

Fiscal Year 2021

PROGRESS REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY

Addressing community health needs



Northern LightSM

Inland Hospital

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Terri Vieira, MHA, FACHE
President

Northern Light Inland Hospital

As 2021 nears an end, we approach 2022 with renewed hope, more resilience, and stronger community partnerships. Those partnerships have proven vital as the pandemic impacted the gains we had made in Maine and nationally to address the opioid epidemic. Unemployment and food insecurity remain higher than pre-pandemic levels too.

The pandemic taught us to become even better at working together. We have renewed commitment to improving the social determinants of health, and we have better ways to reach people than ever before.

In 2019, Northern Light Health partnered with three healthcare systems and the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention to create a Community Health Needs Assessment. We used that assessment and 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 our community health strategy for fiscal year 2021, representing the second year of our three-year health improvement plan. In addition to the extraordinary outreach and collaborative efforts during the coronavirus pandemic, Northern Light Inland Hospital continues to engage in priority areas of work, including:

- Physical activity, nutrition, weight
- Mental health
- Substance use
- Social determinants of health

At Inland Hospital, we know that our neighbors are looking for trusted places where they can go for personalized care that is exceptional—and we want them to choose us. We are determined to be the best option for them while continuing to collaborate with our community partners. I look forward to what we can accomplish in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Terri Vieira, MHA, FACHE
President, Northern Light Inland Hospital

Progress report update

FY 2021 Progress Report

Priority #1: Physical Activity, Nutrition, Weight

Objective: Maintain the number of evidence-based programs focused on increasing access to and availability of physical activity at one through 9/30/21.

Status: Completed

Strategy (approaches taken, and resources used) and highlights from this effort: In fiscal year 2021 (FY21), Northern Light Inland Hospital focused on the evidence-based Let's Go! program, which promotes healthy eating and active living to reduce childhood obesity rates. The hospital's Let's Go! coordinator met in-person or virtually with Let's Go! site champions from schools and childcare centers. Sites were primarily supported virtually, through emailing or virtual meeting platforms. The main focus of this year was to continue building relationships with these sites and be available for support through the year as they navigated challenges with COVID-19 while trying to implement Let's Go! 5210 strategies encouraging individuals to consume five fruits or vegetables per day, two hours or less of recreational screen time, one hour of physical activity every day, and zero sugary beverages. The coordinator worked with site champions and other engaged staff to develop action plans for their various schools/early childcare programs/school nutrition programs for the year, with plans aimed at increasing physical activity and nutritious choices. The coordinator assisted in keeping the sites accountable by following up on their goals and offering persistent communication and support.

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

- Alfond Youth Center
- Central Maine Chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association
- Healthy Communities of the Capital Area
- Healthy Northern Kennebec
- Let's Go! Home Office
- Maine Arts Academy
- Northern Light Acadia Hospital
- RSU 18 school district
- Six early care and education sites
- Somerset Public Health
- Three Northern Light Inland Hospital healthcare sites
- Waterville Parks and Rec
- Waterville school district
- Waterville, Winslow, and Vassalboro school nutrition program
- Winslow school district

Outcome measure: In FY21, Inland Hospital maintained the number of evidence-based programs aimed at increasing physical activity and nutritious choices at one. The hospital increased the number of registered Let's Go! sites by four throughout FY21, for a final total of 22 registered sites. The program reached approximately 10,950 individuals.

Project lead: Sherry Tardy, director of Business Development and director of Community Health

Next steps: In fiscal year 2022 (FY22), Inland Hospital will look to maintain the number of evidence-based programs focused on increasing access to and availability of physical activity at one through 9/30/22. We will continue to offer the Let's Go! program to schools, early care and education, out-of-school, and provider sites, supporting our returning sites and increasing recruitment efforts to register new sites.

Priority #2: Mental Health

Objective: Increase educational programs to raise awareness, readiness, and access to mental health services that support middle and high school youth and their families from zero to one by 9/30/21.

Status: Completed

Strategy (approaches taken, and resources used) and highlights from this effort: In FY21, Northern Light Inland Hospital's Community Wellness coordinator worked to develop a behavioral health program for a local school district, to address topics of anxiety, suicide prevention, bullying, and resiliency. They partnered with Northern Light Acadia Hospital and Acadia's associate vice president of Pediatric Services to facilitate a behavioral health program for 25 staff at the Maine Arts Academy in Sidney on April 30, 2021. The program addressed stressors for students, staff, and caregivers related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The staff who attended the presentation were provided tools and strategies for self-care and supporting the 201 students at the high school.

Partners engaged: Inland Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:

- Maine Arts Academy staff and students
- Northern Light Acadia Hospital
- Northern Light Sebecook Valley Hospital
- RSU 18 school district
- Winslow school district

Outcome measure: In FY21, Inland Hospital collaborated with Acadia Hospital and held one facilitated behavioral health training at a local school for 25 staff who taught 201 additional students.

Project lead: Sherry Tardy, director of Business Development and director of Community Health

Next steps: In FY22, Inland Hospital will aim to increase the number of sites receiving mental health programming from one to two by 9/30/22, by engaging another school district in collaboration with Acadia Hospital.

Priority #3: Substance Use

Objective: Increase the number of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) options for opioid use readily available in local communities from seven to eleven by 9/30/21.

Status: In progress

Strategy (approaches taken, and resources used) and highlights from this effort: In FY21, Northern Light Inland Hospital aimed to recruit and train MAT prescribers at the hospital's primary care sites. They were able to maintain seven MAT trained providers at the beginning of FY21 despite COVID-19 challenges but had to adapt and focused on developing provider engagement strategies to involve more providers in MAT, resulting in a net of five MAT trained providers at the end of FY21.

Partners engaged: Inland Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:

All Inland Hospital primary care providers and practice managers

Outcome measure: In FY21, Inland Hospital worked toward its substance use objective of increasing the number of primary care practices offering MAT and increasing the number of MAT trained primary care providers and was able to maintain a net of five primary care providers certified in MAT.

Project lead: Beth Held-Dobos, PA-C, medical director – Primary Care

Next steps: In FY22, Inland Hospital aims to recruit and train MAT prescribers at Inland Hospital's primary care sites and increase the number of MAT options for opioid use readily available in local communities from five in FY21 to seven in FY22.

Priority #4: Social Determinants of Health

Objective: Maintain the number of patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources at 34,715 by 9/30/21.

Status: Completed

Strategy (approaches taken, and resources used) and highlights from this effort: In FY21, Northern Light Inland Hospital engaged 18 healthcare partner sites throughout the year to conduct a two-question screening for food insecurity at patient intake using the hospital's Cerner medical record platform. They aimed to expand this outreach from 12 partner sites in FY20, as food insecurity continues to be a major challenge to the Waterville area community. The COVID-19 pandemic caused an increased awareness in food insecurity in this community as well. Early in FY21, Inland Hospital partnered with the Good Shepherd Food Bank and the USDA Farmers to Families Food Box program to host a drive-up food pantry event. Community members could drive up and food supplies were put directly into their vehicle. 1,150 boxes of free food were distributed.

Partners engaged: Inland Hospital partnered with the following Northern Light members and community organizations:

- Inland Hospital Community Health Navigator
- Primary Care Practices (Unity, Madison, Oakland, Waterville)
- Women's Health
- Physical Medicine
- Endocrinology and Diabetes
- Walk-In Care
- Rheumatology and Neurology
- Orthopedics
- Podiatry

Good Shepherd Food Bank
Healthy Northern Kennebec
RSU #18, Winslow, Vassalboro, and Waterville School Districts
Greater Waterville Area Early Education Sites
Local Food pantries and food banks

Outcome measure: In FY21, Inland Hospital measured the number of food insecurity screenings conducted at 41,852 at 18 different hospital sites. This surpassed the goal of 34,715 patients being screened for food insecurity, resulting in 744 positive screens, reaching 41,852 individuals.

Project lead: Beth Held-Dobos, PA-C, medical director, Primary Care

Next steps: In FY22, Inland Hospital aims to maintain the number of patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources at 41,852 by 9/30/22.

Conclusion

Northern Light Inland 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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