

Full Agenda Morning

Time	Event		
7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Conference Registration		
7:30 - 8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast/Exhibitor Availability		
8:30 - 8:45 a.m.	Welcoming Remarks and Updates from the Health Department Patsy Kelso		
8:45 - 9:45 a.m.	Immunizations in 2025: Protecting Health Along the Storm Front Robert Hopkins, MD, MACP		
9:45 - 10:45 a.m.	When Flu Flew the Coop: Current Status of Avian Influenza A (H5N1) in Livestock, Wildlife and Humans Emily Buskey, DVM, David Sausville and Natalie Kwit, DVM MPH, DACVPM		
10:45 - 11:00 a.m.	Transition Break with Refreshments/Exhibitor Availability		
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Session I	Adirondack ABC	Adirondack D	Montpelier
	I Was a Mother who was Skeptical of Vaccines for 12 Years. How Did I Change My Mind? Heather Simpson and Lydia Greene	Tracking Trouble: Innovations in Infectious Disease Surveillance from Sewers to Syndemics Yvonne Boire, BSN, RN, Lynn Blevins, MD, MPH, and Daniel Daltry, MSW	Introduction to Infodemiology: The Study of the Spread of Information Julie Corwin, MA

Full Agenda Afternoon

Time	Event		
12:00 - 1:15 p.m.	Lunch Buffet		
1:15 - 1:30 p.m.	Transition Break/Exhibitor Availability		
1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Session II	Vaccine Confidence Benjamin Lee, MD, Sarah Nowak, PhD, Breena Holmes, MD, Heidi Schumacher, MD	Immunization Program 101 Meredith Plumpton, RN and Katie Mahuron, RN, MPH	Bugs and Bunnies: One Health Investigations in Vermont Natalie Kwit, DVM, MPH, DACVPM and Katie Strelau, PhD
2:30 - 2:45 pm	Transition Break with Refreshments/Exhibitor Availability		
2:45 -3:45 p.m. Session III	From Viruses to Superbugs: Unraveling Infectious Disease Outbreaks and Investigations Laura Ann Nicolai, MPH, Christine Connor, MSN, Allison Lafferty, MD, John Davey, PhD	Immunization Registry/ Immunization Data Craig Morrill, MPH, Jason Pope, BS, CMA and Denise Kall, PhD	Vaccine Coalition Private Meeting
3:45 p.m.	Evaluation and Adjourn		

Conference Session Details

8:45 - 9:45 a.m. | **Plenary I**

Immunizations in 2025: Protecting Health Along the Storm Front

Dr. Robert Hopkins

We are in a challenging time and space to provide vaccine protection to the individuals and families in our communities. In this presentation, I will review current challenges, opportunities and communication techniques to help participants 'arrive at the goal' of providing evidence-based immunization to their patients.

9:45 - 10:45 a.m. | **Plenary II**

When Flu Flew the Coop: Current Status of Avian Influenza A(H5N1) in Livestock, Wildlife and Humans

Emily Buskey, DVM, David Sausville and Natalie Kwit, DVM MPH, DACVPM

Experts from Vermont Department of Health, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, and Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife will provide an overview of the current avian influenza A(H5N1) "bird flu" outbreak. H5 bird flu is widespread in wild birds worldwide and is causing outbreaks in poultry and U.S. dairy cows and human cases in U.S. dairy and poultry workers. Speakers will describe the current status of H5N1 in livestock, wildlife, and humans and how Vermont is preparing to respond to detections in dairy cattle or humans.

Adirondack ABC | 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | **Session I**

TRACK 1 - I Was a Mother who was Skeptical of Vaccines for 12 Years. How Did I Change My Mind?

Lydia Greene and Heather Simpson

Before children, Lydia had a career in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). How did she become opposed to vaccines? We'll discuss the interactions with health care workers that helped and didn't help, and how her journey influences her practice as a health care worker today. In addition, Heather was initially skeptical of vaccines, but her journey led her to research extensively, ultimately changing her perspective and inspiring her to help others navigate vaccine misinformation.

Conference Session Details

Adirondack D | 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | **Session I**

TRACK 2 - Tracking Trouble: Innovations in Infectious Disease Surveillance from Sewers to Syndemics

Participants will gain insight into current trends and testing recommendations in the fields of TB and HIV and will learn more about existing and emerging opportunities for wastewater surveillance to provide early warning to public health and communities.

ROOM

Segment 1: TB or Latent TB? That is The Question: Next Steps After the IGRA

Yvonne Boire, BSN, RN

Screening for tuberculosis infection in targeted populations is a key component of tuberculosis elimination, but sometimes knowing who should be tested is easier than knowing what to do once they test positive. Learn more about who is being tested in Vermont and explore steps and considerations after patients test positive. Attendees will get a brief introduction to resources and will learn how the Health Department can provide support.

Segment 2: From First Blush to Flush: The Emergence of Wastewater Surveillance in Vermont

Lynn Blevins, MD, MPH

First launched during COVID-19, wastewater surveillance has continued to expand. Learn more about the current applications of wastewater surveillance and what the future holds in Vermont for monitoring infectious diseases after the flush.

Segment 3: HIV in Vermont: Where Are We Now?

Daniel Daltry, MSW

Biomedical interventions have improved HIV prevention and care, yet new infections continue to occur. During this presentation, you will gain the latest state of the state perspective on HIV in Vermont today, HIV trends, and the importance of offering HIV testing opportunities.

Conference Session Details

Montpelier | 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | **Session I**

TRACK 3 - Introduction to Infodemiology: The Study of the Spread of Information

Julie Corwin, MA

In the same way epidemiology studies the spread of diseases, infodemiology is a public health discipline that studies the spread of information to improve health. Infodemiology is a relatively new field of research that spans disciplines like psychology, marketing, communication, journalism, and information science. Explore the social, behavioral, and cognitive factors that influences people to believe and share misinformation. Gain insight into tools and methods for collecting, monitoring, and analyzing health information online to inform public health interventions. Learn practical skills in how to respond and address false health information.

Adirondack ABC | 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. | **Session II**

TRACK 1 - Vaccine Confidence

Benjamin Lee, MD, Sarah Nowak, PhD, Breena Holmes, MD, and Heidi Schumacher, MD

This session will highlight a project between Vermont Department of Health and Vermont Child Health Improvement Project (VCHIP) to develop a targeted training to support child-serving providers in promoting vaccine confidence among families with children. The VCHIP team will engage child-serving professionals from health care, education, community health and other fields to provide basic education in vaccines, share best practices in communicating with families about vaccine effectiveness, and connect participants with well-vetted resources.

Adirondack D | 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. | **Session II**

TRACK 2 - Immunization Program 101

Meredith, RN and Katie Mahuron, RN, MPH

Gain an in-depth understanding of the Vermont Immunization Program's structure and how it ensures widespread access to vaccines. Learn about the scientific process behind vaccine approval, from clinical trials to regulatory review. Address common concerns surrounding vaccine safety with a focus on evidence-based information. Summary of upcoming vaccines in development, including those for emerging diseases, novel pathogens, and even efforts to improve existing vaccines.

Conference Session Details

Montpelier | 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. | **Session II**

TRACK 3 - Bugs and Bunnies: One Health Investigations in Vermont

Natalie Kwit, DVM, MPH, DACVPM and Katie Strelau, PhD

During this session, participants will hear how to use One Health principles in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of zoonotic and vector-borne diseases of concern in Vermont.

Segment I: Powassan Virus Disease

Katie Strelau, PhD

Powassan virus (POWV) is a tickborne flavivirus that can cause severe neuroinvasive disease with 10% mortality and frequent neurologic sequelae. Before 2023, the last POWV disease case reported in Vermont was in 1999. We describe two cases of POWV disease with delayed diagnosis.

Segment II: Increase in Eastern Equine Encephalitis Virus Activity - Vermont 2024

Katie Strelau, PhD

Eastern equine encephalitis virus (EEEV), a mosquito-borne alphavirus, can cause severe neuroinvasive disease; approximately one-third of patients with neurologic disease die, and half of survivors experience long-term neurologic sequelae. We describe an increase in EEEV detections in mosquitoes, humans, and animals and the state's response during 2024.

Segment III: Wabid Wabbits: Increase in Rabies and Spillover to Non-Traditional Pets - Vermont 2024

Katie Strelau, PhD

Rabies is a zoonotic viral disease transmitted primarily through direct exposure to the saliva of infected mammals into bite wounds. The virus affects the central nervous system and is nearly 100% fatal once clinical symptoms appear. We describe an increase in animal rabies cases in Vermont and an investigation of a rare infection in a domestic rabbit.

Conference Session Details

Adirondack ABC | 2:45 - 3:45 p.m. | **Session III**

TRACK 1 - From Viruses to Superbugs: Unraveling Infectious Disease Outbreaks and Investigations

In this session participants will learn more about ongoing and emerging disease concerns and how public health collaborates with clinicians and community partners to investigate and respond here in Vermont.

Segment I: Measles

Laura Ann Nicolai, MPH

Measles cases have been increasing across the U.S. Nearby outbreaks and international travel has led to 3 cases in Vermont since 2024. During this presentation participants will learn more about the role of the Health Department when measles is suspected and what resources are available to help prepare for the possibility of future cases.

Segment II: PEP by the Pool: Hepatitis A at Camp for Adults

Christine Connor, MSN, MPH, RN

Hepatitis A can spread through contaminated food and water, yet most adults are not protected through vaccination. Postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) with vaccine or immune globulin can effectively prevent infection following an exposure, yet administration can be challenging, especially for persons with special needs. Participants will learn how epidemiologists assess opportunities for transmission and identify close contacts of infected individuals. This presentation highlights the challenges in notifying contacts who should receive PEP in a camp setting for adults with disabilities as well as the inter-department collaboration efforts needed to successfully administer it.

Segment III: Multidrug-Resistant Superbugs and the Complicated Webs they Weave

Allison Lafferty, MD

Participants will learn about MDROs and how they intertwine with antimicrobial stewardship. We will discuss the impact of microbes such as carbapenemase-producing organisms and *Candida auris* on Vermonters, the measures used to contain them, and prevention through stewardship.

Conference Session Details

Segment III: What Can We Learn from COVID-19 Deaths Five Years Later?

John Davy, PhD

COVID-19 mortality was a major public-facing indicator of COVID-19 burden during the pandemic, and remains of interest. Public discourse about COVID-19 death counts reflects diverse understandings of the shifting role of COVID illness in these deaths. This presentation will include a look back at COVID-19 deaths in Vermont since 2020 and what efforts might be needed to better educate Vermonters on the burden of COVID-associated mortality moving forward.

Adirondack D | 2:45 - 3:45 p.m. | **Session III**

TRACK 2 - Immunization Registry/Immunization Data

Craig Morrill, MPH, Jason Pope, BS, CMA and Denise Kall, PhD

Review of Immunization Registry reports including vaccines due and IQIP reports, how to export reports to Excel, and to look at common code guidance and forecaster issues, along with a brief intro/discussion of bi-directional. Overview of datasets available on immunization data, such as the Vermont Immunization Registry(IMR), the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), alongside IMR coverage reports and published data products. These datasets encompass a variety of vaccines and include various variables such as demographic information, risk factors, and chronic disease prevalence. These data can be used to see trends, identify groups at risk, and measure if our vaccine outreach efforts are working. Attendees will gain insights into how these datasets can be instrumental in shaping public health strategies and improving immunization coverage.

Montpelier | 2:45 - 3:45 p.m. | **Session III**

TRACK 3 – Vaccine Coalition - Private Meeting