



Brattleboro Retreat

Brattleboro Retreat CHNA Implementation Update

(December 31, 2019)

For CHNA-related activities January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019

#1. Cooperate with regional providers as part of the Accountable Communities for Health by helping individuals and families receive more timely and effective mental health/addiction treatment and aftercare support through enhanced inter-agency collaboration.

- Continued to staff an office of mental health professionals within the main facility of Blue Cross Blue Shield Vermont (BCBSVT) in Barre, VT. The individuals who staff this office (called Vermont Collaborative Care or VCC) help BCBSVT subscribers integrate mental health care and medical health care.
- Continued to provide collaborative office rounds with area pediatric and family practices to facilitate problem solving on psychiatric and addiction cases.
- Continued to participate in the Windham County Consortium on Substance Use (COSU)- a group of regional agencies tasked with studying and intervening in the opioid epidemic.

#2. Increase accessibility to the Retreat's programs and services by improving the cultural competencies of providers and removing barriers that challenge vulnerable populations and people who have been historically underserved by the mental health and addiction treatment system.

- Offered a continuing education workshop on 4/18/2019 that focused on culturally diverse patient populations entitled *Improving Provider Communication and Shared Decision Making with Multi-Cultural Clients*, with speaker Margarita Alegria, Ph.D.
- Continued to provide on-site clinical services at Groundworks Collaborative, Brattleboro's temporary shelter for homeless men, women, and children. This is a service that began in 2015.
- Further refined and expanded the scope of the hospital's cultural competency online training module and assigned it to all newly-hired staff during orientation and annually for all Retreat staff.

#3: Reduce barriers to treatment and promote fact-based knowledge about mental illness and addiction among healthcare providers and the general public by increasing educational initiatives and supporting campaigns to decrease stigma.

- Continued to support our *Stand Up to Stigma* community awareness campaign through community events, advertising, website, promotional items, etc.

- Offered nine all-day, one half-day, and one two-day continuing education workshops in the spring of 2019. Combined with 11 all-day, and one half-day continuing education workshops in the fall of 2019 for a total of 23 for the year.
- Continued hosting and participating in a Consumer Advocacy Group that meets on a monthly basis with Retreat clinicians and administrators. Goal is to ensure that Retreat programs and services are meeting the needs of consumers and are being delivered in ways that accommodate the perspectives and experiences of patients.
- Dr. Geoff Kane participated as a panelist with representatives from Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, Turning Point of Windham County, among others at a community forum of approximately 175 people. This forum was held at the Brattleboro Fire Station on Thursday, June 20th and was focused on the opioid crisis facing the town of Brattleboro.
- Participated on a pilot project with Strolling of the Heifers (SOTH) Apprenticeship Program and Groundworks Collaborative to provide therapeutic support for SOTH in their annual jobs training program.
- Launched Rapid Access MAT (medication assisted treatment) with Brattleboro Memorial Hospital (BMH), and Turning Point of Windham County to help people in active withdrawal from opioids receive MAT quickly while at the BMH emergency department.
- Partnered with Brattleboro Museum and Arts Center (BMAC), Turning Point, Groundworks Collaborative, and other organizations in the community, to honor the courage of those in recovery through Michael Poster's "If she has a pulse, she has a chance" documentary photography exhibit (at BMAC, Oct. 5, 2018—Jan. 7, 2019).
- Brattleboro Retreat continued its partnership with Ticket to Work program (America Works) in 2019 with the ongoing goal to helping clients who are recovering from opioid addiction to search for and secure employment.
- Continued participation with Project CARE, a community coalition led by the Brattleboro Police Department that includes Habit Opco, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, Turning Point, HCRS, and Groundworks. The goal of this coalition is to improve community relations with local law enforcement and to explore ways to better integrate the police in efforts to get help for people psychiatric and addiction issues.
- Brattleboro Retreat marched in the annual Strolling of the Heifers parade with NAMI Vermont in June 2019 with staff and community volunteers sharing the Stand Up to Stigma campaign message.
- Produced two new "Keep Talking" video broadcasts on Brattleboro Community Television in 2019:
 - "Step Families: Meeting the Challenges"
 - "Kids and Cannabis – Changing Perceptions, Myths, and Risks"
- Published three Op-Eds and/or educational pieces in local and regional newspapers:

- “Calling All Mental Health Professionals: Border Crisis Requires Action on Behalf of Children,” by Louis Josephson, Ph.D., *VT Digger*, July 11, 2019; *Bennington Banner*, July 12, 2019, *Brattleboro Reformer*, July 13, 2019, *Rutland Herald*, July 20, 2019
- “An IOP Exclusively For Addiction Issues: Spotlight on the Retreat’s Starting Now Program,” by Kurt White, LADC, LISCW, September 10, 2019
- “We lament changes to healthcare too,” by Louis Josephson, PhD. Letter to the Editor in *Brattleboro Reformer*, September 8, 2019