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### **Dental clinic at Turning Point Center highlights collaboration on opioid crisis**

BURLINGTON, VT – Two partners of the Chittenden County Opioid Alliance have joined in a new effort to improve access for Chittenden County residents to dental care. On March 9, The University of Vermont Medical Center will host a dental clinic at the Turning Point Center of Chittenden County. Using materials purchased by CCOA and donated by The UVM Medical Center, the dentists will screen patients, refer them to treatment for urgent needs, and offer education about oral health.

“This is an exciting way to support our community members in recovery, while at the same time providing dental care, which has been identified as an important health care need in our community,” said CCOA Project Director Cathy Aikman.

Gary De Carolis, Executive Director of the Turning Point Center of Chittenden County, is eager to hold the dental clinic. “We have hosted other clinics in the past and our guests have really benefited from them as there is a real need,” he said, highlighting a 2016 survey that showed 97 percent of Turning Point Center guests contacted were struggling with a combination of chronic medical issues. The most common were anxiety, depression and dental problems.

“People are struggling to get the dental health support they need due to many barriers, and this is one small way we can assist with help from one of our community partners,” De Carolis added. “We hope to be able to host more clinics like this in the future.”

The UVM Medical Center donated gloves, masks, bags and hand sanitizer for the clinic. Organizers expect they will treat about 50 patients. Aikman noted that the idea for this clinic came about thanks to the connections made possible by the CCOA and the awareness brought about by the investment of \$150,000 over the course of the next three years to combat opioid abuse and dependency by the Delta Dental Plan of Vermont (DDPVT). The DDPVT Board of Trustees approved the grant in light of the severity of the epidemic, and the importance of effectively combating it to improve the overall health of the residents of the region.

### **About the Turning Point Center**

The Turning Point Center of Chittenden County, located at 191 Bank Street, Suite 200 in Burlington, Vermont, is a dedicated, compassionate community that provides peer-based recovery support services in a safe, substance-free environment for individuals and families on multiple paths to self-discovery and sustained recovery.

## **About Chittenden County Opioid Alliance**

The Chittenden County Opioid Alliance is a group of committed partners from many sectors who have joined together to reduce the burden of opioids on our community. Partners include businesses, non-profit agencies, government, and community members. The CCOA is funded by the University of Vermont Medical Center, the Stiller Family Foundation through the United Way of Northwest Vermont, Delta Dental Plan of VT and GE Healthy Cities. The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, the cooperative regional forum for the development of policies, plans and programs that address regional issues and opportunities in Chittenden County, is the fiscal and administrative agent of the grant funds. For more information, please contact CCOA Project Director Cathy Aikman at [caikman@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:caikman@ccrpcvt.org) or (802) 861-0138, or visit [ecosproject.com/chittenden-county-opioid-alliance](http://ecosproject.com/chittenden-county-opioid-alliance).

## **About the University of Vermont Medical Center**

[The University of Vermont Medical Center](#) is a 447-bed tertiary care regional referral center providing advanced care to approximately 1 million residents in Vermont and northern New York. Together with our partners at the Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, we are Vermont's academic medical center. The University of Vermont Medical Center also serves as a community hospital for approximately 150,000 residents in Chittenden and Grand Isle counties.

The University of Vermont Medical Center is a member of [The University of Vermont Health Network](#), a five-hospital system established to deliver high quality academic medicine to every community we serve. Our partners are:

- [The University of Vermont Health Network - Alice Hyde Medical Center](#)
- [The University of Vermont Health Network – Central Vermont Medical Center](#)
- [The University of Vermont Health Network – Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital](#)
- [The University of Vermont Health Network – Elizabethtown Community Hospital](#)

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