

for Vermonters with disabilities, among others, so it is a very good thing that we are acknowledging this now.

- The Treasury just issued ARPA guidance on Monday and we're collectively working to identify how Vermont will operationalize it. Still no guidance out from CMS on the 10% FMAP bump though we have heard from Advancing States that it is expected, finally, this week.
- We've been working closely on the reopening plans for Adult Day and Senior Centers, appreciate the work that has been going on in those important sectors. Reopening has been in many ways more of a challenge than it was to shut down!
- The temporary Johnson and Johnson vaccine pause threw us a curveball – that “one and done” vaccine has been very useful for targeting harder to reach populations such as homebound and houseless individuals, hospital discharges, and also for folks with sensory difficulties, among other topics – but we are back on track!
- 12-15 age band for Pfizer vaccines opens today – and the State is rolling out a comprehensive strategy to reach those who have not yet been vaccinated across all age bands.
- Our overall C19 numbers have improved in terms of reduced case counts and importantly, deaths and hospitalizations – the vaccines are working!
- DAIL and VDH synthesized updated CDC and CMS guidance issued late April, into revisions of our visitation/quarantine/congregate activity guidance – posted [here](#). Key updates in this latest revised document include removal of the Phase Charts, changes in staff surveillance testing to only include unvaccinated staff, changes to guidance around communal dining and activities, and changes in visitation guidance. There was a Q&A call primarily to discuss epidemiological questions about breakthrough cases and other topics on 4/30 and another call today to discuss additional questions facilities are having on the guidance.
- On the DDSD front we are making significant progress on expanding crisis capacity. We anticipate having a third VCIN bed online on or before September 1st and our ITS RFP closed this week, we are evaluating proposals and expect to issue a contract for this work soon.
- The Vermont Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind held their (virtual) annual meeting Saturday 5/1. DAIL's Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired Director, Fred Jones, spoke at this event.
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP), via the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), is spearheading a partnership with the Lamoille County Sheriff's office, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and four other first responder departments throughout the state to build out a statewide first responder peer support network. The project is made possible by a grant from U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Community Policing

Services (COPS) grant provided through a federal appropriation by the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA).

- I was joined by Ed Paquin last week at a dedication ceremony for the expanded and accessible Robert Frost Interpretive Trail in Ripton, very grateful to Senator Leahy for his support of funding for that project and to the US Forest Service and the Moosalamoo Association for championing that important work, very pleased with the media coverage highlighting the importance of accessibility.
- AAA's – Three new Directors (CVCOA, SS, SEVCOA) – V4A Association Director recruitment.
 - CVCOA - Doug Bouchard was the CEO at NEKHS
 - Senior Solutions – Mark Boutwell (previous case management supervisor)
 - Southeast Vermont Council on Aging - Pamela Zagorski Most recently she served as Chief Administrative Officer for Seacoast Mental Health center in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. For the previous ten years she was Chief Financial Officer for Community Enterprises, a nonprofit human services agency based in Northampton, Massachusetts that supports individuals with disabilities in five states.

Vaccination work:

- Kids 12- 16 vaccines open today 5/13.
- American Sign Language (ASL) coordination for federal vaccine clinics is happening with help from DAHL's new Director of Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind services, Laura Seigel.
- Place-based vaccinations are opening up across the state - Walk-in clinics
- Rescue Squads opening up for vaccines/celebrations weekend of May 20/21.
- Vermont #1 in Nation:
 - # of vaccines administered per 100K of population
 - # of people with 1st vaccine
 - # of people 65+ fully vaccinated (87%)

Work with providers:

- Revised Adult Day Standards to align with Vermont Forward Plan.
- New CMS guidelines for dining/activities for fully vaccinated people. No masks/distancing.
- VDH working through how to manage “breakthrough” cases in LTC facilities. Modifying responses and focusing on the science.

American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 – [H.R. 1319](#):

- Still early to know how exactly this will roll out in Vermont as the funding decisions are being made via the Governor's plan and the legislature. Some key areas in the bill that will likely affect DAHL stakeholders:
 - ARPA Guidance - [FAQ](#) and [Interim Federal Rule](#)

- 10% FMAP
- VT Leg Proposal for \$5M for Adult Days
- Older American’s Act Funding – ACL approx. \$7M for OAA and LTC Ombudsman 4/1/21 – 9/30/24. Requires State Match of about \$1.3M.

State Plan on Aging Year-2 Progress Report

Conor O’Dea, Director of State Unit on Aging

Conor O’Dea presented the two-year review on the State Plan on Aging. In his report, he writes:

In order to plan for the ongoing and future needs of older adults in Vermont and to meet the requirements of the Older Americans Act (OAA), the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL), the designated State Unit on Aging (SUA) for Vermont, prepared a four-year State Plan on Aging approved in September 2018 by the Administration for Community Living (ACL).

As part of DAIL’s ongoing administration of the plan, the department has reviewed progress on goals, for Year 2 (October 2019 – September 2020) of the plan. The summary below represents some of the work accomplished to date and work planned for the future.

To read the report in its entirety you can find it on the DAIL website:

<https://dail.vermont.gov/resources/advisory-board/dail-advisory-brd-2021-items>

Money Follows the Person (MFP) Grant

Matt Corjay, MFP Program Director

Matt Corjay presented that the MFP grant received a re-authorization that is in place until December of 2024. There were some changes made in the grant. One change was a relaxation of eligibility requirements that will allow for 50% more qualifying participants.

Some new initiatives that are being considered by Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for Vermont’s supplemental grant are:

- Increased brain injury supports
- Direct service workforce development and retention
- Expansion of volunteer programs
- Falls prevention and mobility
- Holistic social and mental health supports
- Independent living and home modifications
- Use of assistive technology

To view the full report from Matt, please go here: <https://dail.vermont.gov/resources/advisory-board/dail-advisory-brd-2021-items>

Formal Introduction of New Advisory Board Members

Monica White, Commissioner and Megan Tierney-Ward, Deputy Commissioner

The board welcomed Lynne Cordoza, Jane Catton, and Michael Gruteke who are new DAIL Advisory Board Members. Deputy Commissioner Tierney-Ward also announced that Fran Keeler had resigned from the board effective immediately.

DAIL Advisory Board Updates

Jeanne Hutchins announced the Gerontology Conference is on June 22. For people who are interested follow this link for more information:

<https://www.med.uvm.edu/centeronaging/symposia/2021>

Ruby Baker announced that Anita Hoy is retiring from COVE and they are hiring to fill the vacant Director of Programing position.

Global Commitment 1115 Waiver Renewal

Ashley Berliner, Department of Vermont Health Access Director of Health Care Policy

Ashley Berliner presented information on Vermont's Global Commitment 1115 waiver and the renewal process. Vermont first received federal government approval to operate its Global Commitment to Health Section 1115 demonstration in 2005. Today, the Global Commitment demonstration covers nearly all of Vermont's Medicaid program, and allows the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) to provide Medicaid services as a non-risk bearing managed care plan.

The Global Commitment demonstration also allows Vermont to fund investments for health-related services and programs, such as flexible family funding, emergency medical services, and public health programs. Investments funded under the Global Commitment demonstration have been instrumental in helping Vermont achieve among the highest levels of access to care and maintain one of the healthiest populations in the nation.

Vermont intends to improve upon its already strong care coordination and population health management infrastructure through Blueprint for Health, Vermont's Health Information Exchange (VHIE), the All-Payer ACO Model, HCBW-like programs, and the Vermont Chronic Care Initiative.

Proposed new initiatives:

- **Provide more integrated care coordination** by increasing alignment between Blueprint and other programs offering care coordination within Medicaid, the ACO, and through other payers.
- **Obtain federal matching funds for data exchange initiatives** that will allow more providers to participate in health information exchange and community information exchange to support care coordination.

To read the entire presentation please go to: <https://dail.vermont.gov/resources/advisory-board/dail-advisory-brd-2021-items>

VDH would like stakeholder input. To submit comments on the waiver, visit [2022 Waiver Documents](#). Public comments may be submitted until midnight on June 12th by email or regular mail. Please indicate “1115 Renewal Public Comment” in any public comments submitted by email or regular mail.

By Email: AHS.MedicaidPolicy@vermont.gov

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Meeting was adjourned: 12:25