

Vermont's new healthcare law enacted May 26, 2011 –
“A Universal & Unified Health System” (Act 48)

Selected quotes from the law:

The state will create Green Mountain Care “to provide, as a public good, comprehensive, affordable, high-quality, publicly financed health care coverage for all Vermont residents in a seamless and equitable manner regardless of income, assets, health status, or availability of health coverage.”

- This statement meets the principle of **Equity** (Public Good) and **Universality**.

The state will “achieve health care reform through the coordinated efforts of an independent board, state government, and the citizens of Vermont, with input from health care professionals, businesses, and members of the public.”

- This statement meets the principle of **Accountability, Transparency** and **Participation**.

*** * * Healthcare Is a Human Right PRINCIPLES * * ***

- **Universality** is the principles that human rights must be afforded to everyone, without exception. It is by virtue of being human, alone, that every person is entitled to human rights.
- **Equity** is the principle that every person is entitled to the same ability to enjoy human rights. Healthcare resources and services must be distributed and accessed according to people’s needs, not according to payment, privilege or any other factor. Disparities and discrimination in healthcare must be eliminated, as must any barriers resulting from policies or practices.
- **Accountability** is the principle that mechanisms must exist to enable enforcement of human rights. It is not enough merely to recognize human rights. There must be means of holding the government accountable for failing to meet human rights standards.
- **Transparency** is the principle that government must be open with regard to information and decision-making processes. People must be able to know how public institutions needed to protect human rights are managed and run.
- **Participation** is the principle that government must engage people and support their participation in decisions about how their human rights are ensured.

In other words:

1. Every person is entitled to comprehensive, quality healthcare.
2. Systemic barriers must not prevent people from accessing necessary healthcare.
3. The cost of financing the healthcare system must be shared fairly.
4. The healthcare system must be transparent in design, efficient in operation and accountable to the people it serves.
5. As a human right, a healthcare system that satisfies these principles is the responsibility of government to ensure.