

The logo for Vermont Psychiatric Survivors features the text "vermont psychiatric survivors" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. The text is arranged in three lines: "vermont" on the top line, "psychiatric" on the middle line, and "survivors" on the bottom line. The background is a textured, painterly style with a color gradient from orange at the top to blue at the bottom.

vermont
psychiatric
survivors

The mission of Vermont Psychiatric Survivors is to provide advocacy and mutual support that seeks to end psychiatric coercion, oppression and discrimination.

In line with our mission, VPS asks that the state:

- **Fund the creation of 6 peer-operated crisis respite and community centers throughout the state.** Peer-operated crisis respites provide better outcomes than hospital stays, can be developed rapidly using existing peer-run networks, cost far less than inpatient care, and further Vermont's goal of developing its peer support workforce, creating job opportunities for mental health service users and survivors. These centers will serve as hospital diversion and step-down from psychiatric hospitals. Community centers staffed with peer support workers will allow individuals in our communities to access much-needed support and resources, and thus decrease the need for emergency psychiatric services.
- **Follow through on last year's efforts to increase peer-to-peer supports in the community.** Expand existing programs like the Vermont Support Line to provide 24/7 coverage, and further develop peer supports in emergency rooms to address the crisis of long waits with no care. Currently, peer support represents only 1% of the DMH budget. The demand for inpatient beds is reduced when community supports are optimized.
- **Prevent the need to increase inpatient beds by funding supported housing.** A recent study by the UVM Health Network suggests that 10 to 12 beds could be reduced statewide if barriers to discharge due to lack of community resources were eliminated. VPS's review of existing literature and our own research show that a lack of safe, affordable housing is a major contributor to the number of inpatient admissions and emergency department visits.
- **Commit to holding the Brattleboro Retreat accountable for quality of care and transparency.** Support H. 44, which calls for at least bimonthly meetings of advisory committees with non-exclusionary membership, and H. 22, requiring the Retreat to submit its budget to the Green Mountain Care Board as do the other hospitals in the state.