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MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Mary S. Hooper, Senator Jane Kitchel, Representative Janet Ancel, Senator Becca Balint, Representative Tim Briglin, Senator Ann Cummings, Representative Peter J. Fagan, Representative Emilie Kornheiser, Senator Dick Sears Jr., Senator Richard Westman

FROM: Commissioner Emily Hawes, Department of Mental Health

DATE: July 30, 2021

SUBJECT: Workforce Development

A Task Force was created and began in June to address the issue of workforce recruitment and retention at the Designated and Specialized Services Agencies. A strategic plan is being developed that creates action steps associated with the strategy areas found below. Vermont is also taking part in a national learning collaborative and obtaining technical assistance through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The major components of the plan, which includes members of the group, purpose, data, and a summary of evidence-based recruitment and retention strategies is below.

DA/SSA Workforce Recruitment and Retention Strategic Plan

Co-Chairs: Cheryle Wilcox, DMH and Anne Bilodeau, HCRS

Sponsors: Alison Krompf, DMH Deputy Commissioner and Monica White, DAIL Commissioner

Participants: DMH: Laurel Omland, Samantha Sweet; VDH-ADAP: Emily Trutor, Roy Belcher; VCP: Dillon Burns, Julie Tessler, Simone Rueschemeyer; Marie Lallier; DAIL: Debbie Smith, Amy Roth; DA/SSA: Cheryl Huntley, CSAC; Josh Smith, GMSS; Stacey Remillard, NCSS; Dept. of Corrections: Annie Ramniceanu

Meeting Dates: 2021: June 9, July 21, August 24

Purpose of this Group: Leverage collective resources to create a system-wide strategic plan that addresses workforce recruitment and retention for the DA/SSA network in Vermont and identifies advocacy opportunities.



Workforce challenges: What we know from the data

The toll the pandemic is taking on everyone is profoundly felt by mental health staff as they respond to others while managing their own experience of trauma. Systemwide the staff vacancy rate is 15%. Here is data on how staff vacancies are distributed by service type (as of February, 2021):

- Developmental Disability Services: 190
- Mental Health Services: 519
- Substance Use Disorder Services: 29
- Other: 42
- Total: 780