

**GMCB Public Comment****Submit Date:** 3/15/2023**Name:** Mary Alice Bisbee, B.A., M. S., Human Services/Gerontology**Topic:** UVMMC and mental health plan**Comment:** What should GMCB do with UVMMC and its lack of a mental health plan?

Having just read the comments of Ken Liberto, Anne Donahue, and others and as well as being a psychiatric survivor who spent one week at the old Waterbury State Hospital in 1971 before being transferred to what was then called the Mary Fletcher Hospital Baird 6 unit, and having recovered and worked as a medical social worker in several VT hospitals and nursing homes during my working life, I believe my comments should have some validity as well. Now at age 86, and having gone to the CVMC Emergency Room on a few occasions lately to be told I was having "an anxiety attack" and sent home, I also am concerned about the lack of both inpatient and outpatient services available for former, current, young and old mental health patients. The suicidal young, indeed, deserve prompt, appropriate services, and UVMMC which is now in charge of the \$\$\$ should meet their responsibility to either build or reconfigure beds at either the MFUnit or CVMC, using Ken Liberto's suggestions. Covid and the extra push of climate changes that are now happening should also make this a strong priority. Yes, the GMCBoard should use your authority to mandate UVMMC to use their \$\$ to start solving this problem rather than building a huge new outpatient surgery center. Of course, a surgery center will be more profitable to UVMMC, but until the federal government provides more socialized healthcare solutions at the federal level by taxing upper-income Americans in a responsible manner to pay for universal healthcare, we should hold our not-for-profit UVMMC's feet to the fire about their commitment to expanding mental health resources, perhaps with a specialized mental health ER at CVMC. We are now able to see that privatizing Medicare does not work, either! After all, I believe Vermonters at the State House and elsewhere have agreed that mental health problems should be considered to have the same priority as ALL physical health problems. The brain is still considered a valuable part of our bodies! Thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments. Mary Alice Bisbee, BA, MS, Human Services/Gerontology

**Post Comment:** Yes