

Why support Universal Primary Care?

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF UNIVERSAL PRIMARY CARE LEGISLATION?

- **Will cover universal primary care for all Vermont residents with no deductibles or copays as the first step in phasing in universal publicly financed health care for all Vermonters.**
 - Covers preventive care, chronic disease management, outpatient mental health, and care coordination, and outpatient substance use disorder treatment.
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WHY THIS IS URGENT AND NECESSARY

Health Crisis:

- **187,800 Vermonters (30% of insured residents under 65) are underinsured**
- 63% of young adults 18-24 cannot afford out-of-pocket costs despite having insurance
- Medical debt plagues thousands of Vermonters.
- People are dying from preventable diseases because they avoid primary care due to cost

Economic Impact of our current system on Vermonters:

- "More than 1 in 10 adult **Vermonters** carry medical debt, and across the U.S., medical debt is the leading cause of bankruptcy." ([Vermont Treasurers Office](#)).
- Small businesses spend thousands per employee annually on individual coverage.
- Premium increases of over 65% over the past ten years.
- Our school budgets and property taxes are exploding and one key reason is [out-of-control health insurance costs](#).
- Managing insurance takes away from the work involved in growing a business. It is almost like a second job!

Financial Solution:

- Primary care represents only about 6% of Vermont's \$6.37 billion healthcare spending
- Oliver Wyman Report shows **\$300 million in hospital savings from expanded primary care.**

Vermont Law

- Under Act 48 (18 V.S.A. § 9371(1)), every Vermonter has a legal right to healthcare: “The State of Vermont must ensure universal access to and coverage for high-quality, medically necessary health services for all Vermonters. Systemic barriers, such as cost, must not prevent people from accessing necessary health care. All Vermonters must receive affordable and appropriate health care at the appropriate time in the appropriate setting.”

Community Health and Safety:

- 9 of 14 Vermont hospitals losing money—this threatens access to emergency care
- Public health is foundational to community wellbeing
- **Primary care has been shown in numerous studies to be the single best step in improving population health.**

HOW WILL WE PAY FOR IT?

- Keep in mind that broad access to primary care will add up to \$300 million in hospital savings according to the Wyman report.
 - Money already exists in our economy—we're just paying inefficiently.
 - Economic vitality affects town tax base and ability to fund services
- We are already paying now. Insurance companies cannot charge for a service that is publicly financed and universal so there can be no double charging.
- H.433 stipulates that financing should be progressive and based on ability to pay and adhere to the principles of Act 48 which is fair and sustainable financing.

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DO NOTHING?

- Crisis continues; more medical bankruptcies, more preventable deaths, rising costs
- Young people keep leaving Vermont
- Businesses continue struggling with unsustainable insurance costs
- Hospital financial crisis worsens