

Fiscal Year 2022

PROGRESS REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY

Addressing community health needs



Northern LightSM

Mercy Hospital

Table of Contents

Progress Report to Our Community

Introduction 3

Progress Report Update

Priority #1: Social Determinants of Health 4

Priority #2: Substance Use 5

Priority #3: Access to Care 6

Priority #4: Mental Health 6

Priority #5: Older Adult Health/Healthy Aging..... 7

Conclusion 8





Charlie Therrien, FACHE
President,
Northern Light Mercy Hospital
Senior Vice President,
Northern Light Health

This past year, we not only continued our ongoing work to safeguard our communities from the COVID-19 pandemic, but we set our sights towards the future. We looked to build and improve upon the delivery of healthcare in Maine, and partnership is essential to this work; coming together to ensure our families, friends, and neighbors have access to the very best resources for generations to come.

While the pandemic still looms and may for quite a while, we will never stop looking forward and thinking strategically about addressing the most critical community health needs. 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 (CHNA). 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 2022, representing the third year of our three-year health improvement plan. In addition to the extraordinary ongoing outreach and collaborative efforts during the coronavirus pandemic, Northern Light Mercy Hospital continues to engage in priority areas of work, including:

- Social determinants of health
- Substance use
- Access to care
- Mental health
- Older adult health/Healthy aging

I hope you find the update contained in this report informative. If you ever have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to communitybenefits@northernlight.org. Lastly, we know our community trusts us to provide exceptional healthcare and resources that complement a healthy, enriched life, and we are dedicated to maintaining that trust through hard work and commitment to doing what's right for Maine. We look forward to our continued services in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Charlie Therrien
President, Northern Light Mercy Hospital

Progress report update

FY 2022 Progress Report

Priority #1: Social Determinants of Health

Objective: Increase the number of sites implementing screening and referral for health-related social needs from one to six by 9/30/22.

Status: In progress

Strategy: In fiscal year 2022 (FY22), Northern Light Health made significant progress in Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) screening and intervention. The Northern Light Health SDOH team defined “completed” SDOH screening and established a system policy for minimum SDOH screening standards to provide consistency in screening guidelines. During the course of FY22, the SDOH team worked with Information Systems to continually improve the SDOH screening tool based on user recommendations and will continue to manage user requests moving forward. SDOH team leaders worked with members of Northern Light Health Quality to develop an SDOH screening dashboard that provides real-time screening rates by member organization, practice, provider, and payor type, as well as prevalence of SDOH need from positive screening results. The dashboard is undergoing validation and is anticipated to be available in FY23. Northern Light Health achieved a significant milestone in responding to social health needs when the Findhelp platform went live on September 13, 2022. Findhelp is a national social care network that will make it easier for patients and providers to find and connect with local resources. The platform is embedded within our electronic health record so that care teams can find and refer patients to resources. Community members can also access Findhelp at any time via a public portal.

Partners engaged: Northern Light Mercy Hospital partnered with the following Northern Light members on this priority:

- Acadia Hospital
- AR Gould Hospital
- Beacon Health
- Blue Hill Hospital
- CA Dean Hospital
- Eastern Maine Medical Center
- Home Care & Hospice
- Inland Hospital
- Maine Coast Hospital
- Mayo Hospital
- Sebasticook Valley Hospital

Outcome measure: System data for SDOH screening became available in December 2021 and revealed that 2.6% of patients had a completed SDOH screening within the past 12 months. By September 2022, this rate had increased to 8.2% with minimal education or promotion from the system. Among the five practices participating in the Institute for Healthcare Improvement/Pfizer, Inc. quality improvement project, average completed SDOH screenings increased from 4.2% to 22.1%. This project demonstrated the benefit of a quality improvement approach to increasing SDOH screening rates and lessons learned will inform best practices to be shared in fiscal year 2023 (FY23).

Project lead: Melissa Skahan, Vice President, Mission Integration

Next steps: The Northern Light Health SDOH team will continue to monitor and support improvements to SDOH screening and support efforts to increase availability of accurate and timely SDOH screening and results data. In FY23, Northern Light Health will focus on optimizing the Northern Light Health Findhelp platform by increasing community partner awareness of and engagement with the platform. A Community Engagement Workgroup has been convened and will meet regularly to discuss and plan community outreach and engagement as part of the FY23 Community Health Improvement Plan goal of increasing community partner use of the platform.

Priority #2: Substance Use

Objective: Increase the number of Medication-Assisted Treatment options for opioid use readily available in local communities from one to four by 9/30/22.

Status: Completed

Strategy: In FY22, Northern Light Mercy Hospital delivered training that allows primary care providers to obtain their x-waiver and prescribe Suboxone for opioid use disorder. This commitment ensures that all five primary care sites at Northern Light Mercy Hospital are well prepared to serve patients with substance use disorder.

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

- Sadie Knott, PMHNP Northern Light Mercy Hospital
- Dr. Su-Anne Hammond, Medical Director Primary Care
- Lester Gilkey, Recovery Coach
- Patrick Metro, Recovery Coach
- Melissa Skahan, VP of Mission Integration

Outcome measure: In FY22, Northern Light Mercy Hospital provided x-waiver training for all providers to ensure all five primary care centers were poised to care for persons with substance use disorder. This activity increases our capacity to provide Medication-Assisted Treatment at five primary care centers instead of one.

Project leads: Sadie Knott, PMHNP Northern Light Mercy Hospital; Dr. Su-Anne Hammond, Medical Director Primary Care; Lester Gilkey, Recovery Coach; Patrick Metro, Recovery Coach; Melissa Skahan, VP of Mission Integration.

Next steps: In fiscal year 2023 (FY23), Northern Light Mercy Hospital will continue to prescribe Suboxone and deliver trauma-informed care training at all primary care locations to ensure that all patients with substance use disorder are well received by staff and providers who understand the mental and physical effects of trauma, as well as their individual and collective role in patient engagement and health outcomes.

Priority #3: Access to Care

Objective: Increase the number of housing developments that offer access to COVID education, vaccine, and testing, as well as health promotion activities to include preventative tests from seven to nine by 9/30/22.

Status: In progress

Strategy: In FY22, Northern Light Mercy Hospital continued to support work at local housing authorities with outreach activities at 100 State Street and testing and vaccination at the Fore River Campus Pharmacy and within primary care offices. A survey was administered at 100 State Street to ensure that transportation was not a barrier to services offered at the Fore River Campus. Health Promotion Clinics and Urgent Care Services were offered for New Mainers at local hotels in South Portland and Yarmouth with follow up care occurring in Primary Care, Women's Health, Pediatrics, and Specialty Care. Transportation, access to medication, housing insecurity, and lack of case management added complexity for Mercy's care teams.

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

- City of Portland
- Maine Immigrant Rights Coalition
- Spurwink
- Housing Manager at 100 State Street
- Public Health Nurses

Outcome measure: In FY22, Northern Light Mercy Hospital offered weekly clinics at three local hotels for a minimum of two days per week for 12 weeks. Staff also worked with public health nurses and ethnic based organizations to welcome pregnant women, who are seeking asylum and are homeless.

Project leads: Melissa Skahan, Vice President, Mission Integration; Katie Kerr, Director of Mission Services

Next steps: In FY23, Northern Light Mercy Hospital will continue to work with public housing authorities with health promotion clinics and the City of Portland to ensure that new Mainers, who are seeking asylum, have access to care and other necessary services to ensure that basic needs are met.

Priority #4: Mental Health

Objective: Increase educational programs to raise awareness, readiness, and access to mental health services from two to four by 9/30/22.

Status: In progress

Strategy: In FY22, Northern Light Mercy Hospital provided trainings for nurses and providers specific to tactics to successfully engage patients with severe and persistent mental illness. These trainings were developed in response to requests from nursing staff, who were seeking greater insight, expected behaviors, proven engagement tactics, and treatments available for persons with complex trauma, personality disorders, and substance use disorders. This has promoted dialogue and ongoing requests for education resources and training for clinical teams.

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

Lisa Barry, PMHNP, Lead Provider, Behavioral Health Consult Team
Kelly Bickmore, LCSW, Director, Behavioral Health

Outcome measure: In FY22, Northern Light Mercy Hospital delivered two trainings for nurses and providers regarding complex trauma, substance use disorder, and personality disorders. These trainings help to raise awareness and readiness for clinical teams to successfully engage patients with severe and persistent mental illness in the acute setting for improved health outcomes, treatment adherence, and overall patient experience at Mercy Hospital.

Project leads: Lisa Barry, PMHNP Lead Provider, Behavioral Health Consult Team; Kelly Bickmore, LCSW Director, Behavioral Health

Next steps: In FY23, Northern Light Mercy Hospital behavioral health staff will be trained as trainers for Mental Health First Aid. Staff will learn risk factors and warning signs for mental illness and addiction concerns, strategies to offer support, and next steps for professional healthcare or other services. Behavioral health staff will provide mental health first aid training for staff and providers at Mercy and be available to offer presentation for the community.

Priority #5: Older Adult Health/Healthy Aging

Objective: Increase initiatives to promote end-of-life and palliative care options from one to two by 9/30/22.

Status: In progress

Strategy: In FY21, Northern Light Mercy Hospital offered training for all primary care practices with medical leaders of Northern Light Health's Palliative Care Program on advance care planning and palliative care. In FY22, each practice was provided educational materials and specific tools to engage patients and families in advance care planning conversations. Northern Light Mercy Hospital also acquired a geriatrics practice that increased our capacity to provide care for older adults and medical direction for local nursing homes.

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

- Northern Light Health Palliative Care
- Dr. Su-Anne Hammond, Primary Care Medical Director
- Katie Kerr, Director of Mission Integration and Patient Advocate

Outcome measure: In FY22, Northern Light Mercy Hospital distributed educational resources to all five primary care centers with specific tools to engage patients in advance care planning. This activity builds on training provided to all primary care sites by palliative care providers.

Project leads: Dr. Su-Anne Hammond, Primary Care Medical Director; Katie Kerr, Director of Mission Integration and Patient Advocate.

Next steps: In FY23, Northern Light Mercy Hospital remains committed to ensuring that primary and specialty care providers have the resources to support advance care planning for patients and families throughout the care continuum. In FY23, Mercy Hospital will expand resources in geriatrics and palliative care for improved health and wellbeing of older adults in greater Portland.

Conclusion

Northern Light Mercy 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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