

Elder Care Clinician Program Statewide Snapshot SFY 2021

How is the snapshot produced?

The service numbers and figures in the snapshot are provided by the Department of Mental Health (DMH). Analysis by the DMH is based on extracts from Monthly Service Reports (MSR) submitted to the DMH by its designated agencies. The extract from the MSR database includes July 2020-June 2021 monthly service records, with an "Elder Care" Cost Center and Units greater than 0. It is important to note that the 2021 snapshot shows a decrease in people served compared to previous fiscal years. The 2021 report produced by DMH does not include data from Rutland Mental Health Services, a provider historically serving many older adults. When the discrepancy in reporting is resolved, it is expected that the number of people served will be comparable to previous reporting periods.

What is the Elder Care Clinician Program (ECCP)?

The Elder Care Clinician Program (ECCP) began in 2000 and serves Vermonters age 60 and older in their home due to psychological, emotional, and/or physical barriers to accessing office-based mental health services. The goals of the program are to improve the quality of life of older Vermonters and prevent or delay the need for institutional care.

Who is served and where? What are their needs?

In the state fiscal year 2021 (July 2020-June 2021), 267 older Vermonters were served. Of those served, 74% were female, and 26% were male; 35% were in their 60's, 40% were in their 70's, and 25% were 80+. The locations of service varied depending on the needs of the individual. The percentage of appointments in the home was 34%. 36% of appointments took place in a community setting, 12% in an office, and 18% were reported as other. Historically, a large percentage of visits by eldercare clinicians are to the home. The even distribution of people being seen in and home and in the community will have to be explored deeper to understand the cause of this change. The most common diagnoses are anxiety (54%) and mood disorders such as depression (50%). Many have co-occurring conditions.

Who provides the service?

Mental health clinicians at seven designated mental health agencies provide services including clinical assessments, individual and family therapy, supportive counseling, and medication management. Most older Vermonters are referred to the designated agencies through the five Area Agencies on Aging in the state. In the state fiscal year 2021, approximately 3,000 hours of clinical therapy were provided.

How is the program funded?

The program is funded by a combination of Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial insurance revenue, the state general fund appropriation, and local agency funds. Medicare was the primary insurance for 73% of those served in 2021, followed by Medicaid at 49%. The designated agencies always bill insurance first if possible. Additionally, it is important to note that insurance categories are not mutually exclusive, and clients may be counted in more than one insurance category.

In the State Fiscal Year 2021, the general fund appropriation was approx. \$235,000, which provides the state match needed for Medicaid billing plus supplemental funding that is managed via a local contract between the Area Agency on Aging and the designated agency. These funds do not cover all program costs, so most agencies supplement with additional funds. Through appropriations by the Vermont Legislature, COVID-19 relief funds were provided to the eldercare clinician program totaling \$100,000. The funds were granted to the six Designated Agencies that applied. The additional, one-time funds, were used in a variety of ways including increasing capacity to address waiting lists, enhancing staff training, implementing companion services, and increasing outreach.

Designated Agencies Providing Elder Care:


Counseling Services of Addison County
Healthcare and Rehabilitation Services of Vermont
Howard Center
Northeast Kingdom Human Services
Northwestern Counseling and Support Services
Rutland Mental Health Services
Washington County Mental Health Services

Area Agencies on Aging:

Age Well
Central Vermont Council on Aging
Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging
Senior Solutions
Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging

State Plan on Aging

Vermont's current State Plan on Aging focuses on supporting healthy aging for all Vermonters and includes a specific objective to "increase behavioral health prevention, treatment and recovery for older Vermonters." In order to achieve this objective, Vermont needs a robust network of designated agencies and elder care clinicians with the resources to serve older



Vermonters with a diversity of behavioral health needs wherever they may live. Both the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living and the Department of Mental Health are committed to working collaboratively with the designated agencies and Area Agencies on Aging to ensure a successful and sustainable Elder Care Clinician Program.

Additional Resources

Elder Care Clinician Program Manual:

<https://asd.vermont.gov/sites/asd/files/documents/2019%20ECC%20Manual.pdf>

Elder Care Data Report:

https://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/sites/mhnew/files/documents/Reports/Stats/Eldercare_FY21.pdf

State Plan on Aging:

<https://asd.vermont.gov/resources/state-plans>

Questions?

Contact Conor O’Dea, Adult Services Division, DAIL

Conor.odea@vermont.gov or 802-585-6040