

Progress Report to our Community

Fiscal Year
2023

Addressing community health needs.

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

We used the results of the 2022 [Community Health Needs Assessment](#) along with community input to inform the development of our three-year [Community Health Strategy](#). As a member of Northern Light Health's Community Health Council, Eastern Maine Medical Center recognized the value, reach, and influence of aligned engagement efforts with a shared purpose. The following three priority areas were adopted as shared priorities where Northern Light Health member organizations would engage in common strategy to achieve greater statewide impact:

- Mental health
- Social determinants of health
- Substance use

This report is an update on Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center's progress on our community health strategy for fiscal year 2023 (October 2022 – September 2023), representing the first year of our three-year health improvement plan.

PRIORITY: Mental Health

Three-year approach (2023-2025)		
Goal	Strategy	Objective
Provide youth and families with the mental and behavioral health resources they need to thrive.	Partner with schools and other community organizations to ensure youth and their families have improved access to mental health prevention, early intervention, and treatment services.	Educate and empower others to recognize, support, and respond to mental and behavioral health needs of youth.

Shared objective:

Increase the number of individuals trained to support the mental health needs of youth.

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center trained staff in Psychological First Aid (PFA), an evidence-informed approach to help anyone — children, adolescents, adults, and families — in the immediate aftermath of a traumatic experience and has proven to be effective when someone is experiencing a mental health crisis at any time. PFA shines a light on the impact of collective trauma, builds resiliency, and assists in self-care action plans by incorporating five evidence-based principles: safety, calming, connectedness, self and community reliance, and hope.

Certified Eastern Maine Medical Center staff then engaged schools and/or youth serving organizations to educate and empower individuals to respond to mental and behavioral health needs of youth using the PFA training model.

Attendees received training in eight core elements: engagement, safety, stabilization, information gathering, practical assistance, connection to social supports, information on coping, and connecting with collaborative services.

Systemwide collective impact of our shared objective resulted in 35 training sessions with 584 individuals trained.

Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Bangor Public Library	Hilltop School*
BARN (Bangor Area Recovery Network)	Shaw House
Challenger Learning Center*	Together Place
Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center's student volunteer program*	

- Three community organizations* trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA); 28 individuals trained in PFA.
- Shaw House - provide monthly clinic via Family Practice and Residency
- Started Primary Care Depression Screenings for 12 year old's and older.
- Trauma Informed Care - collaboration with Acadia, Together Place, and BARN (Bangor Area Recovery Network)
- Five new staff members trained as PFA trainers

PRIORITY: Social Determinants of Health

Three-year approach (2023-2025)		
Goal	Strategy	Objective
Improve health outcomes for vulnerable populations.	Partner with community to improve equitable access to social supports, community resources, and healthcare services.	Connect individuals with community resources they need to improve their health and wellbeing.

Shared objective:

Increase community partner engagement with findhelp.org.

Findhelp.org is the nation's leading social care network, making it easier to connect patients and their families with free or reduced-cost programs from local partners and national support services with dignity and ease, and is one component of Northern Light Health's response to need in the communities we serve. Northern Light findhelp will continue to develop, allowing users to search and connect to community services.

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center engaged in meaningful, trusted community partnerships to reach priority populations with equitable access to community resources and social supports and connect individuals with community resources they need to improve their health and well-being through the findhelp.org platform. Eastern Maine Medical Center participated in a monthly systemwide workgroup focused on engagement efforts to educate community partners on the availability and uses of findhelp.org. We assisted those community partners with adding their program information to the platform directory and with activating the ability to receive referrals or requests for information through the platform. Systemwide community engagement efforts resulted in 28 partners offering 89 programs that increased engagement with findhelp.

Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Bangor Area Homeless Shelter*
Bangor Public Library*
Bangor YMCA*
Christine B. Foundation
Good Shepherd Food Bank

Hope House PCHC
Lafayette Family Cancer Institute
Penquis Community Action Program (CAP)
St. Joseph Hospital

- Three community partners* added nine programs to the findhelp directory:
 - Bangor Area Homeless Shelter: Bangor Area Homeless Shelter, Food pantry
 - Bangor Public Library: Computer classes, Knit Night at the Library
 - Bangor YMCA: Camp Hope, Camp Jordan, Membership for All, Open Door Program, Summer Day Camp
- Partnered with Good Shepherd Food Bank on Shelter and Nutrition for All Children (SNAC) Program
- Community Closet for patients; undergarments for sexual assault victims (SANE)
- Northern Light Cancer Care provided dental, medication, copay, and MaineCare application assistance. Additionally, they provided items such as walkers, canes, shower chairs, wigs, and living expenses such as auto repairs and lodging while patients were in treatment.

- Partnered with St. Joseph Hospital, in Bangor, on a community garden located on St. Joseph’s property.
- Thirty-six childbirth education classes were offered to the community in the last year with 510 enrolled participants.
- Provided Irving cards/Taxi/Uber vouchers to patients and families in need to help traveling back and forth to Eastern Maine Medical Center.

PRIORITY: Substance Use

Three-year approach (2023-2025)		
Goal	Strategy	Objective
Reduce deaths, disability, and suffering associated with substance use disorder.	Leverage community partnerships to reduce barriers and improve access to and availability of substance use prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction services. Optimize relationships with partners who can help us engage effectively with populations in need.	Improve pathways to prevention, treatment, and recovery for individuals with substance use disorder.

Shared objective:

Improve distribution and preventive access to state sponsored Naloxone kits.

In collaboration with other Northern Light Health member organizations and community-based organizations, trained Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center staff representing pharmacy and community health departments worked diligently to improve processes and partnerships to reduce barriers and provide equitable access to state-sponsored naloxone (Narcan) kits for priority populations.

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center participated in the Maine Naloxone Distribution Initiative¹, which provides state-purchased naloxone to community organizations, clinical sites, and end-users throughout Maine to distribute free of charge. Through a collaboration with Bangor Public Health & Community Services, Eastern Maine Medical Center worked in the emergency department and community settings to provide education on the use of these naloxone kits to end-users to facilitate the reversal of private overdoses in the community. Systemwide collective impact of our shared objective resulted in 1,453 naloxone kits distributed throughout Northern Light Health’s service area.

Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Bangor Area Recovery Network (BARN)
Bangor Public Health and Community Services
Co-Occurring Collaborative Serving Maine
Health Equity Alliance (HEAL)

Hermon School District
Maine Substance Use Disorders Learning Community
OPTIONS
Project ECHO: Low Barrier MOUD for Maine

- 127 state-sponsored naloxone kits distributed
- Staff trained in Trauma Informed Care

¹ [Distribute Naloxone – Maine Drug Data Hub](#)

- Family Medicine and Residency curriculum expansion to outreach the homeless population impacted by substance use disorder. A collaboration with community organizations. Peer to Peer consults between Acadia providers and pediatric primary care providers (internal and external to Northern Light Health).
- Began planning for naloxone training with the Hermon school district. Training will take place in fiscal year 2024 on October 6, 2023.
- Whitney Jandreau, PharmD, BCPS, Clinical Pharmacist Specialist presented:
 - “Naloxone and Addiction Neurobiology and Stigma...Oh my!” at MPA/MSHP Fall Conference
 - “Patient Case: QTc or Not QTc...That is the Question” at Project ECHO: Low Barrier MOUD for Maine
 - “Safe and Effective Opioid Practices in the Hospital: Pharmacy Perspective” to Co-Occurring Collaborative Serving Maine.
 - “Best and Promising Practice: Inpatient Pharmacists Advancing MOUD” to Maine Substance Use Disorders Learning Community