



For Immediate Release

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Chittenden County Opioid Alliance Project Director Hired

(Winooski, VT) – The Chittenden County Opioid Alliance (CCOA) announced that it has hired Cathy Aikman as project director. CCOA is a new collaborative partnership with local non-profit agencies, state and local government, UVM Medical Center, business leaders and community members in Chittenden County dedicated to reducing the opioid crisis and the burden it brings to our community.

Aikman previously worked at Washington County Mental Health Services as the quality assurance coordinator. She has a Master's degree in public policy and a background in project management, marketing, and program evaluation. In her new role as the backbone support for the CCOA, she will facilitate, communicate and provide the overall infrastructure to this multi-sector Collective Impact approach.

A Collective Impact approach uses five keys to success: a shared agenda, common program measures, mutually reinforcing actions, communication and a backbone organization.

“A Collective Impact approach enables successful collaboration with a variety of organizations that share a common agenda and outcomes”, said Aikman “By working collaboratively, CCOA can have the impact that a single organization or program cannot have on its own. My role is to ensure that all current efforts to address the opioid issue work synergistically, and to aid in developing new and creative solutions to the problem that we all work on collectively.”

The University of Vermont Medical Center, the Stiller Family Foundation through the United Way of Northwest Vermont and the Green Mountain Care Board through State Innovation Model funds, recently funded this Collective Impact Alliance, while the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), the principal forum for municipalities to address issues of common concern in Chittenden County, is the fiscal and administrative agent of the grant funds.

Martha Maksym, executive director of United Way Northwest Vermont said, “We recognize the clear and present need for a coordinated effort and United Way is committed to this county-wide effort to reduce the burden of opioids for our communities together.”

Four Action Teams are now organized under CCOA and are coordinating their work more closely: Community-level Prevention; Treatment Access and Recovery Support; Workforce Development and CommunitySTAT (rapid response).

The Chittenden County Opioid Alliance (CCOA) is a collaborative partnership with local non-profit agencies, state and local government, UVM Medical Center, business leaders and community members in Chittenden County to reduce the opioid crisis and the burden it brings to our community. CCOA is funded by the UVM Medical Center, the Stiller Family Foundation through the United Way of Northwest Vermont and by the Green Mountain Care Board through State Innovation Model funds.

For more information please contact Cathy Aikman, Project Director, at caikman@ccrpcvt.org or 802.861.0138.

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