

Community Health Strategy

Maine Coast Hospital

Addressing Community Health Needs

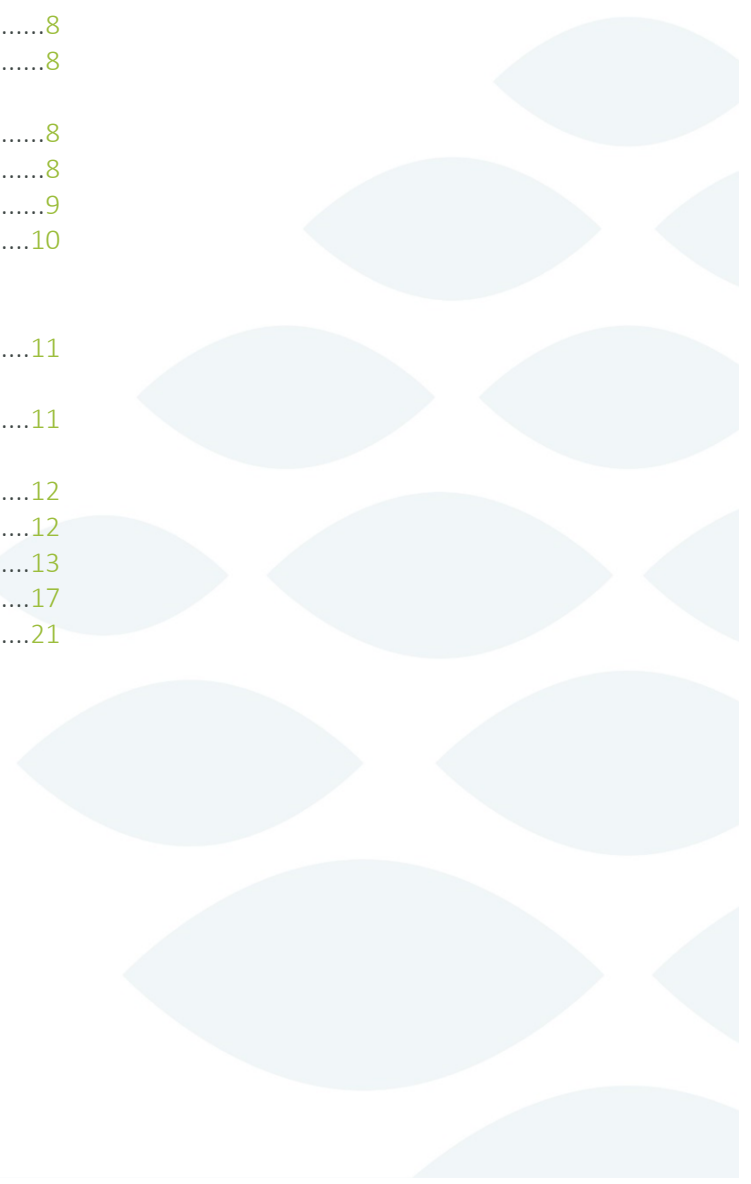
Fiscal Year 2023-2025



Northern Light HealthSM

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Letter from the President and Board Chair

We believe in providing Mainers with what they truly deserve—the absolute best in healthcare. This means actively engaging in our communities and working with partners to reduce external barriers that may prevent our neighbors from living their healthiest life.

Every three years, through the Maine Shared Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), Northern Light Health collaborates with Central Maine Healthcare, MaineGeneral Health, MaineHealth, and the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention to work with local organizations to engage communities to help identify priority health needs through a statewide assessment of community health needs. The data collected informs our community health improvement strategy for the next three years, resulting in this Community Health Strategy report—our road map towards building healthier, thriving communities. Within, you will find our identified data-driven areas of priority, rationale for each selected area, and intended actions to address the need.

We hope that you will take a moment to review the content within and please reach out with any questions or ideas you may have at communitybenefits@northernlight.org. We believe Maine will become one of the healthiest states in the nation, but that starts with collaboration and a shared conviction that we can make a difference. By addressing priority areas of need, breaking down barriers, and promoting health equity for all Maine people, we are well on our way towards a brighter future.



Sally Hutchins[NAME]
Chair, Board of Trustees
Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital



John Ronan, FACHE
President, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital
Senior Vice President, Northern Light Health

Introduction

Northern Light Health and our more than 12,000 employees care deeply about our neighbors and communities. Our member organizations work hard to understand and address priority needs. We meet regularly with community partners to plan and implement local solutions that make it possible for people in our communities to lead healthier lives. By working together, we promote a culture of stewardship and foster vibrant communities.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital is committed to shaping health improvement efforts in its service area based on sound data, personal and professional experience, and community need. Through collaborative efforts, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital creates healthier communities through the provision of services, resources, and programs within and beyond the walls of the hospital.

About Northern Light Health

At Northern Light Health, we're building a better approach to healthcare because we believe people deserve access to care that works for them. As an integrated health delivery system serving Maine, we're raising the bar with no-nonsense solutions that are leading the way to a healthier future for our state. Our more than 12,000 team members are committed to making healthcare work for you: our patients, communities, and employees.

We provide care to people from Portland to Presque Isle and from Blue Hill to Greenville. We are comprised of ten member hospitals and 585 long-term beds, a single physician-led medical group, eight nursing homes, six emergency transport members, and 41 primary care locations.

About Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital

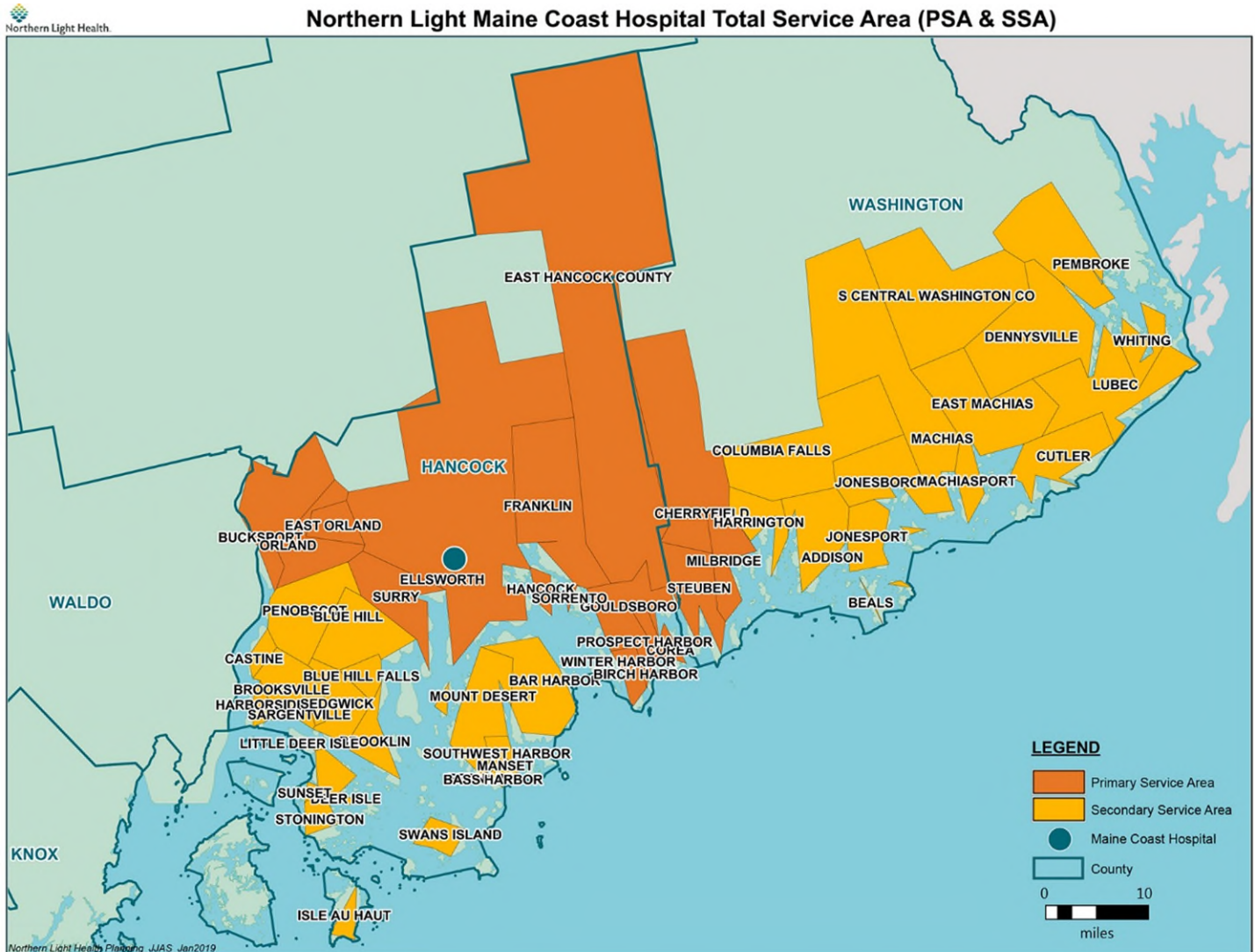
Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital in Ellsworth, is a full-service hospital, serving both Hancock and western Washington Counties.

Our 64-bed Maine Coast facility provides emergency, primary and specialty care, acute inpatient, diagnostic, and surgical services.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital is dedicated to providing exceptional medical care with the personal touch and convenience only a community hospital can offer. Maine Coast has earned both national and state recognition for patient safety, outcomes, and patient satisfaction levels.

Definition of Community Served

Located in Ellsworth, Maine, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital has a service area comprised of both primary and secondary service areas, together referred to as the total service area. Total service areas (TSA's) are developed by the Northern Light Health Planning department based on neighboring zip codes from which a majority of a hospital's inpatient admissions originate. TSA's can sometimes overlap due to hospital locations or because of the specialty services provided by the hospitals.



Demographic Data

HANCOCK COUNTY		
	Percent	Number
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.5%	254
Asian	1.1%	624
Black/African American	0.9%	469
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	75
White	95.9%	52,344
Some other race	0.1%	65
Two or more races	1.4%	770
Hispanic	1.5%	794
Non-Hispanic	98.5%	53,807
County population	54,601	
Veterans	10.1%	
Gay, lesbian, and bisexual (high school students)	14.3%	
Gay, lesbian, and bisexual (adults)	3.0%	
Transgender youth (high school students)	1.1%	
Persons with a disability	14.6%	

Social Determinants of Health Data

HANCOCK COUNTY	
Median household income	\$57,178
Unemployment rate	5.7%
Individuals living in poverty	10.8%
Children living in poverty	14.2%
65+ living alone	27.3%

Addressing Community Health Needs

Shared Community Health Needs Assessment

In 2022, Maine’s four largest healthcare systems – Northern Light Health, Central Maine Healthcare, MaineGeneral Health, and MaineHealth – as well as the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention partnered to research and publish a shared Community Health Needs Assessment (Shared CHNA). The Shared CHNA provides a comprehensive review of health data and community perspective on a broad set of health issues in Maine.

The Shared CHNA data was made widely available to the public, as county-level community engagement forums were held across the state, gathering additional feedback on priority issues and opportunities for community health improvement. New this cycle was an expanded effort to reach those who may experience systemic disadvantages and therefore experience a greater rate of health disparities. Two types of outreach were piloted in this effort. One effort included nine community sponsored events hosted by organizations having statewide reach representing the following communities: Black or African Americans; people who are homeless or formerly homeless; older adults; people who are deaf or hard of hearing; people who define themselves or identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer and/or questioning (LGBTQ+); people with a disability; people with a mental health diagnosis; people with low income; and youth. In addition to these events, 1,000 oral surveys were conducted in collaboration with eight ethnic-based community organizations’ community health workers to better reach Maine’s immigrant population. These reports and the community input received are fundamental to achieving our goal of being a trusted and valued partner to improve the health of the people and communities we serve.

Results of the 2022 Shared CHNA along with community input were used to inform the development of this three-year Community Health Strategy by Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital. The efforts identified within help demonstrate our commitment to our community, as we provide benefits reflective of our mission and tax-exempt status. These benefits include a focus on the clinical, social, and environmental factors that influence the ability of people to lead healthier lives.

Community Health Strategy

This Community Health Strategy was developed with input from community stakeholders including those who serve priority populations, district public health liaisons, business leaders, and community advocates.

Priorities were selected after weighing the severity of each priority area, availability of known and effective interventions, determination that the priority area was un-addressed or under-addressed, and community collaborations underway with Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital reserves the right to amend this Community Health Strategy as circumstances warrant. For example, certain community health needs may become more pronounced and require enhancements or a refocus to the selected priorities of focus.

Process and Methods for Priority Selection

As a member of a partnering healthcare system in the Maine Shared Community Health Needs Assessment (Shared CHNA) effort, Northern Light Health's Community Health Council recognized the value, reach, and influence of aligned engagement efforts with a shared purpose. Review of the county CHNA forum priority voting revealed that mental health, social determinants of health, and substance use were among the top four priorities in almost every county CHNA forum. These three priority areas were adopted as shared priorities where Northern Light Health member organizations would engage in common strategy to achieve greater statewide effect.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's community health strategy was developed to include our systemwide shared priority areas of work reflecting upon the quantitative health profile indicators and qualitative prioritization derived from the Shared CHNA's community engagement process. We also considered local readiness and capacity to address these needs in partnership with our local communities. Our planning team included representatives with knowledge and insight of the communities we serve.

Members of Maine Coast Hospital's Community Health Strategy team included individuals representing the following positions:

- Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital, Vice President, Senior Physician Executive
- Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital, Vice President, Senior Physician Executive
- Northern Light Maine Coast and Blue Hill Hospital(s), Director, Patient and Employee Experience
- Northern Light Maine Coast and Blue Hill Hospital(s), Director, Physician's Practices
- Northern Light Maine Coast and Blue Hill Hospital(s), Director of Quality
- Northern Light Maine Coast and Blue Hill Hospital(s), Lead of Quality
- Northern Light Blue Hill and Maine Coast Hospitals, Community Health Specialist
- Northern Light Blue Hill Licensed Social Worker
- Maine CDC, Downeast District Public Health Liaison
- Healthy Peninsula, Executive Director
- Island Health and Wellness, Executive Director
- Healthy Acadia, Director of Community Health
- Friends in Action, Executive Director
- Down East Community Partners (CAP), Executive Director

The following criteria were used for the health need selection process:

- Shared CHNA prioritization: How the health priority rank in the Shared CHNA
- Systemwide priority areas of work as determined by the Community Health Council
- Health equity: Which populations are disproportionately affected by the priority's area of focus; which populations may be experiencing unique barriers to resolve the issue; and what data or themes emerged from the CHNA Forums and County Health Profile that reinforce selecting one or more populations of focus

- Ability to leverage local community assets: Identification of potential community partnerships to engage to address the priority need, or to build on current programs, emerging opportunities, or other community assets
- Expertise: Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital experts and local partnership experts in various priority areas
- Feasibility: Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital has the ability to have an effect given the community benefit resources available

Annually, our internal team will convene to determine if changes need to be considered to best address the priority health needs of our community.

NOTE: There were no written comments received related to the most recently conducted Shared CHNA and Community Health Strategy for inclusion in this report.

Evaluation Efforts

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will monitor and evaluate the strategies related to priority areas of work for the purpose of tracking the implementation of those strategies as well as to document the anticipated effect. Through internal quarterly reporting practices, we plan to document and track measures, approaches and resources used, partners engaged, and highlights related to these priority areas of work. These quarterly reports will inform our fiscal year-end Progress Report to Our Community that will be made publicly available on our community health strategy webpage.

Feedback Opportunity

Contact communitybenefits@northernlight.org with feedback on this report.

Approval from Governing Board

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's Community Health Strategy and Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) were reviewed by the hospital's governing board and a resolution was made to approve and adopt both the Shared CHNA and the Community Health Strategy on May 26, 2022.

Selected Priorities of Focus

Priority 1: Mental Health (also referred to as Behavioral Health)

Rationale

Mental health conditions, including depression, are leading causes of injury, illness, and disability in the United States and around the world. These illnesses are common and are caused by a complex combination of biological, psychological, and environmental factors. Untreated mental illness can result in severe health problems, including but not limited to heart disease and other chronic conditions, weakened immunity, social isolation, legal and financial problems, self-harm and harm to others, poverty, and homelessness. Mental health can affect an individual's ability to practice good health behaviors and seek care or resources when needed. There is also a strong connection between mental illness and substance use, with more than one in four adults experiencing these co-occurring disorders. Limited healthcare options, lack of support, and fear of stigma may prevent individuals from seeking help, indicating an ongoing need to increase mental health awareness and address barriers to accessing mental healthcare.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's Community Health Strategy team recognizes that addressing mental health needs is a priority for our community with a focus on health equity especially for those who may be experiencing

health disparities. There are substantial local community assets and Maine Coast Hospital has resources available to be leveraged in support of this need. Furthermore, there are many options for evidence-based mental health interventions and services that promote appropriate and effective prevention, identification, and treatment for mental illnesses.

Intended actions to address the need

Maine Coast Hospital will take the following actions to address this need in our community: partner with schools and other community organizations to ensure that children and families have improved access to mental health prevention, early intervention, and treatment services. We will improve screening practices, strengthen the availability of resources within our practices (and in partnership with outside resources) for helping patients with behavioral health issues, develop and implement workflows that support ease of screening, management, and referral, and participate in community education.

Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

We anticipate that our efforts will result in improved identification of people in need, improved access to behavioral health treatment services, and thus ultimately improve the health of the people we serve and the community at large.

Programs and resource allocation

We plan to dedicate necessary Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital internal resources in the form of time devoted to annual community health improvement planning (CHIP), implementation, and evaluation, within the community health, population health, clinical, and administrative departments.

Planned collaborations

We will continue to work closely with regional partners including Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital and community health organizations (including Healthy Peninsula and Healthy Acadia) on an ongoing basis to coordinate plans and activities and maximize the effect of our CHIPs. We also will be developing relationships with area elementary school counselors.

Population of focus

The population of focus will be children and youth and their families within our community, with emphasis on children identified as being at risk for, or currently affected by behavioral health concerns.

Priority: Social Determinants of Health

Rationale

A community's health can be determined in part by access to social and economic opportunities, the safety and cleanliness of environments, and the resources available in homes, neighborhoods, and communities. These social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, live, work, and play, and affect a wide range of health and quality of life outcomes. Examples of social determinants include socioeconomic status, availability of safe and affordable housing, reliable transportation, access to healthcare services, and food security. Over the past two decades, a large and compelling body of evidence has revealed that these factors play a powerful role in shaping health. This has resulted in a greater understanding that medical care is not the only influence on health and suggests that traditional healthcare models may not be enough to adequately improve health outcomes or reduce health disparities without also addressing a person's social and environmental factors.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's Community Health Strategy team has identified Social Determinants of Health as a priority need for our community with a focus on health equity, especially for those who may be experiencing health disparities. There are substantial local community assets and Maine Coast Hospital has assets available to be leveraged in support of this need. Also, there are many evidence-based or promising approaches to

address the need for interventions on the many facets of Social Determinants of Health. Finally, Social Determinants of Health rated as a high priority to the community and Northern Light Health.

Intended action to address the need

Maine Coast Hospital intends to take the following actions in some capacity during this three-year cycle to address this need in our community: understand barriers to social determinants screening, establish partnerships with community organizations to support and facilitate enrollment in the FindHelp.org directory, connect resources to patients that have been identified as being in need, and provide or support cultural competency, trauma-informed care training of all staff to support sensitive and caring delivery of social determinants of health screening and referral.

Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

We anticipate that the result of these efforts will increase our understanding of social determinants of health needs in our community, to make it easier and more effective for care teams to screen patients consistently, to offer meaningful help to patients in need by connecting them with effective community resources, and to ultimately improve the health of the communities we serve.

Programs and resource allocation

We plan to dedicate necessary Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital internal resources in the form of time devoted to annual community health improvement (CHIP) planning, implementation, and evaluation, within the community health, population health, clinical, and administrative departments.

Planned collaborations

We will continue to partner closely with regional partners including Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital and community health organizations including Healthy Peninsula, Healthy Acadia, Downeast Community Partners, and other community organizations on an ongoing basis to coordinate plans and activities and to maximize the impact of our CHIPs.

Population of focus

Our population will include patients/community members of all ages, with the intention to particularly identify and reach people with the highest need for support and resources, and highest risk for isolation.

Priority: Substance Use

Rationale

Substance use, including opioids, alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, have a major influence on individuals, children, other family members, and communities. Alcohol misuse, smoking, and tobacco use cause or increase risk of many diseases, such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and respiratory conditions. The effects of substance use often result in social, physical, mental, and public health problems, including domestic violence, child abuse, accidents, crime, and suicide. Substance use is now understood to be a complex disease of the brain and body, requiring long-term attention and treatment just like any other chronic illness. There are many effective evidence-based strategies that communities, including healthcare organizations and providers, may employ to prevent, identify, and treat substance use disorders.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's Community Health Strategy team determined it was feasible to address this need with a focus on health equity, especially for those who may be experiencing health disparities. There are substantial local community assets and Maine Coast Hospital has assets available to be leveraged in support of this need. Also, there are many evidence-based or promising approaches to address the need for substance use interventions. Finally, substance use rated as a high priority to the community and Northern Light Health.

Intended action to address the need

Maine Coast Hospital intends to take the following actions to address this need in our community to reduce barriers and improve access to and availability of substance use prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction services: assess and improve screening practices, strengthen the availability and clinical-community linkage of resources within our practices (and in partnership with outside resources) for helping patients with substance use disorders, support integrated models of care for pregnant or parenting women and substance-exposed infants, develop and implement workflows that support ease of screening, management, and referral, and participate in community education.

Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

We anticipate that our efforts will result in improved identification of people in need, improved access to substance use treatment services, and thus ultimately improve the health of the people we serve and the community at large.

Programs and resource allocation

We plan to dedicate necessary Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital internal resources in the form of time devoted to annual community health improvement planning (CHIP), implementation, and evaluation, within the community health, population health, clinical, and administrative departments.

Planned collaborations

We will continue to work closely with regional partners including Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital, the Downeast Treatment Center Hub, and community health organizations (including Healthy Peninsula and Healthy Acadia) on an ongoing basis to coordinate plans and activities and maximize impact of our CHIPs.

Population of focus

The population of focus will be adolescents and adults within our community, with emphasis on people identified as being at risk for, or currently affected by, substance use disorders.

Health Priorities Not Addressed

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital considered all priorities identified in the Shared CHNA, as well as other sources, through an extensive review process. Priorities not selected, due to a variety of reasons are listed below:

- Access to care: Access to care was not selected as an independent priority of focus as many of our efforts identified in our strategy are connected to access issues. In addition, our hospital has current initiatives that are ongoing and part of our continual mission to improve access to care such as provider recruitment, engagement of navigators or the equivalent, and other efforts that support this priority.

Conclusion

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital is thankful for the participation and support of our community members and many area organizations in the Shared CHNA process and for contributing their knowledge of local community health needs. Through existing and future partnerships, collaborative efforts will be essential in addressing the identified community health strategies prioritized within.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will engage in another Shared CHNA in 2025 and looks forward to ongoing community participation in these important efforts.

Appendix

Evaluation of Impact

Progress report on selected priorities from Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's last (2019) Community Health Needs Assessment.

Northern Light Health and Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital are committed to promoting a culture of community stewardship and partnering together with community stakeholders to address high priority health issues. To do so effectively, we regularly monitor the effect of our community health efforts and make this information widely available to our communities in the form of annual Community Benefit statements, and this triennial Community Health Strategy report. The following annual Progress Report to Our Community provides a summary evaluation of impact of the actions taken by Maine Coast Hospital to address community health priorities adopted in 2019.

Measuring and reporting on progress is critical to making a difference in the communities we serve, and in the lives of those we care for. The following annual Progress Reports to Our Community are provided for:

- Progress Report to Our Community Fiscal Year 2020
- Progress Report to Our Community Fiscal Year 2021
- Progress Report to Our Community Fiscal Year 2022

For additional information, visit <https://northernlighthealth.org/2019-Community-Health-Strategy>

Fiscal Year 2020

PROGRESS REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY

Addressing community health needs



Northern LightSM
Maine Coast Hospital

Progress report update

FY 2020 Progress Report

Priority #1: Social determinants of health

Objective: Increase the number of patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources from 3,622 to 5,000 by 9/30/20.

Status: Completed

Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used): In fiscal year 2020 (FY20), Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital exceeded their target for patients screened for food insecurity. Patients and families who screened positive were offered community resources, such as offering food boxes and other educational resources by partnering with Good Shepherd Food Bank and Loaves and Fishes.

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

- Good Shepherd Food Bank
- Loaves and Fishes
- Northern Light Pediatric Care in Ellsworth
- Healthy Acadia

Highlights: In FY20, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital achieved the target by providing office and telehealth screening assessments for food insecurity. Boxes containing three days' worth of shelf-stable food were distributed to patients and families at the office. In response to the pandemic, curbside delivery was implemented to overcome any potential barriers related to access to food resources. The food boxes also included recipes, additional community resources, and related education for participants. Northern Light Pediatric Care's strong partnership with Good Shepherd Food Bank (GSFB) led to GSFB identifying grant funding for the continuation of this critical program. Loaves and Fishes has graciously received and stored food.

Outcome measure: In FY20, Northern Light Maine Coast Pediatric Office screened a total of 7,297 patients, which identified 251 opportunities to offer and assist with food insecurity resources.

Project lead: Cindy Vandegrift, Northern Light Pediatric Care Practice Manager, Ellsworth

Next steps: In fiscal year 2021 (FY21), Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will continue partnerships with Good Shepherd Food Bank and Loaves and Fishes. Northern Light Pediatric Care is collaborating with Good Shepherd to further assess and identify specific demographics in need to enhance access to food and nutrition assistance in Hancock County. Plans also include increasing food insecurity assessments and needs during telehealth visits.

Priority #2: Substance use

Objective: Increase the number of Medication-Assisted Treatment patient referrals for opioid use readily available in local communities from 0 to 25 by 9/30/20.

Status: Foundational work started

Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used): In FY20, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital trained three providers in Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) to treat and refer patients identified in our service area for programmatic assistance for opioid use. Education was provided to the Medical Staff surrounding the use of Hub and Spoke care model for patients with Substance Use Disorders. This strategy will help to enhance the MAT referral process, access to treatment, and coordination of follow up care with primary health care providers.

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

- Northern Light Primary Care Medical Staff
- Northern Light Primary Care Walk-in services in Ellsworth
- Northern Light Emergency Care at Maine Coast and Blue Hill Hospitals
- Northern Light Beacon Care Management
- TEAMHealth Medical Staff
- DownEast Treatment Center

Highlights: In FY20, three providers received MAT training and education. Hospital leadership identified key opportunities to increase MAT providers and implement an enhanced MAT referral process for FY21.

Outcome measure: In FY20, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital was unable to engage in the patient referral process for MAT due to reduced staff capacity, leadership oversight changes, and operational resource reallocation due to the pandemic.

Project lead: Sheena Whittaker, MD Senior Physician Executive

Next steps: In FY21, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will provide new and existing providers MAT training and solidify a process to engage in the MAT referral and data collection processes.

Priority #3: Access to care

Objective: Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will increase the number of service area residents identified as having no primary care provider and referred to healthcare coverage options from 0 to 1000 by 9/30/20.

Status: Foundational work started

Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used): In FY20, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital began operational planning which included hiring three additional primary care providers (PCP) to assist with increasing access for patients without an assigned PCP. Utilization of our engaged partners to identify patients with an unassigned PCP to facilitate referral for continued primary care services at Maine Coast Hospital.

Partners engaged: Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:
Northern Light Primary Care in Ellsworth (including Walk-In services), Gouldsboro, and Southwest Harbor
Northern Light Maine Coast Emergency Department
Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital and Care Management
The Jackson Laboratory
Northern Light Beacon Care Management

Highlights: In FY20, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital received referrals from various internal and external partners. Despite the pandemic, Maine Coast increased opportunities for primary care services through our implementation of Maine Coast COVID testing sites, curbside Influenza clinics, and with collaboration from Walk-In primary care services. This also allowed external referrals from The Jackson Laboratory and other surrounding community members who did not have an assigned PCP.

Outcome measure: In FY20, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital received referrals from various internal and external partners. Despite the pandemic, Maine Coast increased opportunities for primary care services through our implementation of Maine Coast COVID testing sites, curbside Influenza clinics, and with collaboration from Walk-In primary care services. Increased capacity, enhanced services, and promotion resulted in external referrals from The Jackson Laboratory and improved ability to meet primary care needs of community.

Project lead: Sheena Whittaker, MD, Senior Physician Executive (SPE)

Next steps: In FY21, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will establish a process to capture the number of patients with no PCP referred to one of the three primary care locations for Maine Coast.

Conclusion

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital continues work on identified priorities through its 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.

Fiscal Year 2021

PROGRESS REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY

Addressing community health needs



Northern LightSM
Maine Coast Hospital

Progress report update

FY 2021 Progress Report

Priority #1: Social Determinants of Health

Objective: Increase the number of patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources from 7,297 to 12,000 by 9/30/21.

Status: In progress

Strategy (approaches taken, and resources used) and highlights from this effort: In fiscal year 2021 (FY21), Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital utilized a validated two question screening for all patients at Northern Light Pediatrics to assess for food insecurity. To increase impact, pediatric staff were trained upon hire to use the screening and refer those who screened positive to additional resources such as food bags. Throughout the year, our pediatric practice continued to promote screening and access to food for their vulnerable population despite facing a number of challenges that included a growing practice, physical change in location, and a medical record conversion which necessitated workflow adaptations. During this challenging transition period and as a result of the medical records conversion, Maine Coast Hospital was able to expand the two-question screening to all primary care practices enabling more patients to be reached throughout a larger geographical area.

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

- Good Shepherd Food Bank
- Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry
- Maine Coast Primary Care Practices

Outcome measure: Maine Coast Hospital screened at least 4,104 patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources as appropriate.

Project lead: Vanessa Hawkins, Practice Manager

Next steps: In fiscal year 2022 (FY22), Maine Coast Hospital will increase the number of patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources from 4,104 to 12,000 by 9/30/22 through the continued utilization of the validated screening tool and referral process with our community partners.

Priority #2: Substance Use

Objective: Increase the number of patients referred to Medication-Assisted Treatment options in local communities from zero to 25 by 9/30/21.

Status: Foundational work started

Strategy (approaches taken, and resources used) and highlights from this effort: In FY21, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital maintained crucial conversations and training for staff regarding medication-assisted treatment (MAT) options for patient referrals into the Down East Treatment Center for services. Through a collaborative grand rounds offering for both Maine Coast Hospital and Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital,

providers offered peer support and training focused on substance use and treatment options for our healthcare teams to best serve our community members in need. Nursing champions identified in the emergency departments were provided additional MAT training. Through this foundational work we look to strengthening relationships with MAT providers and referrals to the Down East Treatment Center to continue promoting and engaging both patients and providers.

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

- Down East Treatment Center
- Northern Light Beacon Care Management
- Northern Light Emergency Care at Maine Coast and Blue Hill Hospitals
- Northern Light Primary Care Medical Staff
- Northern Light Primary Care Walk-in services in Ellsworth
- TEAM Health Medical Staff

Outcome measure: Maine Coast Hospital increased provider and patient awareness of opioid use disorder, reducing stigma, and increasing readiness for treatment. Educational opportunities were provided to promote MAT and to strengthen the relationship with our community partners. Education and networking is ongoing with additional support and resources for this fiscal year.

Project lead: Sheena Whittaker, MD, Senior Physician Executive

Next steps: In FY22, Maine Coast Hospital will increase provider and patient awareness of opioid use disorder, reducing stigma, and increasing readiness for treatment, recruit and train MAT prescribers at Northern Light primary care sites, and partner with community agencies to establish or expand local treatment programs to increase MAT to three sites for our community by 9/30/22.

Priority #3: Access to Care

Objective: Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will increase the number of service area residents identified as having no primary care provider and referred to healthcare coverage options from 0 to 1000 by 9/30/21.

Status: Completed

Strategy (approaches taken, and resources used) and highlights from this effort: Maine Coast Hospital engaged internal and external partners to provide primary care referrals for community members seeking services in the Hancock County service area. Established a process for patients with an undesignated primary care provider (PCP) to get a resource center referral to assist with PCP referrals. Utilized telehealth, walk-in care services, and other curbside clinics to allow for capacity in provider schedules, despite the additional resource demands of the pandemic.

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

- Convenient MD
- Northern Light Beacon Care Management
- Northern Light Maine Coast Emergency Department
- Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital and Care Management
- Northern Light Primary Care in Ellsworth (including Walk-In services), Gouldsboro, and Southwest Harbor
- The Jackson Laboratory

Outcome measure: Maine Coast Hospital increased the number of service area residents identified as having no PCP and referred to healthcare coverage options from zero to 981.

Project lead: Sheena Whittaker, MD Senior Physician Executive

Next steps: In FY22, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will work to schedule PCP appointments for patients who access Northern Light's Primary Care who do not have a primary care provider and increase the quantity as well as availability of face-to-face time with providers through physician recruitment and patient panel optimization. We are optimistic these efforts will increase the number of service area residents identified as having no PCP and referred to healthcare coverage options from 981 to 1200 by 9/30/22.

Conclusion

Northern Light Maine Coast 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.

Fiscal Year 2022

PROGRESS REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY

Addressing community health needs



Northern LightSM
Maine Coast Hospital

Progress report update

FY 2022 Progress Report

Priority #1: Social Determinants of Health

Objective: Increase the number of patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources from 5500 to 12000 by 9/30/22.

Status: Completed

Strategy: In fiscal year 2022 (FY22), Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital successfully exceeded their objective of increasing the number of patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources from 5,500 to 12,000 by 9/30/22 thanks to the buy-in, hard work, and commitment of the primary care practice teams.

12,246 total patients were screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources in FY22. A validated two-question screening tool was used initially for all patients beginning at Northern Light Pediatrics to assess for food insecurity. In May 2022, all Northern Light Primary Care practices were invited to participate in this project and our contract with Good Shepherd Food Bank was expanded to meet increased demand. To build competency in use of the screening tool, staff were trained upon hire how to use it correctly, and how to initiate getting patients access to a food bag or additional resources, including newly produced local food security resource lists if patients screened positive.

Throughout the year, practices continued to promote screening and access to food insecurity for their vulnerable population, despite multiple challenges including an entire electronic medical record conversion and significant staff shortages and turnover. Workflows were adapted, and documentation moved from a paper process to an electronic screening and reporting system embedded in Cerner, our electronic medical record. While this made for a bit of a transition period in data collection specific to “patients reached and positive screens”, it allowed for the food insecurity screening opportunity to expand to all primary care practices, deepening the reach to many more patients and a much larger geographical area. Confidence in the project grew throughout the final year of the project as a review of goals and performance became a standard agenda item at Maine Coast manager’s meetings.

Partners engaged: Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:
Northern Light Maine Coast Primary Care Practices (seven)
Good Shepherd Food Bank

Outcome measure: In FY22, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital screened 12,246 patients for food insecurity and provided food security resource information. 169 patients screened positive for food insecurity and 72 patients were given supplemental food bags and resources.

Project leads: Practice managers Vanessa Hawkins, Cody Garcia, and Caley Morse; Tammy Dickey, Director of Physician Practices; Nikki Gebreselassie, Quality Lead

Next steps: In fiscal year 2023 (FY23), Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital’s Social Determinants of Health priority will focus on findhelp.org. To that end, we will continue to screen and track for food insecurity at

annual wellness checks at a minimum and provide food security bags to our vulnerable patients in partnership with Good Shepherd Food Bank.

Priority #2: Substance Use

Objective: Increase the number of Medication-Assisted Treatment patient referrals opioid use readily available in local communities from zero to three by 9/30/22.

Status: In progress

Strategy: In FY22, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital prioritized ongoing conversations and provided support for staff including training on referrals of patients for Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) and Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) into the Down East Treatment Center for services. Positive progress was made in 2022 developing strong relationships with MAT/MOUD providers, increasing the number of MAT referrals from zero in 2021 to two in 2022. Continued collaboration with Down East Treatment Center to promote the program and engage patients and providers.

Partners engaged: Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital partnered with the following entities on this priority:
Northern Light partners

- Northern Light Primary Care Medical Staff
- Northern Light Primary Care Walk-in services in Ellsworth
- Northern Light Emergency Care at Maine Coast and Blue Hill Hospitals
- Northern Light Beacon Care Management
- TEAM Health Medical Staff

Community partners

- Down East Treatment Center managed by AMHC and Healthy Acadia

Outcome measure: In FY22, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital successfully engaged two primary care practices to make MAT/MOUD referrals in the effort to increase provider and patient awareness of opioid use disorder, reducing stigma, and increasing readiness for treatment. Educational opportunities were provided to promote MAT/MOUD. Getting patients in the community who would benefit from the services and support provided by MAT/MOUD to take advantage of the program is an ongoing concern that has affected Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's ability to reach the target outcome number of unique individuals exposed to the intervention.

To strengthen the relationship with our community partners, ongoing education and networking with primary community partner Downeast Treatment Center continues. Michael Murnik, MD provides monthly clinical supervision for the Downeast Treatment Center's "Hub and Spoke" treatment model that was developed by Downeast Substance Treatment Network Partners. He also attends monthly meetings of the Downeast Substance Treatment Network which is a monthly collaborative effort hosted by community partner Healthy Acadia to address the gaps and increase access to substance treatment and recovery.

Project leads: Practice managers Vanessa Hawkins, Cody Garcia, and Caley Morse; Tammy Dickey, Director of Physician Practices; Nikki Gebreselassie, Quality Lead

Next steps: In FY23, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will continue to focus on increasing provider and patient awareness of opioid use disorder and reducing stigma. Priority will be given to finding new ways of attracting and directing community members in need to taking advantage of the support available to them. Maine Coast Hospital will encourage all interested providers to increase readiness for treatment and receive training to become MAT/MOUD prescribers at Northern Light Health primary care sites. Maine Coast Hospital will continue to partner with community agencies to establish or expand local treatment programs to increase MAT/MOUD to five. Dr. Murnik will continue to partner with and provide clinical oversight for the ongoing work at the Downeast Treatment Center, as well as continue to participate as a core member in monthly Downeast Substance Treatment Network meetings.

In addition to continuing to increase the number of MAT/MOUD and in response to the new substance use community health improvement plan in FY23, Maine Coast Hospital will be offering a minimum of two trauma-informed care educational trainings to providers and staff and will be distributing state-sponsored Naloxone kits through our primary care practices and the emergency departments.

Priority #3: Access to Care

Objective: Maine Coast Hospital will increase the number of service area residents identified as having no primary care provider (PCP) and referred to healthcare coverage options from 759 to 1200 by 9/30/22.

Status: In progress

Strategy: In FY22, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital increased the number of service area residents identified as having no PCP and referred to healthcare coverage options by an additional 109 patients for a total of 868 patients overall. Maine Coast Hospital engaged internal and external partners to provide primary care referrals for community members seeking services in the Hancock County service area. Challenges related to this reaching the intended goal of increasing the number from 759 to 1200 patients in FY22 include access being significantly affected by provider FMLA, staff turnover vacancies, manager vacancies for practices, and lack of a standardized process for new patient intake and prioritization of appointments. Tracking new PCP visits in a standardized format hasn't been established; it is possible data may be underreported.

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

Northern Light partners

- Northern Light Primary Care in Ellsworth (including Walk-In services), Gouldsboro, and Southwest Harbor
- Northern Light Maine Coast Emergency Department
- Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital and Care Management
- Northern Light Beacon Care Management

Community partners

- Convenient MD

Outcome measure: In FY22, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital increased the number of service area residents identified as having no PCP and referred to healthcare coverage options from 759 to 868.

Project leads: Practice managers Vanessa Hawkins, Cody Garcia, and Caley Morse; Tammy Dickey, Director of Physician Practices; Nikki Gebreselassie, Quality Lead

Next steps: Access to care was not selected as an independent priority of focus in our next three-year Community Health Strategy cycle (starting in FY23) as many of our efforts identified in our 2022 strategy are connected to access issues. In addition, our hospital has current initiatives that are ongoing and part of our continual mission to improve access to care such as provider recruitment, engagement of navigators or the equivalent, and other efforts that support this priority.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital continues to strive to meet the needs of the communities served, through continued screening, ongoing assessment, and efforts to expand services and shifts resources as necessary. Although this priority is sunsetting, efforts are ongoing, with focus on panel management, goals to equally stratify provider's panels to allow for more easily accessible providers and more open schedules; improved efforts on pre-visit planning to keep appointments more efficient and reduce the need for unnecessary return visits and allow more appts for additional patients, maximize visits with RN/pharm when appropriate to increase access to providers.

Conclusion

Northern Light Maine Coast 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.