



Guide for Families with Children Traveling to Out-of-State Placements



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Planning for your child's stay

There are many people that can help you in preparing for receiving out-of-state care and all the details to be considered.

Helpful Resources While Planning:

- The medical specialist that referred your child for care
- The care coordinator at your child's pediatricians' office
- A case manager through other agencies: such as the mental health designated agency, pediatric palliative care, children's integrated services, community health team, the children's specialty center at UVM Children's Hospital
- Ask to be connected with a family case manager at your child's placement
- Children with Special Health Needs (CSHN) **800-660-4427** supports children with complex, chronic health conditions and/or developmental disorders, ages birth to-21, and their families, with flexible, experienced, and proactive services.

The CSHN team of medical social workers are located throughout the state to help children, their families, and the providers who care for them. Care coordination services include:

- Helping families navigate the healthcare system
- Accessing health insurance, medical care, and services
- Identifying services and resources that may be helpful for child and family
- Organizing care conferences with various providers caring for the child
- Assisting with transition from services throughout a child's life into adulthood
- If your child is on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) have a conversation with your child's school team about your child's educational needs while they are out-of-state
- Contact Vermont Family Network about: **800-800-4005**
 - Parent to Parent- You can be confidentially matched with another parent who has shared similar experiences and/or diagnoses. VFN connects families together for care and support.
 - Medically Necessary Funding- Income eligible families of children with special health needs may apply for \$1,000 per 12 month period for unmet medically necessary needs such as equipment, medications, travel, and therapies.
 - Care Notebook- a place to record all information regarding your child's medical happenings.
- FMLA allows employees 12 weeks of unpaid time off from work to care for an immediate family member that has a serious health condition, without jeopardizing employment status. The Department of Labor can provide more information. <https://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/>



If your child's admission is an emergency, contact your Medicaid Transportation Broker as soon as possible – Call on your way to the hospital, if possible.

-See **page 9** for more details.

What about insurance?

Private Insurance

You may call the number on the back of your child's insurance card to ask any medical coverage questions. Ask if your child would qualify for one of their nurse case managers. A nurse case manager will be an important contact if coverage questions or issues come up. Be sure to ask if your insurance includes coverage for mileage and lodging.

Families can look up the out-of-state placement to see if they have a contract with Vermont Medicaid. <http://www.vtmedicaid.com/#!/providerLookup>

Vermont Medicaid Insurance

A child may receive Medicaid insurance based on either family income, or child income/resources and disability.

- Dr. Dynasaur is determined based on household income and applied for through Vermont Health Connect.
- Disabled Children's Home Care (DCHC) or Katie Beckett determination is based on the child's income and disability/condition. This is a paper application and will only begin after the birth of your child. You can include medical documentation such as reports from surgeons and specialists. You can also send a copy of the hospital discharge summary but submit the application as soon as possible. The medical reviewers may request missing medical documents to complete their determination.

Completing the Medicaid Application

If you need help completing the application, an In-Person Assistor trained and certified by Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) can help Vermonters enroll and maintain health coverage through Vermont Health Connect or Green Mountain Care.

<https://info.healthconnect.vermont.gov/sites/hcexchange/files/In%20Person%20Assister%20Directory.pdf>

A CSHN Medical Social Worker or VFN Family Support Consultant can also help you during the Medicaid application process.

Additional ways to qualify for Medicaid can be found in VFN's *Six Ways to Access Medicaid*. https://www.vermontfamilynetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/VFN_6WAYS_1_5_FINAL.pdf



The Health Insurance Premium Program (HIPP) **802-241-9315**

A Medicaid program administered by DVHA that may reimburse some or all of an enrollee's share of employer sponsored group health insurance premiums, when

DVHA determines it to be cost-effective. There has to be one member in the household Medicaid eligible and the Medicaid eligible must be covered by the employer health insurance plan. Enrollment in the HIPP is not an entitlement.

If DVHA determines that your enrollment in a group health plan is cost-effective, the person must enroll in that plan or risk having their Medicaid closed. An individual can request that a cost-effective test to be run. Medicaid is always the secondary insurance payer.

If your child's insurance is going to change, here are some things to think about:

- Know the exact stop and start dates of each insurance policy
- Communicate to all your child's medical providers and the pharmacy, the insurance change including: stop and start dates, the new insurance name, ID and Group numbers.
- If your child has Medicaid as secondary insurance, be sure to call Green Mountain Customer Support Center/VT Health Connect to provide the start date, the new insurance name, ID and Group numbers.
- Read the new health plan's guidelines. Call the new insurance company about coverage changes you notice or any other questions.
- Find the section on providers and look up all your child's providers to see if they are in-network or out-of-network. Out-of-network generally means more out of pocket cost.

Check to make sure the same providers are also VT Medicaid providers. <http://www.vtmedicaid.com/#!/providerLookup>

Medicaid transportation, lodging, & meal expenses

In addition to insurance coverage, Medicaid may help with travel expenses such as: cost of fuel, meal expenses, parking, and lodging.

When utilizing Medicaid, the request process requires extra steps. All Medicaid Transportation calls should go to Vermont Public Transportation Association (VPTA).
833-387-7200



If your child's medical appointment is 50 miles or more from your home then...

your child's primary doctor or referring specialist has to fill out the *Out-of-Area/ Out-of-State Transportation Physician Referral Form* and send it to DVHA for prior approval **at least TWO weeks before** you travel.

On the *Physician Referral Form*, the doctor will need to check **Yes**, if lodging is necessary. Medicaid generally pays for overnight (least costly, medically appropriate) lodging for appointments before 10am. When your child is in patient in a hospital, one parent can stay in the hospital with them. If it is medically necessary for the second parent to be there, Medicaid may pay for a hotel room for the second parent. The referring physician will need to outline that medical necessity. The final determination of that eligibility will be made by DVHA staff.

It is recommended that you follow up with your child's doctor to confirm the *Physician Referral Form* and the *Clinical Prior Authorization* have been completed and sent to DVHA. Your child's transportation request cannot be approved until both the *MD transportation referral* and *clinical authorization* forms have been approved.

Medicaid Transportation Broker

Once the *Physician Referral Form* has been approved your Medicaid Transportation Broker will contact you about the trip and any further information required. The broker will let you know when travel and lodging is in place.



For eligible Medicaid clients, DVHA will set up and provide the transportation to necessary medical services when there is no transportation available in the household. For trips that meet Medicaid eligibility requirements, your regional public transit provider will make trip arrangements. Each trip is arranged using the most suitable and cost effective mode.

If your car is not operating or your partner needs the car for work, you will need to fill out the *Medicaid Vehicle Exception* form. An additional form needs to be completed by your partner's employer to verify the work schedule and inability to provide the ride during work hours: *Transportation Employment Exception Verification Form*.

Link to *Medicaid Transportation Forms* and *Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Manual*: <https://dvha.vermont.gov/for-providers/transportation/>.

Lodging

Is there an affordable lodging option when my child is a patient?

Out-of-state accommodations can be expensive, there can be options for patient families which are less expensive. Call ahead to your child's placement facility for recommendations and any lodging discounts. Some out-of-state placement facilities have lodging on site or very near, at lower prices.

- All trips will need to have prior authorization by the broker for hardship mileage reimbursement.

Ronald McDonald Houses are for families that travel far from home to be with their child who is seriously ill or injured. Locations are all across the country. Please note: some houses are diagnosis specific.

Visit: rmhc.org/ronald-mcdonald-house to see if there is a location near your child's placement facility.



How to be reimbursed for travel expenses

Hardship Mileage Program- Medicaid will reimburse members using their own vehicle for medical trips totaling more than 50 miles per week or more than 215 miles per month.

You are responsible for completing the mileage form received from your transportation broker, plus keeping copies of your itemized receipts for lodging, meals, fuel, and tolls. You will need to get the mileage form to the Medicaid Transportation Broker within 30 days of your return home.

- Medicaid will only reimburse a food receipt that is itemized.
- You will not be reimbursed for a receipt that only states the total amount of the meal.
- You will not be reimbursed for grocery store or convenience store purchases.

Meal Expenses Reimbursement

Your transportation broker should explain the reimbursement process to you before the trip happens. You (and your child when not inpatient) may receive (with prior approval) meal reimbursement for meal at the current IRS meal reimbursement rate.

Meal Reimbursement Rates:			
Per Meal	In-State	Out-of-State	
Breakfast	\$5.00	\$6.25	You must leave your home before 5:30am
Lunch	\$6.00	\$7.25	Only after overnight stay or you are 6 hrs. away
Dinner	\$12.85	\$18.50	Returning home after 6:30pm only

**Ask your hotel if they provide
a free shuttle to the hospital or other locations.**

Additional Transportation Resources

Patient Airlift Services (PALS)

631-694-PALS (7257)

Volunteer medical flights and free air transportation.

Angel Flight

800-549-9980

Angel Flight arranges free flights for those requiring access to medical care.

What is considered a medical flight?

A medical flight is for patients and family members that can not fly on a commercial airline. Medical flights must be arranged in advance and have a physician's approval of medical necessity.

Medical flights are not for emergency situations. Patients must be able to travel in a small aircraft without access to bathrooms for the duration of the flight.

How to reduce some of that travel stress

- Plan your travel course ahead of time.
- Program your GPS with your travel destination address.
- And/or, bring a map to use for reference while traveling.
- Keep cash ready for upcoming toll booths.



What should we pack?

For residential placements, call ahead to see if there are specific items to bring or items that are not allowed.

- ◇ Your child's favorite items
- ◇ Cash and quarters for parking, interstate toll, and laundry
- ◇ Comfortable clothes
- ◇ Sneakers
- ◇ Slippers/slip on shoes to wear in the room; great when you need to get up quick
- ◇ Warm clothes (ICU can be cold)
- ◇ A sleeping pad
- ◇ Your 'Care Notebook' from Vermont Family Network, or a notebook to record questions you have for the doctors/nurses and notes from medical visits
- ◇ Baby wipes- some facilities use dry pads that you have to wet with water. If you prefer wipes, it is best to bring your own
- ◇ Laundry detergent (pods are easy to travel with). Detergent is typically not sold in hospitals
- ◇ Tide-to-Go Instant Stain Remover in case you need to do a quick wash of something in your room

Hospital supports:

Child Life Specialists

You can ask for a Child Life Specialist if someone has not visited your child during your stay. Their purpose is to:

- Help patients develop ways to cope with fear, anxiety, separation and adjustment to the hospital experience giving special consideration to each child's family, culture, and stage of development.
- Provide consultation to the health care team regarding developmental and psycho-social issues
- Provide preparation and individualized support before and after medical procedures
- Facilitate developmentally appropriate play, including medical play, at the bedside, in activity rooms and in clinic areas
- Initiate tutoring services

Chaplaincy

Most facilities have chaplains available for emotional and spiritual support, when requested.



If you have time for additional planning...

It would be helpful for you to call a meeting with your child's care team. Having everyone in one room to discuss your child's medical care and answer any questions that you have can be valuable.

* Request one of the care team members to make a connection with the social work department for you.

You should leave this meeting knowing whom you can contact with questions.

Vermont Mental Health Designated Agencies by Region

Agency	Region	Counties included
Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC)	Addison	Addison county (except Granville and Hancock)
Northwestern Counseling and Support Services (NCSS) (802)524-6554	Northwest	Franklin and Grand Isle counties
HowardCenter (HC) (802)488-6000	Chittenden	Chittenden County
Lamoille County Mental Health (LCMH) (802)888-5026	Lamoille	Lamoille County (includes children's services for Craftsbury, Greensboro, Hardwick, Stannard and Woodbury)
Health Care & Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern VT (HCRS) (802)886-4500	Southeast	Windham and Windsor counties (except Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon and Stockbridge)
Northeast Kingdom Human Services (NKHS) (802)334-6744	Northeast	Caledonia, Essex and Orleans counties (except Craftsbury, Greensboro, Hardwick and Stannard for children's services)
Clara Martin Center (CMC) (802)728-4466	Orange	Orange county (except Orange, Washington and Williamstown; includes Granville, Hancock, Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon and Stockbridge)
Rutland Mental Health Services (RMHS) (802)747-3588	Rutland	Rutland County
United Counseling Services (UCS) (802)442-5491	Bennington	Bennington County
Washington County Mental Health Services (WCMH) (802)229-0591	Washington	Washington county (includes Orange, Washington and Williamstown; except Woodbury for children's services)

Useful contact information



Vermont Family Network (VFN)

600 Blair Park Road, Ste 240, Williston, VT 05465
1-800-800-4005

VFN's mission is to empower and support all Vermont families of children with special needs by Giving a Strong Start, Lifting Family Voices, and Advancing Inclusive Communities.



Children with Special Health Needs (CSHN) Main Office

108 Cherry Street, PO Box 70, Burlington, VT 05402
1-800-660-4427

CSHN is a public health program for families, health care providers, and communities. Supporting Vermont children and youth with special health needs by ensuring comprehensive, community-based and family-centered services.

UVM Children's Hospital

111 Colchester Avenue, Main Campus, East Pavilion,
Level 4, Burlington, VT 05401
1-802-847-8200



UVM Children's Hospital's mission is to improve the health of the people in the communities we serve by integrating patient care, education, and research in a caring environment.



How do I talk effectively with my child's doctors and nurses?

Some helpful resources are:

Effective Communication in Children's Hospitals - <http://www.patientprovidercommunication.org/pdf/25.pdf>

A Handbook of Resources for Parents, Patients, and Practitioners

Talking with Your Child's Doctor -

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/talk-doctor.html>
Information on how to maximize your time with your child's doctor.



[https://
www.healthvermont.gov/
family/special-health-needs](https://www.healthvermont.gov/family/special-health-needs)



[https://www.uvmhealth.org/
medcenter/pages/departments-and-
programs/childrens-hospital.aspx](https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/pages/departments-and-programs/childrens-hospital.aspx)



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www.VermontFamilyNetwork.org

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