

SASH is a caring partnership among Vermont [Nonprofit Housing Providers](#) | [Area Agencies on Aging](#) | [Home Health Providers](#) | [Mental Health Providers](#) | [Vermont Hospitals](#) & Primary Care Providers



SASH nurse consultant and health educator Kristi Poehlmann BSN, RN, (right) and University of Connecticut professor Amy Kenefick Moore PhD, APRN presented at the Integrative Healthcare Symposium in New York City last month about the key role nurse coaches (e.g., SASH wellness nurses) play in promoting the health and well-being of people with with chronic conditions.

A Proven Approach to Chronic-Disease Management

SASH plays a major role throughout Vermont helping Medicare recipients keep chronic conditions under control, thereby preventing the need for medical intervention and enabling them to stay healthy and at home.

Virtually all SASH participants have one or more chronic conditions. The **five most prevalent chronic conditions among SASH participants** are high blood pressure, arthritis, depression, general visual decline, and heart conditions.



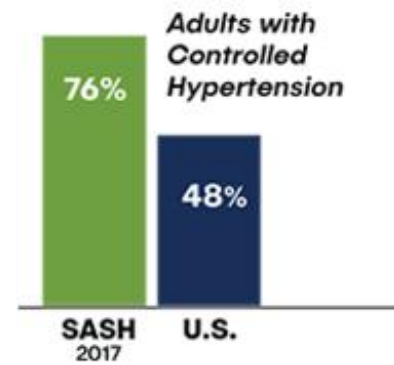
As a care model that works through partnerships to coordinate and deliver programs and services where people live, SASH is uniquely positioned to educate participants about their chronic conditions and how to keep them under control on their own, at home.

The statewide network of SASH partners is actively involved in these efforts as well. In St. Albans, for example, the [Northwestern Medical Center](#) and [Northwestern Counseling & Support Services](#) have teamed up to offer a free, six-week "Healthier Living Workshop" focused on self-managing chronic diseases. The series started March 12 at Four Winds, a SASH site and [Cathedral Square](#) residence. An identical program will run March 27-May 1 at the [Rutland Regional Medical Center](#). Visit myhealthyvt.org to learn more.

SASH Takes on Chronic Hypertension -- and Wins

The longest-running SASH initiative targeting chronic disease is the highly successful "Evidence-Based Hypertension Self-Management Program" for SASH participants with high blood pressure.

The program involves consistent blood-pressure monitoring and record-keeping, with participants either attend on-site clinics or use personal blood-pressure monitors provided by SASH. Readings are tracked and shared with each person's primary-care provider, and participants take part in programs at the housing site such as nutrition evaluations, health coaching and goal setting.



And it WORKS. More than 75% of SASH participants with hypertension have readings considered "in control" by industry standards -- well above the national average of 48%. Of these, 70% achieved an average reduction of 15 mmHg in their systolic blood pressure in three to six months after starting the program.

Statewide Access to Evidence-Based Workshops

SASH provides access to classes throughout Vermont that are proven to help people manage their chronic conditions. We have a cadre of 70+ SASH staff throughout the state who are trained and certified to lead these proven programs, providing the classes right where their participants live! The table below shows the number of classes offered over just six months in 2017 and the number of participants who completed the classes. Every county in Vermont is represented in the totals.

Evidence-Based Program	# of classes statewide	# of people completing class
Tai Chi	43	126
Matter of Balance	12	62
Healthy Living	9	49
Diabetes	13	90
Chronic Pain	7	42

Hypertension Self-Management: A Success Story

In summer 2016, "Teresa," a 79-year-old SASH participant living in affordable housing was at home recovering from a fall. A SASH wellness nurse visited Teresa as part of the routine "transitions care" that

SASH provides.

During her visit, the nurse reconciled Teresa's medications in an attempt to root out possible causes for the fall. In the process, she discovered that Teresa's blood-pressure medicine was missing and that Teresa was confused about how to take her medications in general. The nurse also checked Teresa's blood pressure, which came in at 172/90 -- well over what is considered "controlled."



Following the **SASH protocol for self-management of high blood pressure**, the SASH team educated Teresa about her condition, created a regular schedule for blood-pressure readings, shared the results with her primary-care physician, and provided health coaching on nutrition, exercise, goal-setting and other good-health habits.

Having all the tools needed to successfully manage her hypertension, Teresa got her blood pressure under control in less than a year. Readings of 138/74 are now her norm. She continues to successfully manage her chronic condition on her own, at home, thanks to routine monitoring, tracking and regular communication between her SASH team and her primary-care provider.

Professional Development Opportunities

Refer to the [Statewide SASH Calendar](#) for details about these opportunities.

- March 20 - **Tai Chi Skillbuilder** (Tai Chi Vermont), Rutland
- March 22 - **Supporting Individuals with Behavioral Health Conditions Using Multidisciplinary Care Management within the Community** (New England Qin-QiO), webinar
- March 22 - **Tai Chi Skillbuilder** (Tai Chi Vermont), Barre
- March 22, 23, 29 & 30 - **Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) Leader training** (UVM Health Network), Bennington
- March 23 - **Care Coordination Core Skills Training** (OneCare Vermont), Burlington
- March 26 - **2018 Gerontology Symposium: *Caregiving for Persons Living with Dementia: Families and Professionals Working Together*** (UVM Center on Aging), Burlington
- March 26 - **Interdisciplinary Grand Rounds - Dementia Care in Vermont - A Prescription for Hope** (OneCareVT), Burlington & via WebEx
- March 27 - **Community Leader Webinar: An Extension - Part 2** (Tri State Learning Collaborative on Aging), webinar
- March 27 - **Vermont Blueprint for Health Conference**, Burlington
- March 27 - **Nursing Solutions: Improving Caregiver Strain through Science and Model Interventions** (ASA & Parkinson's Foundation), webinar
- March 29 - **Tai Chi Skillbuilder** (Tai Chi Vermont), South Burlington
- March 29 - **Safe Injection Sites: Part of the Opiate Solution?** (Howard Center's Spring Community Education Series), Burlington
- April 3, 10, 17 & May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 - **WRAP: Wellness Recovery Action Plan** (myhealthylv.org), Williston

- April 5, 6, 12 & 13 - **Diabetes Self-Management Program (DSMP) Leader training** (UVM Health Network), Waterbury
- April 7 - **Integrative Pain Management Conference: National Experts, Local Focus** (UVM Integrative Health), Burlington
- April 11 - **FreshStart Leader training** (UVM Health Network), Rutland
- April 11 - **Vermont Geriatrics Conference** (AHEC), Colchester
- April 16-20 - **WRAP Facilitator Training** (Copeland Center for Wellness and Recovery), Waterbury
- April 19 - **Welcome to Vermont: Four Stories of Resettled Identity** (Howard Center Spring Community Education Series), Burlington
- April 21&22 - **NAMI Provider Program Teacher Training**, Rutland
- April 28 - **Mental Illness and Recovery Workshop Teacher Training** (NAMI), Williston
- April 28 - **Celebrate World Tai Chi & Qi Gong Day** (Tai Chi Vermont), Shelburne
- April 30, May 1, 2, & 3 - **Substance Abuse Prevention Skills Training (SAPST)** (VT Dept. of Health ADAP & SAMHSA), 5 hour online prior to 4 days in person in Waterbury
- May 8, 9, 15 & 16 - **Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) Leader training** (UVM Health Network), Saint Johnsbury

SASH Online Resources

SASH Website:

For the most up-to-date contact list and referral forms, visit sashVT.org.

SASH Forum: For current training information as well as staff tools and resources, visit the [Forum](#) on the SASH website.

SASH Job Opportunities: Learn about [available positions](#) with SASH organizations statewide.



Keep in touch!

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