. You can often find free materials displayed in the waiting area, or the exam room. Books, national organizations (such as the American Heart Association) or the internet are all places where you can find out more. Many hospitals and health centers have resource rooms with different books, videos, and other materials people living with your condition have found helpful. In some places, a computer with internet access is available. Be sure to ask your provider if there is a resource center you can access.

Websites, while very helpful, can be a source of fraud, as sites can be mounted one day and gone the next. Sites can also be left up indefinitely and never updated. A good place to start searching for information on the Web is the national association for your particular condition. A list of websites appears at the end of this booklet (on page 27) for some of the major health condition associations.

While being excellent sources of information, both published books and internet websites can become quickly outdated. In order to judge both books and websites, consider the following:

- ◇ The date of publication-or the last time the website was updated. Medical science changes rapidly, so information that is a few years old may already be outdated.
- ◇ The author of the book, or host of the website. Just because the author may have Dr. in front of his or her name, it doesn't necessarily mean they are a medical doctor. Ask yourself the following:
 - ✓ Is he or she connected with a reputable medical program?
 - ✓ What in their background makes them qualified to write a book or host a website?
 - ✓ Is the publication really a promotion of a product, or does it offer unbiased information?

IF YOU'VE NEVER USED A COMPUTER OR LOGGED ONTO THE INTERNET, AND WOULD LIKE GUIDANCE, BE SURE TO READ THE SECTION "USING THE WEB" ON PAGE 22

NOTES ON MEDICAL INFORMATION SOURCES

SUPPORT GROUPS

Studies show that people with chronic and life threatening illnesses do much better, and even live longer if they are part of a support group. There are a variety of ways to find out about a support group for your particular condition. You can ask your provider where a support group might meet in your area. Frequently, medical clinics have this information hanging on a bulletin board. Newspapers often run announcements for different types of groups. Call your local hospital (see list in the resource section, page 27) as many hospitals run disease-specific groups.

If you are not able to go to a group, there are many different web sites that are condition specific and offer on-line support. As noted above, there are excellent websites that can be good sources of information and support, while others are questionable. Many of the national disease organizations offer on-line support, or have links to on-line chat groups they think are helpful. National associations may also include information on where support groups meet in your area. A number of national disease associations also have Vermont chapters, which can provide you with resource information about your community. See Resource Section, page 27 for a list of Vermont chapters of national groups.

NOTES ON SUPPORT GROUPS

(Remember to note Time, Location, Contact Person)

IF IT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE... ...IT PROBABLY IS...HEALTH FRAUD

People with chronic/life threatening conditions are often the target of fraud. The fact that serious illness can cause suffering and present an uncertain future has fostered the marketing of hundreds of unproven treatments. To assist consumers and providers to understand ways to avoid fraud, and make the most educated and informed decisions possible, the following 10 points have been adopted from the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) Consumer magazine November-December 1999, "How to Spot Health Fraud," and "Ten Ways to Avoid Being Quacked" by Stephen Barrett, M.D.

1: FRAUD SELDOM LOOKS OUTLANDISH:

Its promoters often use scientific terms and quote (or misquote) from scientific references. Terms and scientific explanations may sound impressive and may have an element of truth to them, but the public "has no way of discerning fact from fiction.". Fanciful terms generally cover up a lack of scientific proof.

2: BE WARY OF ANECDOTES AND TESTIMONIALS:

If someone claims to have been helped by an unorthodox remedy, ask yourself and possibly your doctor whether there might be another explanation. Most single episodes of disease recover with the passage of time, and most chronic ailments have symptom-free periods. Most people who give testimonials about recovery from cancer have undergone effective treatment as well as unorthodox treatment, but give credit to the latter. Some testimonials are completely made up.

3: DON'T FALL FOR CONSPIRACY:

Some practitioners claim that the medical profession, drug companies, and the government are conspiring to suppress whatever method they claim works. No evidence to support such a theory has ever been demonstrated. It also flies in the face of logic to believe that large numbers of people would oppose the development of treatment methods that might someday help themselves or their loved ones.

4: "SECRET CURES:"

True scientists share their knowledge as part of the process of scientific development. No one who actually discovered a cure would have reason to keep it secret. If a method works-especially for a serious disease-the discoverer would gain enormous fame, fortune and personal satisfaction by sharing the discovery with others.

THE UNDERLYING RULE WHEN DECIDING WHETHER A PRODUCT IS AUTHENTIC OR NOT IS TO ASK YOURSELF: "DOES IT SOUND TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?" IF IT DOES, IT PROBABLY ISN'T TRUE. IF YOU'RE STILL NOT SURE, CHECK IT OUT: LOOK INTO IT—BEFORE YOU PUT IT IN YOUR BODY OR ON YOUR SKIN.

5: HEALTHY SKEPTICISM:

Be skeptical of any product claimed to be effective against a wide range of unrelated diseases—particularly diseases that are serious. There is no such thing as a “cure-all.” No product can treat every disease and condition, and for many serious diseases, there are no cures, only therapies to help manage them.

6: DON'T LET DESPERATION CLOUD YOUR JUDGMENT!:

If you feel that your doctor isn't doing enough to help you, or if you have been told that your condition isn't curable and don't wish to accept this fate without a struggle, discuss your feelings with your doctor and consider a consultation with a recognized expert.

7: BE WARY OF TALK THAT SUGGESTS A PRODUCT CAN BRING QUICK RELIEF OR PROVIDE A QUICK CURE:

This is especially true if the disease or condition is serious. Even with proven treatments, few diseases can be treated quickly. Note also that the words “in days” can really refer to any length of time. Fraud promoters like to use ambiguous language like this to make it easier to finagle their way out of any legal action that may result.

8: DON'T BE FOOLED BY THE TERM “NATURAL.”

It's often used in health fraud as an attention-grabber; it suggests a product is safer than conventional treatments. But the term doesn't necessarily equate to safety because some plants—for example, poisonous mushrooms—can kill when ingested. And among legitimate drug products, 60 percent of over-the-counter drugs and 25 percent of prescription drugs are based on natural ingredients. Any product—synthetic or natural—potent enough to work like a drug is going to be strong enough to cause side effects.

9: CLAIMS OF AN “INNOVATION,” “MIRACLE CURE,” “EXCLUSIVE PRODUCT,” OR “NEW DISCOVERY” OR “MAGICAL”

Such claims are highly suspect. If a product was a cure for a serious disease, it would be widely reported in the media and regularly prescribed by health professionals—not hidden in an obscure magazine or newspaper ad, late-night television show, or Website promotion, where the marketers are of unknown, questionable or nonscientific backgrounds. The same applies to products purported to be “ancient remedies” or based on “folklore” or “tradition.” These claims suggest that these products' longevity proves they are safe and effective. But some herbs reportedly used in ancient times for medicinal purposes carry risks identified only recently discovered.

10: MONEY-BACK GUARANTEES, NO QUESTIONS ASKED.

Good luck getting your money back. Marketers of fraudulent products rarely stay in the same place for long. Because customers won't be able to find them, the marketers can afford to be generous with their guarantees.

MORE ON HEALTH FRAUD

CHECKING OUT A PRODUCT THAT CONCERNS YOU

FDA health fraud coordinators suggest:

- ◆ Talk to a doctor or another health professional. If it's an unproven or little-known treatment, always get a second opinion from a medical specialist.
- ◆ Talk to family members and friends. Legitimate medical practitioners should not discourage you from discussing medical treatments with others. Be wary of treatments offered by people who tell you to avoid talking to others because "it's a secret treatment or cure."
- ◆ Check with the Better Business Bureau or local attorney generals' offices to see whether other consumers have lodged complaints about the product or the product's marketer.
- ◆ Check with the appropriate health professional group.
- ◆ Contact the FDA office closest to you. Look for the number and address in the blue pages of the phone book under U.S. Government, Health and Human Services, or go to the FDA Website: www.fda.gov/ora/fed_state/dfs_r_activities/dfs_r_pas.html. The FDA can tell you whether the agency has taken action against the product or its marketer. Your call also may alert FDA to a potentially illegal product and prevent others from falling victim to health fraud.

If you believe you have received improper treatment by a licensed practitioner, you can contact:

- ◆ Your local or state professional society (if practitioner is a member);
- ◆ Your local hospital (if practitioner is a staff member);
- ◆ State professional licensing board;
- ◆ National Council Against Health Fraud Task Force on Victim Redress.

If you have received inappropriate treatment by an unlicensed individual you can contact:

- ◆ The local district attorney;
- ◆ State attorney general;
- ◆ National Council Against Health;
- ◆ Fraud Task Force on Victim Redress;
- ◆ Consumer Broadcast Group.

STEPS TO RECEIVING GOOD MEDICAL CARE - BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE

The truth of the matter is: It's unlikely that someone else will care more about your health than you do. So, it's up to you to advocate for yourself. Regardless of your specific condition, you deserve the best possible care available. In order to obtain and utilize treatment appropriately, you will need to a) find an appropriate care team that you are comfortable working with; b) know your rights as a patient; and c) understand your responsibilities to your provider.

FINDING A CARE TEAM

Good health care involves many factors. Being able to 'connect' with your provider is as important as his or her expertise in the field. Here are a series of questions you can ask that might help you decide:

- ✓ How much experience do you have in treating a specific disease or condition? How many people have you treated and what percentage of your patients have your specific condition?
- ✓ (If you are female): Do you have experience working with women?
- ✓ How up-to-date are you with the latest treatments? Are you part of a clinical trial committee/coalition?
- ✓ How many doctors on your staff are knowledgeable in treating your condition? What are their names? Are the nurses on staff trained as well?
- ✓ What is your treatment philosophy? Passive vs. Aggressive? Holistic vs. Western medicine? A combination?
- ✓ Do you work with mental health professionals? Is there a mental health professional on staff at your clinic?

YOUR RIGHTS AS A PATIENT

Knowing that you have rights may help you feel more comfortable sticking up for yourself. Most hospitals and medical centers have their own "Patient's Bill of Rights," which should be publicly posted and are often published on their website. What appears below is a sample, to give you an idea of what to expect.

You have the right to:

- 1] Considerate and respectful care regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender, payment source or health care condition.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Your Rights, Con't

- 2] Obtain current and understandable information concerning diagnosis, treatment and prognosis.
- 3] Know the identity of the physician, nurses and others involved in your care, including those who are students, residents or other trainees.
- 4] Work with the physician or nurse in establishing the plan of care, including the refusal of a recommended treatment, without the fear of reprisal or discrimination.
- 5] Privacy and the expectation that all records and communication are treated as confidential.
- 6] Review your own medical records and request copies of them.
- 7] Expect that an advance directive (such as a living will, health care power of attorney) will be honored by the medical staff.
- 8] Receive timely notice and explanation of changes in fees or billing practices.
- 9] Expect an appropriate amount of time during your medical visit to discuss your concerns and questions.
- 10] Expect that your medical caregivers will follow appropriate precautions including universal protection.
- 11] Voice concerns, complaints and questions about care and expect a timely response.
- 12] Expect that the medical caregivers will give the necessary health services to the best of their ability. If a transfer of care is recommended, you should be informed of the benefits and alternatives.
- 13] Know the relationships your medical caregivers have with outside parties (such as health care providers or insurers) that may influence treatment and care.
- 14] Be told of realistic care alternatives when the current treatment is no longer working.
- 15] Expect reasonable assistance to overcome language (including limited English proficiency), cultural, physical or communication barriers.
- 16] Avoid lengthy delays in seeing medical providers; when delays occur, you should expect an explanation of why they occurred and, if appropriate, an apology.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDERS

Working together as a team is a two-way street, and it is as important for you to communicate with and respect your provider as it is for your provider to communicate with you and show you the respect you deserve. As a Patient, You Have the Responsibility To:

- 1] Provide your medical caregivers with accurate and complete information, and convey your understanding about what is expected of you in regard to your treatment. If you believe you cannot follow through with your treatment, let your provider know.
- 2] Meet your financial obligations as promptly as possible.
- 3] Be considerate of the rights of other patients and medical personnel in the control of noise and respect of property at your appointments or in the hospital.
- 4] Recognize the reality of risks and limits of the science of medical care and the human fallibility of the health care professional.
- 5] Be aware of the health care provider's obligation to be reasonably efficient and equitable in providing care to other patients and the community.
- 6] Become knowledgeable about your health care plan.
- 7] Report wrong doing and fraud to appropriate resources or legal authorities.
- 8] Keep appointments and notify the clinic if unable to do so.
- 9] Inform the clinic of the existence of, and any changes to, advance directives.
- 10] Notify the clinic of changes in your condition or care situation

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MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PATIENTS' RIGHTS

CONFIDENTIALITY VIOLATIONS:

The Coalition for Patient Rights at 1-888-44-PRIVACY

FEDERAL ACTS & LAWS:

- ◆ **The Age Discrimination Act of 1972** prohibits discrimination based on age by any institution or health care provider who accepts Federal funds.
- ◆ **The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)** prohibits discrimination against individuals with real or perceived disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations, communications and employer-provided health insurance.
- ◆ **The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996** prohibits the exclusion of an individual from the group insurance market for more than twelve months based on a preexisting medical condition.
- ◆ **The Mental Health Parity of 1996** prohibits differential lifetime or annual caps on coverage for physical and mental illness in certain situations.

ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS IN VERMONT

Vermont Center for Independent Living:

Citizens with disabilities working together for dignity, independence, and civil rights. Note that specific offices are located in Montpelier, Bennington and Brattleboro, however, every Vermont county has a representative for VCIL. Call 800-639-1522 Toll-free (Voice & TTY) or 802-229-0501 (Voice & TTY) E-Mail: vcil@vcil.org Website: www.vcil.org/contact.html

Office of Civil Rights 802/ 828-5511

NOTES

LEGAL

Regardless of chronic or life threatening, the reality is that none of us knows how long our lives will be. Consequently, wills, power of attorney (both financial and medical), and planning for your and your family's future in the event something should happen to you, are issues which should not be put off. Waiting until a medical crisis to address these pretty serious issues is not a good idea! Planning is best done when you can take your time and think things through clearly. Getting appropriate advice and input from family as well as a professionals (i.e. lawyer, social worker) is also important. Outlined below are some of the items which you need to consider. Be advised that this is not legal advice. It is recommended that you consult with a lawyer as you make your plans.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

WILL A legal document that describes what you want done with your possessions and other affairs after death.

LIVING WILL (ADVANCED DIRECTIVES) This gives directions about your medical care in case there comes a time when you are no longer able to communicate because of your illness. It allows you to express your wishes regarding the use of life support systems and the prolonging of life when critically ill.

DURABLE POWER OF HEALTH ATTORNEY This document allows the person you name as your agent the authority to make any and all health care decisions for you when you are no longer capable of making them yourself.

POWER OF ATTORNEY This gives someone else the authority to make certain kinds of decisions and do other things for you, such as use money from a bank account, pay bills if you are unable to do so, and collect public assistance. Be aware that once this document is signed, the agent named has immediate access to all financial information.

THE VERMONT ETHICS NETWORK (VEN)

VEN has produced an excellent booklet called "Taking Steps" which outlines the choices you can make regarding your medical care. It includes legal forms as well as worksheets to assist you in the process of determining health care power of attorney and Living Wills. A copy of this booklet can be obtained free of charge from any of the following: Area agencies on aging, Home health agencies, hospitals, lawyers, libraries, nursing homes, physicians, and town clerk's offices. You can also purchase a copy from VEN for \$1.00. You can contact VEN by calling 802/ 828-2909.

ADDITIONAL LEGAL RESOURCES

There may be other situations where you might need legal assistance (i.e. difficulties with health insurance). In addition to a private attorney, you may consider some of these resources, particularly if you have a limited income.

CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAP):

An independent advocacy program, offering free and confidential services. You are eligible if you are applying for or receiving services from the following agencies: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR); Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI); Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL); Vermont Association of Business, Industry, & Rehabilitation (VABIR); Supported Employment; or Transition Programs. Call CAP if you need help, have questions or need information, have been turned down by any of these agencies, think things are taking too long, have trouble communicating with your counselor, or are not getting the services you need. 800/769-6728(TTY/Voice) or 802/748-8721 (TTY/Voice)

DISABILITY LAW PROJECT:

Provides legal assistance, without charge, to people with disabilities whose legal problems arise from their disability. Provides assistance in matters such as abuse and neglect, special education, guardianship, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, accessibility, discrimination (employment, housing, government services, private business) and access to assistive technology. 800/769-9164.

SENIOR CITIZEN LAW PROJECT:

Part of Legal Aid. Has a list of attorneys who will do wills and durable power of attorney for reduced fees. Call 800/747-5022.

SOUTH ROYALTON LEGAL CLINIC

This is part of the Vermont Law School 802/763-7118.

VERMONT VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT

This project offers free legal services for low-income families provided by private attorneys 800/639-8857

VERMONT LEGAL AID

Vermont Legal Aid helps low income Vermonters who have legal problems, including those with disabilities and health care issues including Medicaid for adults and children, Medicare, nursing home care, home health services, and mental health. It does not handle criminal cases. There is no charge for services. Call 800/747-5022 for Legal Aid Office closest to you.

BENEFITS & WORK-RELATED ISSUES

Whether you are currently employed, on disability, thinking you may not be able to work much longer, or considering returning to the work force, there are a variety of resources in Vermont that can be of help.

IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY RECEIVING DISABILITY:

Income benefits such as Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), State Disability Insurance (SDI), Long Term Disability (LTD), and/or Short Term Disability (STD) are all things you should understand.

It is imperative that you understand how working may impact the benefits you receive or could receive. The Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL) has a **Benefits To Work** program which can help you understand how you can work but not jeopardize benefits. Call 1-877-807-9700 or e-mail richie@vcil.org.

The Work Incentive Program is a collaboration between the Department of Employment and Training and Vocational Rehabilitation. The two project specialists to contact are: Kathy Henry at 802/951-4092 and Karen Phillips-Edge at 802/786-8835.

IF YOU ARE SEEKING EMPLOYMENT:

Starting a new job may be the perfect opportunity to acquire valuable private disability insurance benefits. The first step is understanding what benefits to look for, such as Short Term Disability coverage, Long Term Disability coverage and Life Insurance.

It is also important to understand what benefits are available to you without “evidence of insurability”. In other words:

- Can you get disability insurance or life insurance without providing any medical information to the insurance companies?
- Is it possible to increase your Long Term Disability or Life Insurance coverage with only a small payroll deduction?

Employers often offer a variety of health coverage options. When choosing a plan you need to understand which plans have preexisting condition limitations. If they do, will it apply to you or have you already satisfied that requirement?

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

If you have a disability as a result of your illness or injury, yet want to work, Vermont's **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)** program offers a broad range of individualized services including:

- Vocational assessment of your unique strengths, interests, and needs.
- Help in identifying and solving problems that prevent you from getting or keeping a job.
- Assist in accessing local services.
- Education and Training: technical training or academic courses related to your employment goal.
- Transportation Assistance
- Worksite Accommodations
- Adaptive Equipment
- Transition Services: support students to move from school to work.
- Job Placement: support or train you to write a resume, practice for an interview, follow up job leads, and other important skills.

For information about VR services, contact the program closest to you, or call the Central office at 802/241-2186 or 802/241-1455 (TTY Next Talk).

VERMONT VR OFFICES

Barre-Montpelier Regional Office: 802/479-4210 (Voice/TTY)

Bennington District: 802/447-2780 (Voice/TTY) or 802/447-2805 (TTY)

Brattleboro District Office: 802/257-0579 (Voice/TTY)

Burlington Regional Office: 802/863-7500 (Voice) or 802/652-6856 (TTY Next Talk)

Middlebury District Office: 802/388-4666 (Voice) or 802 388-4690 (TTY Next Talk)

Morrisville District Office: 802/888-5976 or 888-1329 (TTY)

Newport District Office: 802/ 334-6794 (Voice/TTY)

Rutland Regional Office: 802/786-5866 (Voice/TTY)

Springfield Regional Office: 802/885-2279 (Voice/TTY)

St. Albans District Office: 802/527-2166 (TTY Next Talk)

St. Johnsbury District Office: 802/748-8716 (Voice/TTY)

White River Junction District Office: 802/295-8850 (Voice/TTY)

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OTHER VOCATIONAL REHAB PROGRAMS THAT MAY BE OF HELP

The VT Assoc. of Business, Industry, and Rehabilitation (VABIR) refers people with disabilities to jobs and helps employers retain employees who become disabled. Consists of four services: recruitment & referral, private rehabilitation, self-directed job search, and the VT Disability Awareness Day Conference. 802/ 863-7500

Veterans Administration offers vocational rehabilitation to those who have served in the military (Army, Navy etc.). You may obtain more benefits information by calling 1-800-941-8387 or on the web at www.wrjva1.hitchcock.org/varo.htm

IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE REMAINING IN YOUR CURRENT JOB

If you are currently employed but are finding it difficult to keep up with the demands of your job, or find that you are in need of some modifications in your job site, contact the Vermont Vocational Rehabilitation program at the numbers listed on the facing page.

IF YOU CAN NO LONGER WORK AND NEED TO CONSIDER DISABILITY BENEFITS

Disability coverage may be available to you from several sources, your employer, Social Security, or Veterans Administration.

Employer: Contact your employer's benefits representative to find out what your employer may offer as far as disability coverage or another program that may be of assistance to you.

Social Security: You can apply for Social Security disability benefits by calling the toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213 or 1-800-325-0778 (TTY). The representatives there can make an appointment for your application to be taken over the telephone or at any convenient Social Security office. The claims process for disability benefits is generally longer than for other types of Social Security benefits, from 60 to 90 days. www.ssa.gov/disability/

Veterans Administration: If you have served in the military (Army, Navy etc.) you may qualify for disability. To learn more about eligibility call 1-800-941-8387.

WORK & BENEFITS: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Regardless of your current work status, it's important you understand what your rights are. If you are afraid of losing your job because of lost time due to treatment, being sick or doctor's visits, you should be aware that you are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA guarantees that Americans with any disability, including a chronic disease, have the same legal protection against discrimination as that provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex and religion.

The protection provided by the ADA is not limited to those who are currently impaired. Rather, those who once had a disability, such as cancer or heart disease, but are no longer disabled, are still protected. The ADA also protects individuals who are perceived as disabled even if they are not - such as those with severe facial burns.

People with a hidden disability, such as a learning disability or the HIV virus, are considered disabled under the ADA if they are substantially limited in a major life activity. Finally, people who are not themselves disabled, but who are discriminated against because they are associated with someone who has a disability (e.g., the spouse of a person with muscular dystrophy or parent of someone with AIDS) are also protected.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DISCLOSE THE NATURE OF YOUR HEALTH CONDITION, ONLY THAT YOUR CURRENT MEDICAL SITUATION REQUIRES ADJUSTMENTS IN YOUR SCHEDULE.

You are not required by law to disclose what your medical condition is to your supervisor or those you work with. Use your best judgment in deciding who should know the specifics about your health situation.

If you find that you need to have reduced hours, would like a leave of absence while you go through a course of treatment, or have other reasons why you can't work your normal schedule, you need to speak with your supervisor about your situation.

NOTES

EMPLOYMENT: NATIONAL AND LOCAL RESOURCES

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION:

Federal laws prohibiting job discrimination: questions and answers; How to file a charge of employment discrimination; Mediation 1-800-669-4000 (TDD 1-800-669-6820). <http://www.eeoc.gov/>

OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY:

If you need information on your rights in the workplace, understanding the ADA, or even effective interviewing techniques ODEP can be of assistance. <http://www.dol.gov/dol/odep/>

JOB ACCOMMODATION NETWORK (JAN):

A one-stop service to get information on making workplace accommodations for people with disabilities. 1-800-526-7234 (V/TTY) <http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu/>

A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/workta.htm>

VERMONT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING:

800-639-1522 Toll-free (Voice & TTY) or 802-229-0501 (Voice & TTY)
E-Mail: vcil@vcil.org Website: www.vcil.org/contact.html

PERSONAL FINANCES

If you are having difficulties with credit cards and other forms of debt, you can call Financial Counseling and Budgeting. With offices in Burlington, Bennington, Brattleboro, Rutland, and Barre Vermont and West Lebanon, New Hampshire, they provide confidential counseling and assistance on home budgeting, managing debt, and use of credit.

Counseling is a free service with no eligibility guidelines. Call 800/327-6778.

If you cannot locate a nonprofit service in your community, contact the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC) for the name of a credit counseling service in your area 800/388-2227 or www.nfcc.org.

PAYING FOR HEALTH CARE

DIRECT COSTS

Direct costs resulting from treatment such as physician's fees, hospital expenses, and pharmacy bills, are generally paid for by health insurance. In addition to private insurance, Vermont has a variety of health insurance programs, as well as free medical clinics. If you have served in the military (Army, Navy, Marines etc.) you may be eligible for health care benefits through them. Contact the Veterans Administration in White River Junction Veterans for benefits and/or medical information 1-800-941-8387 or on the web at www.wrjva1.hitchcock.org/varo.html.

THE FOLLOWING ARE PUBLIC INSURANCE PROGRAMS OFFERED BY VERMONT:

Medicaid: 800/287-0589

Medicare: Basic health Insurance for people 65 and over or with disabilities. 800/772-1213 or 802/223-3476

Dr. Dynasaur: A health care program for children under 18 and pregnant women. You may qualify even if you have a job and are earning money; you have other health insurance or have other resources. For more information call 1/800/250-8427

Department of Prevention, Assistance, Transition, and Health Access (PATH): provides pharmacy benefits, eyeglasses, and related services to low-income, disabled and elderly Vermonters who are uninsured for prescription needs. (800) 250-8427

Vermont Health Access Plan (VHAP): A health care program for adults, over 18, who don't have health insurance for both doctors' visits and hospital stays. For more information call 1/800/250-8427

Ladies First program offers free breast and cervical cancer screenings for women age 40-64 (and those over 65 without Medicare Part B), as well as women 18-39 who have breast symptoms and/or abnormal pap smears. Ladies First pays for annual mammograms, clinical breast exams, pelvic exams, Pap tests, and instruction in breast self-exam for women. Ladies First also pays for repeat mammograms, ultrasounds, biopsies, and colposcopies. Call Kate toll-free at 1-800-508-2222, TDD 1-800-319-3141.

If you are having problems with access to health insurance, access to health care, denials of care, billing problems, complaints and appeals, contact the **Office of Health Care Ombudsman**. Services are available to all Vermonters, regardless of income or resources or type of health insurance. All services are free. Call 800/917-7787 or 802/863-2316. TTY 1-888-884-1995 or 802-863-2473.

RELATED NONMEDICAL EXPENSES

Nonmedical expenses, such as travel to and from treatment, child care, housekeeping assistance, and home care products, are not covered by many insurers. However, there are a number of organizations that provide financial support for the costs of direct medical care and related expenses. For example, some organizations have programs that provide free transportation to and from treatment when a volunteer is available. Others offer “lending libraries” of wigs, hospital beds, wheelchairs, and related products. Some organizations offer stipends to families who cannot pay their bills. For services such as transportation, housekeeping and childcare, see Support Services on page 24.

TYPES OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The type and amount of financial assistance available varies from community to community, by health condition and by income level. Many of these services are not advertised, but are available for the asking. There are a variety of resource to contact regarding financial assistance. Even if a particular organization does not pertain to your particular health situation, they may be able to provide a lead to an organization that is more appropriate for you..

Other Local Resources: You can also learn about financial help in your community by contacting the social work department of your hospital, a resource center or organization that is specific to your condition (i.e. American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association), your labor union, a community service organization (page 24), or a religious organization, such as Catholic Charities, as well as your church or synagogue.

FOR A LISTING OF FREE CLINICS IN VERMONT, SEE PAGE 28

NATIONAL RESOURCES TO CONTACT FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

National Association of Community Health Centers: provides a listing of local nonprofit, community-owned health care programs serving low income and medically under-served urban and rural communities. (202) 659-8008 website: www.nachc.com

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

Patient Advocate Foundation: Provides education and legal counseling about managed care, insurance, and financial issues for cancer patients. (800) 532-5274
www.patientadvocate.org

PAYING FOR MEDICATIONS:

Needy Meds: A clearinghouse for free information about getting medications from pharmaceutical companies. Needy Meds makes information about pharmaceutical manufacturer's assistance programs more accessible. Website: www.needymeds.com

Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA): Provides The Directory of Prescription Drug Patient Assistance Programs, which is updated yearly. It lists company programs that provide drugs to physicians whose patients could not otherwise afford them. The guide covers how to make a request for assistance, what medicines are covered, and basic eligibility criteria.
1100 15th Street NW, Washington DC 20005. Website: www.phrma.org.

USING THE WEB

The Internet is a source of excellent and useful information. You can read about new and innovative therapies, find out what local services are available to help you, join newsgroups and listservs which provide up to the minute information, send e-mail to friends around the globe, and even have "chats" with people about your experiences. There are three basic steps for "surfing" or searching the internet:

STEP I Finding a computer that's Internet Accessible: If you do not have internet access at home or at work, consider the following places: local public library or school; a friend; family member; or health clinic. Many hospitals have computers set aside for patient use, so be sure to check there as well.

STEP II Locating the Internet on the computer: Depending on the computer you are using, you may only need to look at the screen and it will be clear which icon (little picture) you need to click to get on-line. However, if it isn't clear, or requires a password, ask someone for help before you become frustrated. There are three popular web "browsers," the program that let you "surf" the web. These are Netscape Navigator, Microsoft Internet Explorer (MIE) and America On-Line (AOL)..

STEP III Surfing: The popular term for exploring the internet is "surfing." Once you get your feet wet, it's very simple. Now that you've located the Internet icon, move the arrow, using the mouse, to the icon. Double click on it. Depending on the computer and browser you are using, it may ask for a password. This is usually the case for AOL. If this happens, you will need to have the correct password to type in. Having crossed that barrier, you should now see a home page for Netscape and MIE. AOL will offer you a choice of options. Select Internet Connection and then select World Wide Web.

Most web browsers are pretty much the same. At the top of the page is what is known as a Menu Bar, which offers a variety of choices. You will see terms like *File, Edit, View, Go, Favorites (Bookmarks)*. Bookmarks allow you want to visit your favorite sites again, without needing to type in an address. Many clinics will “Bookmark” the sites they recommend, so be sure to check those out first.

Assuming you are interested in finding out more about chronic conditions, one good place to start is the Chronic Conditions Information Network (CCIN), as it provides information about services in Vermont and New Hampshire. The address, or uniform resource locator (URL) is **www.cc-info.net**. After you type in the address, hit the return button on the computer. This should connect you. If you get an error message, it’s most likely because you’ve made a typo. Go back and check to see that the URL you typed is exactly like the one above. Every period and slash must be entered for it to work.

Once you are connected, you will notice a tool bar at the top of page, under the menu, which contains items like *Back, Forward, Home*. By using these buttons, you can quickly browse a site. Starting with the CCIN site, click on links to other pages or websites that interest you.

WHAT ABOUT E-MAIL?

Email is rapidly becoming a primary means of communicating. If you don’t own a computer, you can still have an e-mail address. Even if you can only check it once a week at the local library, it allows you to stay connected and often find out about new treatment options and much more.

There are a number of places where you can obtain this service, Hotmail.com and Yahoo.com to name just a few. These are free Web based Email services, which means it costs you nothing, and you can access your messages from any computer with internet connections, anywhere in the world and any time of the day or night. All you need to do is type in the URL (www.hotmail.com) and follow the simple steps for registering. Be sure to jot down your password, as well as your e-mail address, as you will need your password to check messages.

NOTES

COMMUNITY-BASED RESOURCES & SERVICES

All area codes listed below are 802 unless otherwise noted.

VERMONT SERVICE NET

The Vermont Service Net is an internet-based service that helps you find services in your area. Services include: Adult Independence; Housing/Shelter; Protection; Child/Youth; Income; Support; Recreation; Legal Assistance; Substance Abuse; Education/Schooling; Employment/Training; Medical/Dental; Transportation Aid; Mental health; Food/Clothing; and Utility/Fuel. The URL for the Service Net is <http://www.ahs.state.vt.us/services/>

There are also three information help lines in Vermont, which can provide you with a wide array of information, similar to Service Net, but for a particular region.

- GET INFO Champlain Valley (covers Chittenden County): 866/652-4636 (Toll free number) or 652-4636.
- HELPLINE for Windham County (includes Brattleboro and Bellows Falls): 257-7989 or 463-2202.
- Healthlinks, Inc., Infoline (Rutland County): 747-9961.

If you live close to New Hampshire, there are some services in NH that are available to residents in Vermont. You may wish to contact the NH Helpline, which is similar to the VT Service Net. Call 603/225-9000 or www.nhhelpline.org.

SUPPORT SERVICES: FOOD, HOUSING, FUEL ASSISTANCE

VERMONT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING:

Provides advocacy and services for people with disabilities enabling them to live more independently and participate fully in the lives of their communities. Statewide 800/639-1522. Bennington County 229-0501, Chittenden County 229-0502

AREA AGENCIES ON AGING:

If you are 65 or older, Vermont has five agencies spread throughout the state that advocate for seniors, assist with applications for benefits such as fuel assistance, Medicaid, food stamps and help resolve problems by linking to other services. For the office nearest you, call 800/642-5119.

DISABLED OR NEEDY VETERANS FUND:

Provides temporary assistance to veterans and their dependents in the form of a one-time monetary payment of up to \$300. (888) 666-9844 or 828-3379 TDD

COMMUNITY ACTION GROUPS:

The community organizations listed on the following page provide a wide array of services including: housing; transportation; weatherization; advocacy; benefits counseling; tax assistance; legal services; food/nutrition; support for families; clothing; budget counseling; and tenant advocacy. These organizations are familiar with programs in their region and can serve as a good referral source if they do not provide a specific service that you might need. In some cases, case management is provided for specific services.

Community Action Groups

Addison Community Action (Middlebury) 800/639-2318. 388-2285

BROC-Bennington 447-7515 -Rutland 775-0878 or 800/717-2762

Central VT Community Action -

Berlin 800/639-1053 or 479-1053

Bradford 888/815-6737 or 222-4963

Lamoille/Morrisville 800/639-8710, 888-7994

Randolph 800/846-9506 or 728-9506

Chittenden Community Action (Burlington): 863-6248

Community Action Brattleboro Area (CABA) 257-7051

Community Emergency Relief (Northfield) 485-4293

Franklin/Grande Isle Community Action (St. Albans) 800/300-7392 or 527-7392

NE Kingdom Community Action-Newport/St. Johnsbury 800/639-4065 or 334-7316

Southeastern VT Community Action (SEVCA)

Brattleboro 254-2795

Springfield 885-6153

Westminster 888/869-6287 or 722-4700

White River Junction 295-5215

Windsor 674-7120

MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

If you are experiencing a crisis, check your local phone book for the closest hotline number. Most mental health centers have 24 hour response lines. For teens, call the Teen Line for VT and NH at 1-800-639-6095.

ADDISON COUNTY

Counseling Service of Addison County 802/ 388-6751

Specialized Community Care, Inc. 453-4175

Clara Martin Center 728-4466, 222-4477 or 1-800-639-6360

Upper Valley Services 222-9235, 728-4476, 496-7830

BENNINGTON COUNTY

United Counseling Services 802) 442-5491

CALEDONIA COUNTY

Northeast Kingdom Human Services

CHITTENDEN COUNTY

Champlain Vocational Services 655-0511

Howard Center for Human Services 660-3678

Northeastern Family Institute. 660-4822

ESSEX COUNTY

Northeast Kingdom Human Services

334-6744-Newport, 748-3181- St. Johnsbury

FRANKLIN COUNTY AND GRAND ISLE COUNTY

Northwestern Counseling and Support Services.

(Formerly Franklin Grand Isle Mental Health Services.) 524-6554

LAMOILLE COUNTY

Lamoille County Mental Health 888-5026

Sterling Area Services, Inc. 888-7602

ORANGE COUNTY

Clara Martin Center 728-4466, 222-4477 or 1-800-639-6360

Upper Valley Services 222-9235, 728-4476, 496-7830

ORLEANS COUNTY

Northeast Kingdom Human Services.

RUTLAND COUNTY

Rutland Mental Health Services, Inc. 775-2381

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Washington County Mental Health Services 229-0591

Upper Valley Services, Inc. 222-9235, 728-4476, 496-7830

WINDHAM COUNTY

Health Care and Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont 463-3947

Vermont Supported Living 295-9100

WINDSOR COUNTY

Health Care and Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont 885-9533

Families First 464-9633

Clara Martin Center 728-4466, 222-4477 or 1-800-639-6360

ALCOHOL AND DRUG PROGRAMS

Individual Practitioners, who are State approved or certified and specializing in substance abuse treatment, can be found in your local telephone book under "Counseling, Alcoholism or Drug Abuse." Schedules for meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-ANON, Al-ATEEN, Narcotics Anonymous are generally listed in your local newspaper, and are also generally available at your local hospital, health center or by calling your local community mental health organization. Many of the services below indicate whether they are outpatient (OP), Adolescent (Adol), or Residential (Res).

ADDISON COUNTY

Counseling Service/Addison County (OP) 388-7641

BENNINGTON COUNTY

United Counseling Service (OP) 442-5491 or 362-3950 (24 hour Emergency Service)

Northshire United Counseling 362-3950

CALENDONIA COUNTY

Tri-County Substance Abuse Services 748-1682

CHITTENDEN COUNTY

Champlain Drug and Alcohol Services (OP, Project CRASH) 800/639-1585 or 862-5243

Adolescent & Family Services (OP) 862-6292

Day One (Intensive OP, Adol) 865-3333

Howard Center for Human Services (OP) 658-0400 or IDD 865-6164

Maple Leaf Farm (Res, Detoxification) 899-2911

Phoenix Academy at Mountain View (Adol, Res) - 434-2929

Center Point (Adol, OP, Intensive OP) 654-7711

Bridge Program (Res) 654-1067

Family Therapy Associates (OP) 878-4399

Lund Family Center (Adol, OP) 864-7467

Spectrum Youth and Family Services (Adol, OP) 864-7423

FRANKLIN/GRAND ISLE

Champlain Drug and Alcohol Services (OP, Project CRASH) 524-7265

LAMOILLE COUNTY

Copley Hospital Behavioral Medicine (OP, Adol, Project CRASH) 888-8268

ORLEANS / ESSEX COUNTY

Tri-County Substance Abuse Services (OP, Intensive OP, Project CRASH) 334-5246

Dawnland Center (OP) 888/211-1840

Newport Adolescent and Adult Programs Substance Abuse Counseling 334-5085

ORANGE COUNTY

Clara Martin Center (OP) 728-4466

RUTLAND COUNTY

Evergreen Center (OP) 775-4388

Quitting Time (Intensive OP, Project Crash) 775-4388

Serenity House (Res, Detoxification) 446-2640

WASHINGTON

Central Vermont Substance Abuse Services (OP, Project CRASH) 223-4156

Maple Leaf Counseling (Intensive OP) 476-3771

Washington County Youth Services (Adol, OP) 800/229-9151

WINDHAM

Brattleboro Retreat (Res) 800/738-7328 or 257-7785

Families in Recovery (Res) 258-2804

Marathon (OP) 257-1147

Starting Now (Intensive OP) 800/738-7328 X 3705 or 258-3705

Youth Services of Windham County (OP) 257-0361

Health Care & Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont (OP, Intensive OP)

Bellows Falls 463-3947 or Brattleboro 254-6028

WINDSOR

Health Care & Rehabilitation Services of

Southeastern Vermont (OP, Intensive OP, Project CRASH) 885-5781 (Springfield) 295-3031

(Windsor)

Veterans Center 800/649-6603 or 295-2908

VERMONT CHAPTERS OF NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Alzheimer's Association 229-1022 //welcome.to/alzvt
- American Heart Association 878-7700; 800/AHA-USA1 www.americanheart.org
- American Heart Association, New England Affiliate 878-7700 or 800/AHA-USA1
- American Cancer Society, Vermont Division 223-2348 www.cancer.org
- American Diabetes Association 654-7716 www.diabetes.org
- American Lung Association of Vermont 863-6817; 800/LUNGUSA www.lungusa.org
- Arthritis Foundation 864-4988 www.arthritis.org
- Epilepsy Foundation of VT 775-1686.
- Lupus Foundation of America, VT Chapter 244-5988 www.lupus.org
- March of Dimes Foundation 479-3265 www.modimes.org
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society 800/FIGHTMS www.nmss.org
- Vermont Kidney Association: 863-4087 during regular business hours or 863-1532 after hours.

HOSPITALS IN VERMONT

- Brattleboro Memorial Hospital (Brattleboro): 257-0341 or www.bmhvt.org
- Brattleboro Retreat (Brattleboro): 257-7785 www.bratretreat.org
- Central Vermont Medical Center (Barre): 371-4100 www.cvmc.hitchcock.org
- Copley Hospital (Morrisville): 888-4231 www.copleyhealthsystems.org
- Fletcher Allen Health Care (Burlington): 847-2345 www.fahc.org
- Gifford Medical Center (Randolph): 728-4441 www.giffordmed.org
- Grace Cottage Hospital (Townshend): 365-7357 www.gracecottage.org
- Mt. Ascutney Hospital & Health Center (Windsor): 674-6711
- North Country Hospital (Newport): 334-7331 www.nchsi.org
- Northeastern Vermont Regional (St. Johnsbury): 748-8141 www.nvrh.org
- Northwestern Medical Center (St. Albans): 524-5911; www.nmcinc.org
- Porter Medical Center (Middlebury): 388-4701 www.portermedical.org
- Rutland Regional Medical Center. (Rutland): 775-7111 www.rrmc.org
- Southwestern Vermont Health Care (Bennington): 442-6361 www.svhealthcare.org
- Springfield Hospital (Springfield): 885-2151 www.springfieldhospital.org
- Vermont State Hospital (Waterbury): 241-1000
- VA Medical and Regional Office Center (White River Junction): 295-9363

NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITALS CLOSE TO VERMONT

- Alice Peck Day (Lebanon) 603/448-3121
- Cheshire Medical (Keene) 603/354-5400
- Cottage Hospital (Woodsville): 603/ 747-2761
- Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center (Lebanon, NH): 603/650-5000; www.hitchcock.org
- Littleton Regional Hospital (Littleton) 603/444-9000
- Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital (Colebrook): 603/237-4971
- Valley Regional (Claremont): 603/542-7771
- Weeks Medical Center (Lancaster) 603/788-4911

NURSING HOMES (LONG TERM CARE)

For more information about other types of long term care facilities, such as assisted living, contact the VT Dept. of Aging and Disabilities 241-2400 or for a NH facility, the NH Health Care Association at 603/226-4900.

- Derby Green Nursing Home (Derby): 766-2201
- Linden Lodge Nursing Home (Brattleboro): 258-3704
- Helen Porter Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center (Middlebury): 388-4001
- Mt. Ascutney Health Center (Windsor): 674-6711
- Stratton House Nursing Home (Townshend): 365-7344
- SVHC Center for Living and Rehabilitation (Bennington): 447-1547
- Woodridge Nursing Home (Barre): 371-4700
- Copley Manor (Morrisville): 888-5201

HOME HEALTH & HOSPICE

- Addison County Home Health & Hospice (Middlebury): 388-7259
- Bennington Area Home Health (Bennington): 442-5502
- Caledonia Home Health Care & Hospice (St. Johnsbury): 748-4540
- Central Vermont Home Health & Hospice (Barre): 223-1878
- Franklin County Home Health (St. Albans): 527-7531
- Farr Avenue (Morrisville) 888-4651
- Manchester Health Services (Manchester Center): 362-2126
- Orleans, Essex VNA & Hospice (Newport): 334-5213
- Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice (Rutland): 775-0568
- Dorset Nursing Association (Dorset): 867-5922
- Visiting Nurse Alliance of Vermont and New Hampshire (White River Junction): 295-2604
- Visiting Nurse Association of Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties (Colchester): 658-1900
- Vermont Association of Hospice and Home Health 1-800- 713-0893 (in Vermont) or 229-0579

FREE CLINICS

- Barre: People's Health and Wellness Clinic 479-1229
- Bristol: Open Door Clinic 388-0137
- Colchester: Free Clinic at Fletcher Allen Health Care 847-6984
- Middlebury: Open Door Clinic 388-0137
- Putney: Putney Walk In Clinic 387-2120
- Randolph: Gifford Medical Center Health Breaks Health Connections 728-2323
- Rutland: Park St. Healthshare 775-1360
- Springfield: Precision Valley Free Clinic 885-1616
- White River Junction: Good Neighbor Health Clinic 295-1868; Red Logan Dental Clinic 295-7573
- Windsor: Windsor Community Clinic 674-7213
- Vermont Coalition of Clinics for the Uninsured 388-2753 www.vccu.net/index.html

NOTES AND IMPORTANT NUMBERS

CCIN IS COMMITTED TO CONTINUE TO OFFER UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ABOUT RESOURCES IN THE REGION.

We rely on those of you who use our services to let us know of additional sources of information, as well as agencies and organizations that are available. If you would like to suggest additions to our publications, please take a moment to provide the following information:

YOUR NAME/AGENCY

**CONTACT PERSON:
PHONE/EMAIL**

INFORMATION YOU WANT TO SUBMIT:

NAME OF AGENCY/RESOURCE

ADDRESS (STREET, TOWN, STATE, ZIP)

**PHONE
EMAIL
WEBSITE URL
FAX**

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

OTHER COMMENTS:

You may tear out this sheet and send it to CCIN PO Box 3, Cavendish, VT 05142, or Fax it to CCIN at 802-226-7807. You may also submit information via the CCIN Website: www.cc-info.net *We appreciate your input!*

MORE NOTES

CCIN

The Chronic Conditions Information Network (Formerly known as the Health Information Vermont/New Hampshire Network-HIVNet), assists those who live or care for those with chronic conditions so that they are able to obtain accurate and relevant information in a timely manner. The CCIN offers the following services:

WEBSITE

The CCIN Website is a free, electronic network of information and resources on chronic life threatening conditions (including asthma, diabetes, hepatitis, and HIV) affecting people and their providers in Vermont and New Hampshire. This website replaces the old HIVNet site and can be reached at www.cc-info.net.

PAMPHLETS AND INFORMATIONAL MATERIAL:

CCIN develops and publishes a variety of printed materials relating to living with chronic conditions in Vermont & New Hampshire, including this Guide. In addition, we publish condition-specific companion pamphlets, such as the Hepatitis C Guide.

CCIN CONTACT INFORMATION

PO Box 3, Cavendish
VT 05142
Phone: 802/226-7807
Website www.cc-info.net
email ccin@cc-info.net

NEWS DIGESTS

CCIN has three email digests available free of charge to providers.

SHH (STDs, HIV AND HEPATITIS)

This is what was previously the HIVNet Digest. Postings are twice a week, and contain the latest research findings on prevention and treatment, as well as relevant regional information such as job postings, conferences and funding opportunities. To subscribe, e-mail margoc@ludl.tds.net and write "Subscribe SHH" in the subject heading.

CDIS

(CHRONIC DISEASE INFORMATION SERVICES)

Posted on the 15th of each month, this digest contains the latest research on asthma and diabetes, as well as regional and on-line continuing education opportunities. This is a service of the NH Area Health Education Center. To subscribe, e-mail margoc@ludl.tds.net and write "Subscribe CDIS" in the subject heading.

SP (SEX POSITIVE)

Posted on Friday of each week, this digest is for providers who work in the field of prevention. Subscribers must be able to document that they are providers. For more information on this digest contact margoc@ludl.tds.net.

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