

1 VERMONT MEDICAL SOCIETY  
2 RESOLUTION  
3

4 **Patient Education & Personal Responsibility for Health**

5  
6 *Adopted October 29, 2011*  
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8 Whereas, unhealthy lifestyle choices drive direct health care costs as well as indirect costs, relating to  
9 disability, workers compensation, absenteeism and productivity issues; and  
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11 Whereas, according to a recent Columbia University study published in the Lancet, obesity is fast  
12 replacing tobacco as the single most important preventable cause of chronic non-communicable diseases,  
13 and will add an extra 7.8 million cases of diabetes, 6.8 million cases of heart disease and stroke, and  
14 539,000 cases of cancer in the United States by 2030; and  
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16 Whereas, because of obesity, the United States can expect to spend an extra 2.6 percent on its overall  
17 healthcare bill, or \$66 billion per year; and  
18

19 Whereas, only 3% of Americans actually meet healthy behavior guidelines in *all four* lifestyle behaviors  
20 – tobacco use, sedentary behavior, unhealthy weight, unhealthy diet; and  
21

22 Whereas, the number of working-age adults from 1997 to 2006 who reported being diagnosed with at  
23 least 1 of 7 major chronic conditions (heart disease, hypertension, stroke, diabetes, emphysema, asthma  
24 and cancer) grew by 25% to a total of nearly 58 million; and  
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26 Whereas, Act 48 amended 18 V.S.A. § 5 to require the department of health to create a state health  
27 improvement plan in order to encourage the design of healthy communities and to promote policy  
28 initiatives that contribute to community, school, and workplace wellness, which may include providing  
29 assistance to employers for wellness program grants, encouraging employers to promote employee  
30 engagement in healthy behaviors, and encouraging the appropriate use of the health care system; and  
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32 Whereas, Act 48 also added 18 V.S.A. § 9371 that lists 14 principles as the framework for reforming  
33 health care in Vermont; and  
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35 Whereas, under principle (7) of section 9371, individuals have a personal responsibility to maintain their  
36 own health and to use health resources wisely, and all individuals should have a financial stake in the  
37 health services they receive; now therefore be it  
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39 **RESOLVED, that the Vermont Medical Society work with the Department of Health to create a**  
40 **state health improvement plan; and be it further**  
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42 **RESOLVED, that the VMS work with the Green Mountain Care Board and other organizations**  
43 **to promote greater personal responsibility by individuals in maintaining their own health and**  
44 **the wise use of health resources.**