



Enhancing Community Efforts to Obtain Maintain and Retain the Primary Healthcare Workforce in Southern Vermont

“Vermont Proud: Assessing the Need for Community Based Physicians” Challenges for Rural Patients and The Value of Home Visits

What established support systems exist in rural communities that help an asthma patient on oxygen, an elderly woman struggling with dementia and cannot drive, or a diabetic unable to cook meals in their apartment?

Under Vermont’s Blue Print for Health and OneCare Programs, Care Coordinators are in every hospital region to help manage patient care, including care in their homes. This interdisciplinary project will offer a unique opportunity to go on home visits with a Care Coordinator to more fully understand the patients’ personal, geographical and financial challenges – as well as examine community strengths in this region of southern VT.

Students will have an opportunity to examine the challenges that rural Vermont patients face that keep them from coming into a medical site for heart health checkups, important follow-ups to test their A1C levels, or situations that if untreated can necessitate a hospital emergency room visit. At the same time, what keeps them from accepting community services that might be available?

Londonderry, Vermont, is in the south central part of the state known as the West River Valley region, and home to **The Mountain Valley Medical Clinic**. This clinic serves a region that includes two-lane roads, dirt lanes, mountain and river valleys, and is located at least 45-minute from a hospital. Elderly and economically disadvantaged residents comprise a significant segment of the patient population in this region.

<https://springfieldmed.org/mountain-valley-medical-clinic/>

The clinic is part of the Federally Qualified Health Center of **Springfield Medical Care Systems**. Drs. Roger Fox and Delores Barbeau are longtime community physicians, and occasionally go on home visits to their patients. Home visits make up a large portion of the Nurse Care Coordinators’ patient panels in this region.

Learning objectives:

- Understand the role of a Community Based Physician based in a rural Satellite Center
- Identify the medical and patient value of home visits
- Assess the community and medical resources available that assist rural patients
- Identify the gaps that prevent or inhibit best evidence-based patient care
- Describe medical and social determinants of health in the population served by this practice
- Discuss benefits of an interdisciplinary perspective in addressing barriers and gaps

Housing in the Springfield/Londonderry region will be arranged by AHEC for Larner College of Medicine students, as well as UVM Social Work or Nurse Practitioner students who are accepted for this AHEC Summer Interdisciplinary Project.

To apply, contact Susan White, Education Resources Coordinator, SVTAHEC at 802-885-2126 x 105, swhite@svtahec.org

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