

Fiscal Year 2019

Progress report to our community

Addressing community health needs



Northern LightSM

A.R. Gould Hospital

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Our new brand, Northern Light Health, is now in its second year of existence and the changes are evident at Northern Light AR Gould Hospital. With increased clinical connections to our fellow Northern Light Health organizations, we are making strides to lead Maine on a path to better health.

In 2016, EMHS partnered with three other Maine healthcare systems and the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention to create a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). We used that assessment along with public input to develop a three-year strategy to improve the health and well-being of the communities that we serve.

This report is an update on the progress of that community health improvement plan for fiscal year 2019, which is the final year of our three-year plan. Northern Light A.R. Gould Hospital has its own unique set of priorities that we are addressing, including:

- Decrease sedentary lifestyles in youth through family engagement
- Decrease number of adults aged 20 – 65 with cardiovascular disease risk factors
- Improve health status of adults over 65 with three or more chronic conditions
- Improve access to mental health, substance abuse services and early intervention

We are also working together with other Northern Light Health members throughout the state to prevent and treat opioid addiction and to improve access to healthy food for patients, families, and communities.

As Northern Light AR Gould Hospital, we are inspired by the resiliency of the people we serve, and we look forward to helping them, and the community at large, become healthier and more productive in the year ahead. We will do that by constantly imagining new ways to provide care and continuing to engage our communities in health and wellness outreach.

Sincerely,



Gregory LaFrancois
President, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital

Progress report update

FY 2019 Progress Report

Priority #1: Decrease prevalence of sedentary lifestyles in youth through family engagement

Objective: By September 2018, increase by 50 number of Aroostook Pediatric patients reporting at least 60 minutes of physical activities based on their participation in the Fit and Fun Passport Challenge.

Status: In progress

Approaches taken and resources used: In fiscal year 2019 (FY19), Northern Light AR Gould Hospital partnered with multiple community agencies to provide low cost or no cost activities for families as well as additional activities for adults through our Fit and Fun programming.

Partners engaged: Northern Light AR Gould Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:

University of Maine at Presque Isle, local recreation departments, local housing departments, multiple ski facilities, local school departments, a local Native American tribe, Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, and the Aroostook County Action program (ACAP)

Highlights: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital had hundreds of students attend our events this year. Although we had hoped to measure participation by using “passport cards” that children could check off for events, we did not find they were used with regularity. However, we had some particularly well attended events that exceeded our expectations including but not limited to: 50 children having ski lessons supported by our efforts, over 200 community members participating in free skating, 125 participants in low cost swimming event, and 400 seventh graders attending the ACAP youth prevention day for which we provided speakers and other in-kind support. We also launched Fit and Fun Over 50 activities this year and included times for those children to participate in activities who may be overstimulated by the larger crowds in order to be more inclusive.

Outcome Measure: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital had difficulty measuring the intended pediatric population to identify engagement in regular bouts of physical activity throughout the year. However, though the measure was difficult to ascertain, the Fit and Fun series was able to engage youth in a number of physical activity efforts with the intent to educate and encourage regular physical activity.

Project Lead: Transitioned to Laura Turner, Director of Community Outreach, midway through the fiscal year due to staffing changes.

Next Steps: In fiscal year 2020 (FY20), Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will continue with the Fit and Fun programming as physical activity, nutrition, and weight will continue to be a community health priority area of focus. We look to reach new populations and increase our nutritional based activities.

FY 2019 Progress Report

Priority #2: Decrease the number of adults ages 20-65 with cardiovascular disease risk factors - patients

Objective: Decrease to 10% the number of Northern Light AR Gould Hospital primary care patients smoking through the provision of education and available resources by September 30, 2019.

Status: In progress

Approaches taken and resources used: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital provided smoking cessation information to patients through signage, educational materials, discharge instructions, and a stop smoking event. We also wrote a letter of support for Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP) to receive a grant for tobacco cessation staff.

Partners engaged: Northern Light AR Gould Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:

Aroostook County Action Program

Highlights: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital held a smoking cessation event for staff and patients in the hospital in conjunction with ACAP and Go Red Day. Although we were challenged to get the primary care data, we were able to provide quit link information on inpatient discharge forms and on other patient material as well as providing smoking cessation support and medication for inpatients. Smoking status is regularly discussed with patients at five of our adult primary care outpatient sites and embedded in the electronic health record.

Outcome Measure: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital provided smoking cessation educational materials to our patients, however, we were unable to measure any decrease in smoking rates.

Project Lead: Transitioned to Laura Turner, Director of Community Outreach, midway through the fiscal year due to staffing changes.

Next Steps: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will include tobacco cessation activities into our substance misuse harm reduction goal. We have hired a new Community Health Specialist who is a Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist and has extensive experience in tobacco prevention efforts. This will aid both patients and staff. We hope to partner with ACAP to provide individual patient smoking cessation as a result of a new grant. We also look to including vaping cessation and smoking cessation at venues such as our health fair and lunch and learn programming.

FY 2019 Progress Report

Priority #2: Decrease the number of adults ages 20-65 with cardiovascular disease risk factors - staff

Objective: Decrease the number of AR Gould Hospital staff smoking, using education and available resources by 4% by September 30, 2019.

Status: Completed

Approaches taken and resources used: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital provided tobacco cessation information to new employees at new staff orientation. Information was placed throughout the campus about quitting resources. Our system benefits include tobacco cessation aids and support.

Partners engaged: Northern Light AR Gould Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:

Aroostook County Action Program

Highlights: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital provided smoking cessation for all new hires as part of their orientation and although we were challenged to get particular data on our employees, we were able to provide quit link resources throughout the hospital, our system benefits include tobacco cessation resources, and we held an event in conjunction with the Aroostook County Action Program that encouraged tobacco cessation and provided bags to assist with that process. We highlighted a staff member who quit smoking through internal communication.

Outcome Measure: In FY19, this objective was not measurable by employee actions but rather by measuring orientation efforts regarding smoking cessation for new employees that was provided every two weeks along with one hospital wide event.

Project Lead: Transitioned to Laura Turner, Director of Community Outreach, midway through the fiscal year due to staffing changes.

Next Steps: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will include tobacco cessation activities into our substance misuse harm reduction goal. We have hired a new Community Health Specialist who is a Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist and has extensive experience in tobacco prevention efforts. This will aid both patients and staff.

FY 2019 Progress Report

Priority #3: Improve health status of adults over 65 with three or more chronic conditions

Objective: By September 2019, 10 patients will complete the Chronic Disease Management Education (Stanford Model) class

Status: Completed

Approaches taken and resources used: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital facilitated a train the trainer class for the Stanford Model Living Well class and held multiple community education sessions.

Partners engaged: Northern Light AR Gould Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:

Aroostook Agency on Aging

Highlights: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital held regular lunch and learns for seniors on multiple health topics designed to assist them to manage chronic diseases, to be proactive about their health, and live independently. We held a Women's Health Conference focused on sleep issues. We transitioned our chronic disease Stanford program to the larger community by training seven program facilitators and now there are many opportunities for people to access these classes in our community. We began a new community conversation program where doctors speak on multiple health topics with the general public. We provided speakers and exhibitors for the Aroostook Agency on Aging's Senior Expo. We also started a Parkinson's Support Group.

Outcome Measure: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital trained new trainers and made the chronic disease Stanford model program self-sustainable.

Project Lead: Transitioned to Laura Turner, Director of Community Outreach, midway through the fiscal year due to staffing changes.

Next Steps: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will not offer the Stanford program's chronic disease management classes due to the program's sustainability efforts established in our community. AR Gould will continue to offer Healthy Aging Lunch and Learns, participate in the Agency in Aging's Senior Expo, continue our Parkinson's support group, and Community Conversations with our providers.

FY 2019 Progress Report

Priority #4: Improve access to mental health/substance abuse services and early intervention (Systemwide priority)

Objective: By 9/30/2019, increase the number of patients receiving patient education materials surrounding prescription drug safety

Status: Completed

Approaches taken and resources used: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital provided education cards related to opioid use to primary care patients and in key service lines of emergency department, general surgery and orthopedics.

Partners engaged: Northern Light AR Gould Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:

Our local TV station, WAGM, did a series on our pain treatment clinic which we see as an alternative to opioid use

Highlights: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital, recognizing the need to provide alternative pain management options to our patients and community members, continued to grow the pain interventionalist service offering pain management options as an alternative avenue to opioid use. In addition, our director of community outreach attended Maine's first Opioid Summit and gained valuable knowledge for future efforts as well as participated on a local task force organized by Maine's Center for Disease Control and Prevention. We hardwired the practice of patient information card distribution in many of our practices who gave them to 100% of their patients. Each quarter we saw a steady rise in distribution efforts. The educational cards were updated in FY19.

Outcome Measure: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital distributed over 20,000 patient opioid information cards at five primary sites, our emergency department, surgical services, and our orthopedics services.

Project Lead: Laura Turner, Director of Community Outreach

Next Steps: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will continue offering patient prescription cards to our practices who wish to use them. We plan to collaborate with other agencies in our service area to reduce opioid harm by providing educational opportunities to our community with a focus to reduce stigma around substance use disorders and treatment and prevention efforts.

FY 2019 Progress Report

Systemwide priority: Healthy food access – screen and intervene

Objective: Increase the number of screenings for food insecurity from 80% (baseline of June 2018) to 85% by September 30, 2019.

Status: In progress

Approaches taken and resources used: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital continued to screen primary care patients for food insecurity using the established two question screen and intervene protocol. Patients who screened positively were given food resource guides and given contact information to Aroostook County Action Program's (ACAP) case management services.

Partners engaged: Northern Light AR Gould Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:

ACAP Case management services created food guides and provided case management services to those patients referred to the program or to patients who used tear off sheets available throughout practices

Highlights: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital screened 12,593 patients for food insecurity, trained new staff in the process, and adjusted our new electronic system to allow us to track the data. Additionally, some of our specialty services incorporated the questionnaire and referrals to ACAP into their intake process.

Outcome Measure: In FY19, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital screened 12,593 patients in primary care for food insecurity. With the implementation of our new electronic health records we were a bit challenged with getting data and could not isolate pediatric wellness visits and could therefore not count them in our data. 42% of primary care adult patients were screened for food insecurity. We saw a decline in our screening numbers but showed improvement in the fourth quarter after retraining staff.

Project Lead: Laura Turner, Director of Community Outreach

Next Steps: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will continue food insecurity screening as part of a more comprehensive social determinants of health screening effort. We plan to continue collaborating with ACAP as our case management partner in these efforts.

Conclusion

Northern Light AR Gould Hospital continues work on identified priorities through the Community Health Strategy and is thankful for the participation and support of our community members and many area organizations for contributing their knowledge of local community health needs related to our priorities of action. Through existing and future partnerships, collaborative efforts are essential in addressing the identified community health strategies prioritized within.

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