

Progress Report to our Community

Fiscal Year
2023

Addressing community health needs.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital 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, Maine Coast Hospital 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, Maine Coast Hospital 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 Maine Coast Hospital'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 Maine Coast Hospital 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 Maine Coast Hospital 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:

Children's Development Services	Downeast Horizons	Homeless Provider Resource
Community Health and Counseling Services	Downeast Partners & Friends	Network
Curriculum Coordinators in Hancock County	Downeast Partners Collaboration*	Kids Peace
Department of Health and Human Services	Downeast Restorative Justice	Maine Department of Corrections
Downeast Community Partners	Eagles Nest Clubhouse*	Maine State Police Liaisons
Downeast Family YMCA	Eastern Maine Development Corp.	Next Step Domestic Violence Project
	Families First Community Center	Regional School Unit #24
	Healthy Acadia	Special Children's Friends
	Help Me Grow	WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)

- Two community organizations* trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA); 22 individuals trained in PFA.
- Developed directory of behavioral health resources for youth and adults in the LGBTQ community.
- Engaged in "Help Me Grow" with the Department of Health and Human Services
- Resource discussion with OPTIONS counselor
- Engaged in the Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach Naloxone and Safety (OPTIONS) initiative coordinated by the Maine Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) and Community Health and Counseling Services

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 Maine Coast Hospital 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. Maine Coast Hospital 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:

Age Friendly Sullivan	Good Shepherd Food Bank	Next Step Domestic Violence Project*
Beth C. Wright Cancer Resource Center	Hancock/Washington County	Prosper Consortium
Community Caring Coalition	Homeless Providers Coalition	Restored Hope
Downeast Community Partners	Healthy Acadia*	Simmering Pot
Downeast Family YMCA	Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County	Substance Use Prevention Council hosted by Healthy Acadia
Downeast Partners for Children and Families	Inspire Warming Center	Heart of Maine United Way
Downeast Substance Treatment Network	Maine Health Access Foundation	WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)
Ellsworth Chamber of Commerce	Medical Neighborhood Team	
Friends in Action*		

- Three community partners* added 16 programs to the findhelp directory:
 - Friends in Action: Food and Medicine Delivery, Friendly Visits, Simple Home Repairs, Telephone Check-In, Transportation, Yard Work
 - Healthy Acadia: INSPIRE Recovery Center, Neighbor4Neighbor, Thai Chi, You've Got A Friend Fund
 - Next Step Domestic Violence Project: Community Education & School Programming, Confidential 24-Hour Helpline, Emergency Shelter, Legal Assistance, Support Groups, Transitional Housing

- 153 food bags distributed for patients in need, in partnership with Good Shepherd Food Bank
- 941 lbs. of free, fresh, local produce distributed August, Sept, and October to patients from three participating practices in partnership with the Good Shepherd Food Bank Mainers Feeding Mainers program.
- Sponsored of the Heart of Maine United Way's Hancock County Food Drive to support food security effort.
- Partnered with Downeast Community Partner's Thaw Fund to support the purchase of heating fuel for people living in poverty in Hancock County.
- Participated in Downeast YMCA Healthy Kids Fair and the WIC Community Baby Shower providing health and wellness information at both events.
- Food donation of approximately 43 gallons of homemade soup and other food to community members via Inspire Warming Center, a partnership with Healthy Acadia
Sponsored Down East Family YMCA Healthy Kids Fair and Pridefest celebration, a partnership with Healthy Acadia
- 40 Blood Pressure checks conducted at Juneteenth celebration in partnership with Healthy Acadia
- Partnered with Comfort Cases to stock 16 personal care backpacks to have for babies-teenagers entering Foster Care.

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 Maine Coast Hospital 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 Maine Coast Hospital 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, Maine Coast Hospital worked in the emergency department and primary care 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.

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

Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Downeast Substance Coalition
Downeast Substance Treatment
Network
Downeast Substance Use
Prevention Council

Hancock County Sherriff's Office
Healthy Acadia
Hub and Spoke Clinical Advisory
Council

Inmar/Northern Light Maine Coast
Pharmacy
Inspire Warming Center
Restored Hope for Recovering
Addicts

- Six state-sponsored naloxone kits distributed
- Prosper Consortium meetings
- Stocked Deterra medication waste bags, a program in partnership with the Hancock County Sherriff's Office and Healthy Acadia.
- Staff trained in Trauma Informed Care
- Engaged in collaborative efforts with listed partners.
- Assisted in the distribution of 452 kits of Narcan, 350 fentanyl test strips and 46 Xylazine test strips at the Blue Hill Fair in partnership with Opiate Free Island Project and others.
- Distributed and provided education for 36 kits of Narcan at Ellsworth Pridefest with Healthy Acadia
- Distributed and provided education for 20 kits of Narcan at the Stonington Lobster Boat races.