



## Welcome to the Vermont Medical Society

As we emerge from the COVID pandemic, Vermont Medical Society (VMS) physician and physician assistant members have very little reserves. While Vermont health care clinicians remain committed to their patients, many are burned out from an unsustainable workload, exacerbated by administrative burdens, capacity issues and severe workforce shortages. In July of 2022 the Vermont Medical Society surveyed our members about the pressing issues impacting them. *See the full survey results here: <https://vtmd.org/2022-vms-survey-results>.* Comments included:

**“Too many work hours. Too much administrative work after a 50-hour clinical week. I am a director of a clinical service and have no administrative time. All I do is put out fires and do not improve anything.”**

***“The overall morale of physicians is as low as I ever seen it.”***

## What Can Congress Do?

### Increase Practice Sustainability

- **Stabilize Medicare rates:** physicians received a 2% payment cut in 2023 and unlike other Medicare providers, do not get an automatic yearly inflation-based payment update – the physician fee schedule should include annual inflation update equal to the full Medicare economic index (MEI)
- **Permanent telehealth coverage:** Ensure ongoing Medicare telehealth flexibilities and coverage for audio-only telehealth services, including for treating Substance Use Disorder

### Reduce Administrative Burdens

- **Reduce prior authorization:** reduce prior authorization in the MA program, adopt interoperability standards and require MA and other payers adopt an electronic real-time prior authorization process
- **No Surprises Act:** Address huge implementation hurdles of Advanced Explanation of Benefits

### Ensure a Strong Workforce

- **HRSA scoring:** address HRSA formula, which disadvantages VT opportunities for loan repayment, public health service slots, GME programs
- **Expand GME slots:** especially for primary care, SUD, high-need specialties; strengthen Conrad 30
- **Address workplace violence** against healthcare workers

## Access to Care & Public Health

- Patient access: Reduce Medicare out of pocket costs; increase oversight of Medicare Advantage plans; reduce prescription drug costs
- Ensure adequate substance use prevention policies and funding
- Increase pediatric and adult mental health care services

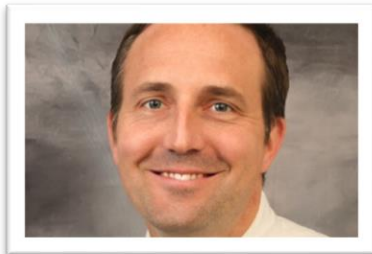
## VMS Organization

**VMS is made up of 2600 members**, which represents 2/3 of practicing physicians & PAs in Vermont, along with 460 medical students. Our members include primary care, specialists, and all employer-types (hospital-employed, FQHC, independent practice). [www.vtmd.org](http://www.vtmd.org)

### **VMS also operates the:**

- [Vermont Specialty Societies](#): Pediatrics, Family Practice, Internal Medicine, Ophthalmology, Orthopedics, Psychiatry, Anesthesiology, Surgeons, Orthopedics, Osteopathic Physicians, Addiction Medicine.
- [Vermont Practitioner Health Program](#): supports health care practitioners (MD, DO, PA, RA, AA) with impaired ability to practice medicine
- [VMS Education and Research Foundation](#): physician leadership training, student scholarship.

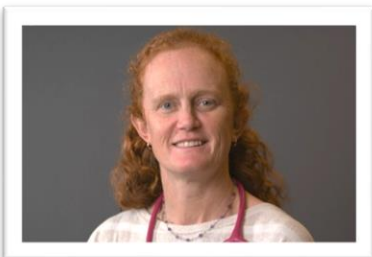
## VMS Physician Leadership



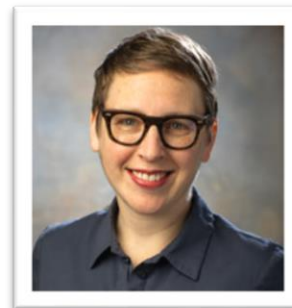
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