

## **Chronic Disease Prevention and Management for Individuals with Disabilities**

The State Disability and Health Programs grant aims to improve the health and quality of life among individuals with mobility limitations and/or intellectual disabilities. This capacity building grant emphasizes integration of proven strategies into public health programming to reduce health disparities between people with and without disabilities. This work will be embedded in Vermont Department of Health's (VDH) chronic disease prevention programs, particularly the 3-4-50 campaign. Proven strategies in inclusive programming paired with guidance and feedback from a state-wide advisory group of disability advocates and experts will ensure long term, sustainable change.

### **Program Goals:**

By the end of this five-year grant, we expect Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HPDP) Division chronic disease programs to be accessible to all Vermonters, including individuals with physical and/or intellectual disabilities. (HPDP chronic disease programs include cancer control, physical activity and nutrition, tobacco control, oral health, diabetes prevention, asthma, cardiovascular disease, and breast and cervical cancer screenings.)

The first year of work largely focused on compiling state data to help the advisory group identify areas of most significant disparity. By synthesizing state data with a community partner needs assessment, the advisory group will next identify priority chronic disease areas that are primed for impactful, sustainable work, and will then progress into the program development and implementation phase.

Since this is a capacity building grant, we are also committing resources to training HPDP staff in accessible and inclusive programming, plain language, and other tools to help them revise their programs to better meet the needs of individuals with physical and intellectual disabilities. As this work is done, we will look for any gaps in programming that should be filled through this grant. Additionally, project work and resulting resources and information will be shared throughout VDH and broader Agency of Human Services (AHS) department partners, divisions, and grantees.

Key partners include:

- Vermont Center for Independent Living
- Green Mountain Self Advocates
- Special Olympics
- Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living
- Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council
- Center on Disability and Inclusion, University of Vermont
- Disability Rights Vermont
- Vermont Family Network
- Vermont Brain Injury Association

### **Funding:**

This project is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This funding is currently awarded to 19 states. Vermont funding began in July 2016 and is expected to last five years. The funding supports one program manager, a .25 FTE epidemiologist position and grants and contracts to partners in support of the work. Total funding is \$150,000 annually.

**Successes:**

July 1, 2017 marked the beginning of year two of the funding. Successes include:

- We are working with a CDC-assigned mentor from the University of New Hampshire who has received this funding for at least one additional funding cycle.
- A passionate, active, and diverse advisory group has been established. The group meets bimonthly and has established formal processes and documentation, including a charter, job descriptions, and succession plan.
- A needs assessment of partner organizations and AHS programs and departments has been completed to support the advisory group in identifying chronic disease health areas most primed for impactful and sustainable work.
- In-person training on disability awareness and inclusive health programming will be offered to AHS staff to build capacity and knowledge. Training dates are September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

**Challenges:**

None to date.

**Landscape of Disability in Vermont:**

With support and feedback from the advisory group, three data briefs have so far been developed and posted on the VDH website demonstrating prevalence of disability by demographics. Data is broken down into intellectual disabilities, mobility limitations, and all disabilities:

<http://www.healthvermont.gov/health-statistics-vital-records/population-health-surveys-data/brfss>

Disability and Health Program contact information: Allie Perline, Chronic Disease Program Specialist: 802-951-0157, [allison.perline@vermont.gov](mailto:allison.perline@vermont.gov)