

Strengthening our communities by  
improving the health of all our neighbors.



**BATTENKILL  
VALLEY  
HEALTH CENTER**  
*Established 2014*

Medical • Dental

Counseling Services

# Strategic Plan 2026-2028

## Battenkill Valley Health Center

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**Board Approved 12.18.2025**

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# Who are we?

Battenkill Valley Health Center Inc. is a nonprofit federally qualified health center (FQHC) that provides affordable, quality primary, and preventive care for all.

## Our Mission

To provide compassionate, comprehensive, affordable healthcare.

## Our Vision

To increase health equity by expanding access to affordable high-quality healthcare and fostering community engagement.

## About Us

BVHC's designation as an FQHC is special as it is a one-stop comprehensive health center providing medical, dental, and counseling services to all, regardless of ability to pay. BVHC offers a Sliding Fee Discount Program for eligible patients who are uninsured, underinsured, or have a high-deductible health insurance plan. Vermont Medicaid, Medicare, and most commercial insurances are accepted.

## Our Leadership

Kayla Davis, MSW, Chief Executive Officer

## Our Board

2026-2027 Members: James Blanchard, Christine Bongartz, MaryAnn Carlson, Brian Cunningham, Carol Gottlieb, Peter King, Carol Kirkland, Russell Leslie, James Martinez, Sebastian Massey, Joseph O'Dea, Kimberly Tenner



# Our Values

We believe the following value statements are essential to our mission.

## *Comprehensive Care:*

Treating the whole person throughout all stages of life has a positive, long-term impact on individuals, families, and communities.

## *Employee Well-being:*

We invest in our employees by providing learning and training opportunities that make BVHC an employer of choice and joyful place to work.

## *Equal Access:*

Every person, regardless of ability to pay, has the right to receive high-quality, reliable, and confidential healthcare.

## *Excellence:*

We strive for excellence in all aspects of our healthcare.

## *Integrity:*

We demonstrate compassion and empathy, recognizing the individuality of our patients. We employ high ethical standards that include honesty and fairness.

## *Partnership:*

The BVHC team establishes partnerships that enhance our communities.



*BVHC Board Members*



# SWOT Analysis

The purpose of this exercise is to assess our organization's position before deciding on any new strategies. Input was gathered from the staff and stakeholders of BVHC in September and October 2025.

**SWOT** stands for “**S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats.”

It is a way of summarizing the current state of our organization to help devise a plan for the future; building upon existing strengths, addressing existing weaknesses, expanding opportunities, and defending against threats.

Strengths and weaknesses address internal factors, while opportunities and threats address external factors.

## **Our Greatest Strengths**

1. Caring and dedicated staff
2. Offering many services under one roof
3. Positive work culture

## **Our Biggest Opportunities**

1. Creating efficiencies to help all
2. Increase support staff
3. Expand services
4. Support growth and development of staff

## **Our Greatest Weaknesses**

1. Staff turnover
2. Technology support on-site
3. Workplace training

## **Our Biggest Threats**

1. Lack of space to expand needed services
2. Cuts to patient and health center resources
3. Not having enough staff to do the work

## STRENGTHS BUILD, ENHANCE

Veterans dental assistance    Fiscally sound    Sliding scale    Communication

Impeccable reputation    Community outreach    Employees are valued & embraced    Staff genuinely cares about our patients

Strong, clear values    Desire to grow & learn    Talented staff    Culture of support & positivity    Staff care about each other - feels like family

Targeted outreach    We help people through Patient Necessity Fund    Comradery & collaboration    Services all under one roof

Good compensation & benefits    Strong leadership    Work-life balance & flexibility    BH expansion meeting community needs

Celebrate birthdays & years of service for staff    Staff is mission driven    Supportive board    Invest in professional growth

Fun work environment - spirit week, holidays, staff appreciation events    Offering free-to-patient services    Dedicated & motivated to serve the community



## WEAKNESSES RESOLVE, REDUCE

Need more providers    No lab or phlebotomist    We're hard to get to for those without a vehicle    Can't always get a person when calling

On-boarding process    Collecting payment at time of service    Not accepting new patients    Slow responsiveness to tech & ops needs

Policy enforcement    Staff turnover    Retention of frontline staff    Clinical team not cohesive

Not enough IT support on-site    Training of staff    Not enough staff to meet increasing demands    Employees not doing their job accurately & completely affects the chain of care

Communication    Not enough staff cross-training    "Silo-ing" across departments

Not enough space    Leveraging technology/portal to assist with tasks

Showing respect & support for one another    Callback times    Professional development opportunities



AI to work smarter not harder    Expand collaboration with organizations & schools

Leverage technology to better serve patients & staff    Expand - Bennington & staff    Employee recognition

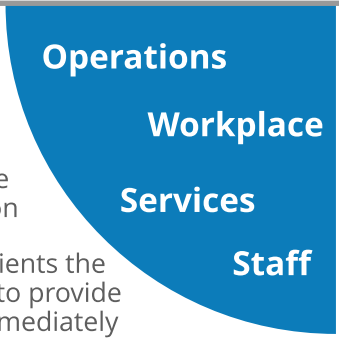
Improve callback times    Electronic documents to help with on-boarding    Provide patients the opportunity to provide feedback immediately through kiosk

Grow nutrition insecurity program    Offer incentives to increase retention    Pharmacy in Arlington/on-site    BH team to support staff to promote collaboration, respect, & communication

Community-based care - go where the patients are    Marketing & advertising    Support professional growth & development    Offer expanded hours for care

Dedicate time for peers to have access to one another    Offer employee trainings

Increase staff    Offer mobile services    Promote within    Blow our horn



## OPPORTUNITIES EXPLOIT, EXPAND

Lack of space to expand any further    Patients can't see specialists in a timely manner    No qualified providers in the area

We only have one MD    Technology advancements that staff aren't trained for    Cybersecurity challenges

Not enough revenue - federal funding uncertainty    Changing weather patterns    Cuts to Medicare & Medicaid

More demand than we can address    Not hiring enough staff    Cuts to patients' resources    Staff turnover

Lack of staff cohesion    No grant opportunity to open Bennington    Lack of providers    Negative behavior of some staff

Recruitment is difficult due to challenges beyond our control    Provider burnout

## THREATS AVOID, THWART



# Stakeholders

When talking with community stakeholders, we wanted to know how they would describe BVHC, what they have to say about BVHC, and their thoughts on planning considerations for the future.

Interviewees included a range of stakeholders - board members, community partners, donors, funders, public officials, and others\*.



**Natalie Basil**, Executive Director of Greater Bennington Community Services

**Jamie Blanchard**, Board Member, Lieutenant with Manchester Police Department

**Chris Bongartz**, Board Member, Retired Registered Nurse

**Bill Bryan**, Arlington Food Shelf

**Margae Diamond**, Executive Director of Turning Point Center

**Carol Gottlieb, PhD.**, Board Member, Retired Psychologist

**Deanne Lacoste**, Principal of Arlington Schools

**Sebastian Massey**, Board Member, Healthcare Technology

**Lorna Mattern**, Executive Director of United Counseling Services

**Joe O'Dea, Esq.**, Board Member, Retired Attorney

**Scott Ross**, Monthly Donor

**Russell Sleigh**, Monthly Donor

**Jim Trimarchi**, Director of Planning at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center

**Kay and Mike Wisniewski**, Donors/Foundation Trustees

\* More than 70% of those interviewed are patients.

## Here's what they had to say ~

*"From entering the building to entering the exam room, everyone is so welcoming and caring. We appreciate all that the team at BVHC does to care for the community."*

*"BVHC is a health center that is devoted to providing services (dental, mental health, medical) with a strong focus on the community."*

*"I'd love to see more Community Health Workers added to the team to address the specific social needs of young families, the sandwich generation, and the geriatric population."*

*"We believe in the work that BVHC is doing and want this special health center to remain here for our community long after we are gone."*

*"Expansion of services and locations; structuring it in a way that is most cost effective, efficient, and can serve more people - that's what BVHC does."*

*"BVHC provides high-quality integrated care to rural Vermonters. They are well-run, efficient, and set high expectations for staff."*



BVHC hosts VeggieVanGo events each month



Enjoying Christmas in July at the Farmers' Market



Toddler time at the Martha Canfield Library



# Strategic Priorities

The Strategic Plan is organized around five high-level priorities: Growth, Services, Operations, Facilities, and Funding and Sustainability. Within each priority area, the Board has identified three key goals to guide organizational focus and decision-making.

## Growth Strategic Goals

1. Increase Patient Visits
2. Expand Partnerships
3. Recruitment

### Increase Patient Visits

Schedules of existing providers will be strategically optimized to maximize productivity within our current space. To encourage and reward increased patient visits, management will explore productivity-based compensation models that align with organizational goals and provider satisfaction. Recognizing the physical limitations of our facility, BVHC will also explore field-based placement of medical and mental health services, meeting patients where they are and reducing barriers to care.

### Expand Partnerships

BVHC is honored to participate in the supervised clinical education of students from a variety of colleges and universities. We have successfully hosted dental and medical students and look forward to expanding these opportunities to include our behavioral health department. Exposure to rural healthcare settings plays a critical role in student's professional development and, in many cases, influences their decision to practice in communities like ours. BVHC will continue to strengthen partnerships that allow us to deliver care beyond our walls, including collaborations with nursing homes, schools, recovery centers, and other community-based settings.

### Recruitment of Providers and Support Staff

BVHC recognizes successful recruitment and retention are essential to sustainable growth. We are committed to attracting highly qualified providers and support staff who are motivated to invest their skills and expertise in advancing our mission. BVHC will foster a supportive workplace culture where expectations are clear, ongoing training and professional development are prioritized, work environments enable staff to perform at their best, and employees feel genuinely valued and appreciated.

# Services Strategic Goals

1. Expand Mental Health
2. Expand Specialty Services
3. Expand Dental Services

## Expand Mental Health

To respond to the growing demand for mental health care in our community, and to reduce the barriers preventing patients from accessing these service, BVHC will continue to explore innovative ways to extend care beyond our clinic walls. By meeting patients where they are, we can provide more timely, accessible, and meaningful support.

This includes increasing our presence in schools, senior living communities, recovery centers, and other community-based settings, ensuring mental health care is integrated into the places where people live, learn, and heal.



## Expand Specialty Services

Grant opportunities provide BVHC with the ability to broaden the range of services available to our patients. The BVHC management team will continue to actively research and pursue new funding opportunities to ensure our programming and clinical offerings align with the evolving needs of our community. Priority areas for expansion include, but are not limited to, vision services and screenings, physical therapy, and the development of an urgent care model. To strengthen and inform these efforts, BVHC will build upon its already strong relationships with specialty practices, fostering collaboration which enhances care coordination and expands access for our patients.

## Expand Dental

BVHC currently operates four state-of-the-art dental operatories, providing comprehensive oral health care to patients beginning at age one. As access to pediatric dental specialty services remains limited in our region, BVHC will explore opportunities to expand the range of services available to pediatric patients. To address this gap, we will engage with fellow FQHCs who operate school-based dental clinics and mobile community hygiene programs, evaluating the feasibility of similar models to extend dental services beyond our walls and improve access for children and families in our community.





# Strategic Priorities



## Operations Strategic Goals

1. Internal Systems
2. Staff Retention
3. Administrative Support

### Internal Systems

Ensuring new staff are set up for success from the start is a critical component of maintaining a safe, efficient, and high-functioning organization. BVHC's human resources team will work to streamline the onboarding process and standardize subsequent trainings to support consistency and preparedness across roles. In parallel, we will review and improve key operational procedures, including our telephone system, new patient intake process, and internal communication workflows, to enhance efficiency and reduce barriers to care. As BVHC continues to grow in staff and locations, investing in a secure, user-friendly internal communication platform will be essential to enable timely, direct, and effective collaboration across the organization.

### Staff Retention

BVHC remains deeply committed to acknowledging the value of our staff, and retaining our dedicated workforce, through competitive wages and comprehensive benefit packages. To further support longevity, policies such as the Combined Time Off (CTO) policy will be reviewed and updated to ensure the policies meaningfully reward long-term commitment to the organization. In addition, BVHC will explore systems encouraging professional growth and internal advancement, while supporting staff who wish to build long-term careers within the organization. The goal is to continue to strengthen the overall capacity and resilience of the BVHC team.

### Administrative Support

As the organization continues to grow and individual roles become increasingly complex, the need for additional administrative support has been identified. The Board is committed to supporting administrative staff by providing resources to appropriately off-load responsibilities, allowing staff to focus on their core functions and maintain efficient, effective operations. In addition, this position will play an important role in reducing employee burnout and supporting long-term staff sustainability.

# Facilities Strategic Goals

1. Building and Equipment
2. Expand Further into Service Area
3. Mobile Facility

## Building and Equipment Maintenance/Expansion

BVHC has diligently cared for and closely monitored our buildings and equipment to maintain their safety, functionality, and integrity. To provide comprehensive, high-quality care, key pieces of equipment must work seamlessly together. Keeping our technology and equipment current ensures we can deliver the best possible services to our patients. Moving forward, we will continue to explore ways to maximize the use of our existing building footprints while identifying creative and strategic opportunities for expansion to support the growth and evolving needs of our community.



## Expand Further into Our Service Area

During the strategic retreat, the Board established an ad hoc Real Estate Committee tasked with monitoring the local market and identifying potential sites throughout our service area to better meet patients' needs. By partnering with a local real estate agent, and remaining open to creative solutions, BVHC aims to strategically expand its footprint, improve access to care and ensure our services are convenient for the communities we serve.



## Mobile Facility

Recognizing the limitations of expanding solely within our existing buildings, BVHC will explore alternative models for delivering care by visiting fellow FQHCs who operate school-based clinics and mobile programs. Evaluating the feasibility of a mobile facility will allow us to expand access to a range of services beyond our walls. Building and strengthening partnerships within our service area will be critical to this effort. As a trusted leader and resource in the community, BVHC looks forward to leveraging these relationships to increase access and serve more patients where they live, learn, and work.



# Strategic Priorities



## Funding and Sustainability Strategic Goals

1. Maximize Revenue
2. Fundraising & Development
3. Create an Endowment

### Maximize Revenue

As highlighted in other strategic priorities, BVHC remains committed to expanding services to both increase revenue and improve access to essential care within our service area. To support this goal, staff will receive training and resources to optimize collections at the time of service. BVHC will also focus on increasing patient visits, filling schedules to capacity, and reducing downtime by fostering teamwork and operational efficiencies across all departments. Collectively, these initiatives will help lower the overall cost per visit while maximizing revenue, ensuring the financial sustainability needed to continue serving our community.

### Fundraising and Development

BVHC is committed to diversifying the ways donors can support our mission, recognizing that giving is most meaningful when it aligns with individual preferences. By offering multiple giving options, we aim to encourage broader and sustained participation. Expanding planned giving opportunities will allow donors to make lasting contributions supporting both current initiatives and the future growth of the organization. Maintaining clear, direct communication with donors - keeping them informed about our work and current needs - is a priority. By cultivating relationships grounded in transparency and trust, and BVHC can foster long-term partnerships leading to sustained and increased support for the communities we serve.

### Create an Endowment

An endowment is a charitable fund composed of money or property that is invested to generate income for designated purposes. Establishing an endowment at BVHC would provide donors with the opportunity to make a lasting impact, with their gifts invested to support the organization over the long term. Annual distributions from the endowment could contribute to BVHC's operating budget, providing a reliable source of funding and adding another meaningful way for donors to support the vital work we do in the community.



# Summary

## Strategic Plan 2026-2028

Battenkill Valley Health Center

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12.18.2025





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