



Update on FACT: Forensic, Assertive, Community Treatment

Mental Health Block Grant Planning Council

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About FACT



Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) is a service delivery model intended for individuals with serious mental illness (SMI) who are involved with the criminal justice system. These individuals may also have co-occurring substance use and physical health disorders. Their needs are often complex, and their disorders are often under-managed and further complicated by varying degrees of involvement with the criminal justice system. FACT builds on the evidence-based Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) model by making adaptations based on criminal justice issues—in particular, addressing criminogenic risks and needs. In this sense, FACT is an intervention that bridges the behavioral health and criminal justice systems.

Press Release

August 2, 2022

FACT PROGRAM TO SERVE INDIVIDUALS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Waterbury, Vt. – A new collaboration between the Department of Corrections (DOC), the Department of Mental Health (DMH), and Pathways Vermont will help enhance treatment for individuals involved in the criminal justice system.

This assistance will come through the evidence-based Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) practice, which is recognized by the federal Substance Abuse Mental Health and Services Administration (SAMHSA) as having shown success in treating individuals with mental health and/or substance use challenges and who are considered at risk of re-offending.

FACT will help to reduce the likelihood of individuals being incarcerated again, and increase productive, safe, and structured time in the community where they will be provided resources for housing, employment, and opportunities to build social connections.

The Department of Corrections is thankful for this collaboration as we continue creating supportive frameworks to ensure that incarcerated and supervised individuals successfully reenter our communities,” said Department of Corrections Commissioner Nicholas Deml. “This cannot happen without strong partners. Our department is grateful for the teamwork with DMH on our common goal of building a better Vermont.”

The team at Pathways Vermont will be providing those receiving FACT treatments with direct service providers and case management. The DOC team will include probation, parole, and community correctional officers. Social service agencies and healthcare providers will also be involved in the wider treatment team.

“We are grateful for continued support from the state legislature which funded FACT and the Vermont Congressional Delegation which continues to support the federal Mental Health Block Grant,” said Department of Mental Health Commissioner Emily Hawes. “This program is a product of effective interdepartmental collaboration and wouldn’t be possible without the commitment of Pathways Vermont.”



Testimony at Joint Justice Oversight Committee

September 15, 2022

- Funds: \$400,00 annually in DMH budget and one-time funds of \$200,000 from Mental Health Block Grant.
 - This means the final grant that was executed with Pathways was for two years for a total of \$1M.
 - The grant was written and then executed 7-26-22; it was an effort that involved DMH, DOC, VDH, and our community partner, Pathways VT.
- This grant utilizes funding for programming that had evidence in other states, and we wanted to identify a community partner who had expertise in providing treatment and working with individuals who were involved in the criminal justice system.
- Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) practice, is recognized by the federal Substance Abuse Mental Health and Services Administration (SAMHSA) as having shown success in treating individuals with mental health and/or substance use challenges and who are considered at risk of re-offending.
- FACT helps to reduce the likelihood of individuals being incarcerated again, and increase productive, safe, and structured time in the community where they will be provided resources for housing, employment, and opportunities to build social connections.
- This new collaboration between the Department of Corrections, the Department of Mental Health, VDH, and Pathways Vermont will help enhance treatment for individuals involved in the criminal justice system.

Progress *(as of 12-31-22)*

Who are they serving?

All individuals are 18 or older, under the supervision of Corrections and have mental health challenges such as schizophrenia, depression, anxiety, post traumatic stress disorder, etc.

How many are they serving?

100% of referrals have been accepted to the program. 23 individuals have been referred and 23 have been accepted.

Who are the staff?

They are already nearly FULLY STAFFED!!

- Team Leader 1FTE
- Service Coordinator .85 FTE --hiring
- Peer Specialist .85 FTE
- Supported employment specialist .5 FTE
- Nurse .5 FTE
- Substance Use Specialist .85 FTE
- Housing First Director .05 FTE
- Psychiatrist .25 FTE





Progress

In Quarter 2:

- 0 clients lapsed into homelessness.
- 50% of participants were connected to the FACT Employment Specialist and 83% to the Substance Use Specialist.
- 17% of participants are currently engaged in mental health counseling with an outside provider, and 50% of participants identified an interest in obtaining psychotherapy from FACT Team Lead Hilary Viens, LICSW.
- 54% of enrolled participants were actively engaged in some sort of substance use treatment, or utilizing harm reduction strategies, this included, but was not limited to regularly attending AA/NA meetings and receiving Medication Assistance Treatment (MAT).



What are your questions?

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small succulent plant in a dark pot. The person is wearing a blue and white plaid shirt. In the background, there are more succulent plants, some in a tray. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor or outdoor setting with natural light. A semi-transparent white text box is overlaid on the center of the image.

Thank you for supporting this
innovative program so it can grow in
Vermont!