

Community Health Strategy

AR Gould Hospital

Addressing Community Health Needs

Fiscal Year 2023-2025



Northern Light HealthSM

Table of Contents

Letter from the president and board chair	3
Introduction	4
About Northern Light Health	4
About Northern Light AR Gould Hospital	4
Definition of community served	5
Addressing Community Health Needs	6
Shared Community Health Needs.....	6
Community Health Strategy	7
Process and methods for priority selection.....	7
Evaluation efforts	8
Feedback opportunity	8
Approval from governing board	8
Selected Priorities of Focus.....	8
Priority: Mental Health	8
Priority: Social Determinants of Health	9
Priority: Substance Use	10
Health Priorities Not Addressed	11
Conclusion	12
Appendix.....	13
Evaluation of Impact.....	13
Progress Report FY20	14
Progress Report FY21	21
Progress Report FY22 (upon availability).....	X

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.



Rick Duncan
Chair, Board of Trustees
Northern Light AR Gould Hospital



Greg LaFrançois, CPA, MHA, FACHE
President, Northern Light AR Gould 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 AR Gould 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 AR Gould 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 AR Gould Hospital

Northern Light AR Gould Hospital, a leading provider of healthcare services in Northern Maine, is an acute care hospital located in Presque Isle.

We are governed by a local volunteer board of trustees, so you can be sure that your needs are being addressed by those who know them best—your friends, family, and neighbors.

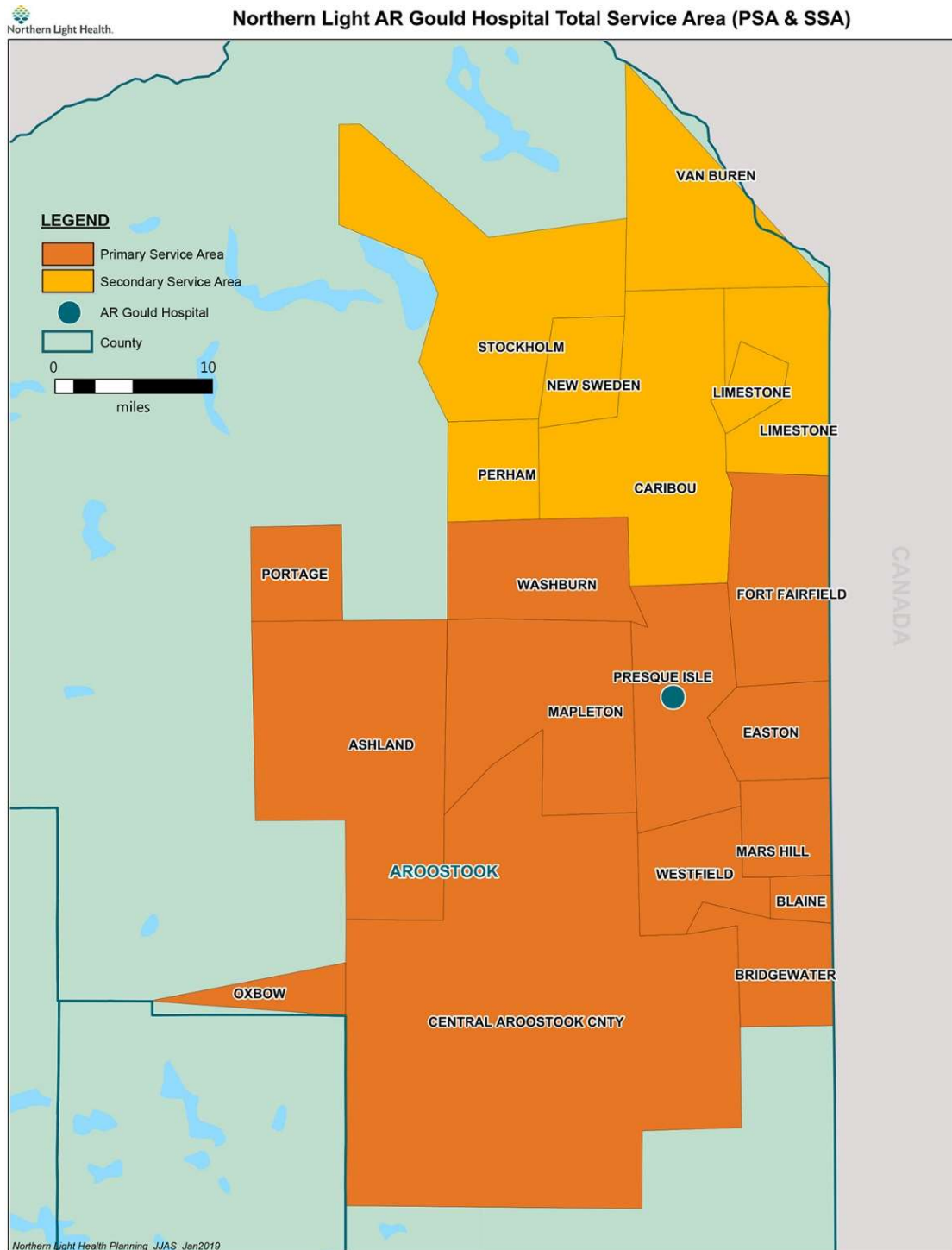
Our employees choose Aroostook County as their home for the same reasons you do: the beautiful scenery, strong family networks, and safe communities.

Our connection with Northern Light Health allows us to offer a wide range of healthcare services not typically available in rural communities. We have more than 60 physicians on our active medical staff and a team of more than 1,000 employees. We believe that the people of Aroostook County should have access to the very best healthcare. That's why we're bringing high quality healthcare services and advanced technologies and treatments to you.

Turn to us when it's time to bring a new life into the world, recover from an illness or injury, and discover the best ways to stay healthy and well. We're working hard to bring advanced medical specialties and the most up-to-date technology to the people of Northern Maine through services including advanced cancer care, cardiology, dialysis, sleep medicine, imaging, emergency response, and orthopedic services.

Definition of Community Served

Located in Presque Isle, Maine, Northern Light AR Gould 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 AROOSTOOK COUNTY		
	Percent	Number
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.9%	1,275
Asian	0.5%	318
Black/African American	1.0%	682
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.0%	12
White	94.9%	64,373
Some other race	0.1%	96
Two or more races	1.6%	1,053
Hispanic	1.2%	834
Non-Hispanic	98.8%	66,975
County population	67,809	
Veterans	11.0%	
Gay, lesbian, and bisexual (high school students)	9.7%	
Gay, lesbian, and bisexual (adults)	2.6%	
Transgender youth (high school students)	1.5%	
Persons with a disability	22.3%	

Social Determinants of Health Data AROOSTOOK COUNTY	
Median household income	\$41,123
Unemployment rate	5.5%
Individuals living in poverty	16.1%
Children living in poverty	20.2%
65+ living alone	32.2%

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 in order 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 AR Gould 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 AR Gould Hospital.

Northern Light AR Gould 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 AR Gould 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 AR Gould Hospital's Community Health Strategy team included individuals representing the following positions:

- Dr. David Weed, Director, Sleep Medicine Services, AR Gould
- Dawn Roberts, LPN, Community Health and Volunteer Coordinator, AR Gould
- Laura Turner, LSW, Director of Community Outreach, AR Gould
- Linda Menard, CME, and Library Coordinator/Chair of the Total Health Team, AR Gould
- Ruth Hanson, RN, Manager of Clinical Operations, AR Gould
- Amy Carlisle, RN, Manager of Inpatient Care Coordination, AR Gould
- Jamie Chandler, Chief Operating Officer, Aroostook County Action Program
- Holly Johnson, Board Member, AR Gould
- Jo-Ellen Kelley, AR Gould volunteer and Community Representative
- Stacy Boucher, Aroostook Public Health District Liaison, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Public Health Systems

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 in order to address the priority need, or to build on current programs, emerging opportunities, or other community assets
- Expertise: Northern Light AR Gould Hospital experts and local partnership experts in various priority areas

- Feasibility: Northern Light AR Gould 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 AR Gould Hospital will monitor and evaluate the strategies related to this priority area 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 this priority area 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 AR Gould 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 5, 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. Lastly, the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed demand for mental health services to an all-time high.

Northern Light AR Gould 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 AR Gould 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

AR Gould Hospital will participate in local coalitions to engage youth and their families in our community through educational efforts focused on supporting, promoting, and increasing awareness of stigma and barriers to mental health services.

Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

Through collaborative partnerships, AR Gould Hospital anticipates engaging the community through educational opportunities on the substantial local community assets available for mental health treatment and support. Through the provision of educational opportunities around mental health we hope to improve health outcomes while reducing the stigma and barriers to mental health services.

Programs and resource allocation

AR Gould Hospital will engage local providers to share their knowledge and expertise at various educational offerings (e.g., Medical Monday, AR Gould Community Health Newsletter, and Facebook posts). Clinical office patient education tool kits will include handouts with information on local mental health treatment and support services available.

Planned collaborations

AR Gould Hospital plans to work locally with Aroostook Mental Health Services, Aroostook County Action Program, The Northern Lighthouse, and the Aroostook Public Health Council. In addition, we see opportunity to work with Northern Light Acadia Hospital by utilizing the CARES package into after school youth groups already formed in the area.

Population of focus

AR Gould Hospital has resources and partnerships available to be leveraged in support of this need. We feel, families and children, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or geographical location will have access to prevention, treatment, and recovery services for mental health disorders in Aroostook County.

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 AR Gould 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 AR Gould 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

AR Gould Hospital will establish partnerships with community organizations focused on housing, transportation, and other resources to support and facilitate equitable access to social supports, community resources and healthcare services.

Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

AR Gould Hospital anticipates that community members who enter our primary care setting will have an opportunity to get connected to needed services through a follow up case management program. Our volume of patients leads to a higher identification rate of community members with unmet social needs that may be referred to community agencies. We hope to assist these individuals meet their identified needs to improve health outcomes and reduce disparities while positively effecting their quality of life and overall health.

Programs and resource allocation

AR Gould Hospital will use an electronic medical record screening tool in the primary care settings which will involve staff time during the initial patient intake. We will also commit other resources for the implementation and evaluation of this effort (e.g., food bags for positive food insecurity screenings, referrals to the local CAP agency for benefits that might include heating assistance, childcare, housing, etc.) Patient education tool kits, located at our clinical offices, will include handouts with information on local support services available.

Planned collaborations

AR Gould Hospital will form/continue strategic community partnerships with other facilities or organizations to address this priority. AR Gould will work in collaboration with the Aroostook County Action program (ACAP) who will provide case management resources for patients with a positive screen. Other partnerships include Good Shepherd Food Bank, Homeless Services of Aroostook, and Aroostook Regional Transportation.

Population of focus

AR Gould Hospital has resources and partnerships available to be leveraged in support of this need. We feel individuals disproportionately affected by various social determinants of health, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or geographical location should be connected to needed services.

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 AR Gould 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 AR Gould 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

AR Gould Hospital will work in collaboration with other agencies, community consortiums, coalitions, and networks (e.g., Drug Free Aroostook, Aroostook Mental Health Center, Rural Communities Opioid Response Program) to engage the community through educational efforts focused on reducing barriers and improve access to and availability of substance use prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction services while reducing stigma associated with substance use disorders.

Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

Through our prevention partnerships, AR Gould Hospital anticipates strengthening current collaborations and engaging new partnerships that will result in a reduction of deaths, disability, and suffering associated with substance use among Aroostook County citizens while reducing the stigma associated with substance use disorders.

Programs and resource allocation

AR Gould Hospital will engage local providers to share their knowledge and expertise at various educational offerings (e.g., Medical Monday, AR Gould Community Health Newsletter, during office visits, and social media posts.) Patient education tool kits that will be made available at our clinical sites, will include information on local substance use treatment options and available support services.

Planned collaborations

AR Gould Hospital, as a member of the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program team, plans to work closely with the Aroostook Mental Health Center and their designated team members to bring the issue of substance use disorder to our community. In addition, we see opportunity to work with Aroostook County Action Program, Power of Prevention, and Northern Light Acadia Hospital.

Population of focus

AR Gould Hospital has resources and partnerships available to be leveraged in support of this need. We feel all ages regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or geographical location should have access to prevention, treatment, and recovery services for substance use disorders.

Health Priorities Not Addressed

Northern Light AR Gould 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.
- Older adult health/Healthy aging: While not specifically identified as a stand-alone priority area of work, older adult health/healthy aging efforts are connected to many of our other priority areas of work. Due to these efforts, we feel confident that our older adult population will benefit from our identified work in these chosen priority areas. In addition, we continue to engage in ongoing collaborative work and initiatives focused on older adult health and healthy aging that will provide support for this population.

Conclusion

Northern Light AR Gould 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 AR Gould 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 AR Gould Hospital's last (2019) Community Health Needs Assessment.

Northern Light Health and Northern Light AR Gould 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 AR Gould 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 (*will be included upon availability*)

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

Fiscal Year 2020

PROGRESS REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY

Addressing community health needs



Progress report update

FY 2020 Progress Report

Priority #1: Social Determinants of Health

Objective: Increase the number of sites implementing screening and referral for health-related social needs from 0 to 6 by 9/30/20.

Status: Foundational work started

Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used): In fiscal year 2020 (FY20), Northern Light AR Gould Hospital participated on a Northern Light Health systemwide Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) workgroup responsible for developing, implementing, and monitoring the effectiveness of a system approach to SDOH screening and intervention inclusive of food security and other social needs. To date, the workgroup's focus has been on the identification of the SDOH screening and referral process, local resource development, provider training and education requirements for the screening tool's implementation, quality review and management of these efforts. Northern Light defined SDOH screening and intervention as a strategic priority to improve the health of the patients it serves.

As Northern Light AR Gould Hospital continues to participate in the systemwide SDOH workgroup, it became apparent that it would be helpful to explore the possibility of providing food bags at our outpatient clinics. Since we have been doing the food insecurity screening for several years, we have a good understanding of what clinics would benefit from having these on hand. Fort Fairfield Health Center was chosen due to their accountability of screenings and the high number of positive screens they continue to have. We worked with folks at Good Shepherd Food Bank (GSFB) to make this happen. GSFB provided us with a \$1200 mini grant to continue providing this service to our patients.

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

- Aroostook County Action Program
- Fort Fairfield Health Center
- Good Shepherd Food Bank
- Northern Light Beacon Health
- Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital
- Northern Light CA Dean Hospital
- Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center
- Northern Light Home Care & Hospice
- Northern Light Inland Hospital
- Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital
- Northern Light Mayo Hospital
- Northern Light Mercy Hospital
- Northern Light Sebec Valley Hospital

Highlights: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital, as part of the Northern Light systemwide workgroup, engaged in literature reviews and outreach efforts to other healthcare system's efforts in this realm to learn about the successes and challenges related to this type of screening effort that will ultimately help to inform how we will operationalize this effort throughout our system.

Outcome measure: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital's identified individual targets were not met for this priority area of work due to the deliberate approach by Northern Light Health as a system, to define a standard process for SDOH screening and intervention. As a result, this year's efforts have primarily been foundational. To date, the efforts of this workgroup has resulted in increased support for this initiative and the development of a screening tool for identifying patients in need.

Project lead: Dawn Roberts, Community Health and Volunteer Coordinator

Next steps: In fiscal year 2021 (FY21), Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will continue participating in the SDOH workgroup through Northern Light Health. The group will proceed with identifying the specific social needs to be recommended for inclusion in the system screening process. The group will also continue discussions and planning for provider education efforts to increase understanding of SDOH and current development of NLH screening and intervention protocol. We anticipate roll-out implementation of the SDOH screening efforts to take place in the coming year. In addition, we'll also continue to consider COVID-related changes to primary care and how these may impact feasibility and provider/patient receptiveness of SDOH screening and referral.

Priority #2: Substance Use

Objective: Increase the number of partnerships with community-based substance use prevention efforts from 0 to 4 by 9/30/20.

Status: Completed

Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used): In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital's Community Health and Volunteer Coordinator, Dawn Roberts, sought out opportunities to increase partnerships with community-based substance use prevention efforts by joining local coalitions and making connections. The partnerships joined included; Aroostook County Action Programs (ACAP) Drug Free Aroostook Coalition, Aroostook County Marijuana Work Group, MicMac Drug Task Force, Aroostook District Coordinating Council, Aroostook Mental Health Centers (AMHC), HRSA RCORP Planning Consortium, Aroostook County Collaborative Meeting, Health Service Advisory Committee, and Working on Wellness Meetings at Northern Maine Community College. Each of these groups brings several participants from different backgrounds to the table with information around what is happening, services that are available, and opportunities for collaboration.

AR Gould Hospital participated in several events that were related to substance use prevention, these included; AR Gould's annual health fair, The Great American Smoke Out, Community Health Talks, and the Walk With A Doc program. Drug Deactivation Bags were provided to community members at the following venues; Senior Connections meetings, health fairs, outpatient clinics, and upon request. Drug Takeback magnets and cards were provided to patients in our primary care offices and at AR Gould's reception desks. We held a Wear Red for Heart Health Event and had Tobacco Cessation and Prevention representatives from Aroostook County Action Program join us to share resources join us. We partnered with AMHC by resourcing one of our providers, trained to prescribe Medication Assisted Treatment, one day a week in the AMHC Caribou office. AR Gould Hospital partnered with ACAP on an event titled IMPACT for youth to engage in substance use and prevention activities offered by a collaborative of service and prevention partners. Our

Walk With A Doc event engaged participants to discuss exercise and aging and how to keep yourself from needing medication for joint pain.

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

- Aroostook Area Agency on Aging
- Aroostook County Action Program
- Aroostook Mental Health Center
- Boys and Girls Club
- Caribou Law Enforcement
- MicMac Tribe
- Northern Maine Community College
- Pines Health Services
- Power of Prevention
- The Northern Lighthouse

Highlights: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital partnered with Aroostook County Action Programs and Drug Free Communities to spread the word about the National Drug Take Back day on October 26th. Efforts to spread the word of the event included the use of brochures, placing information on all hospital monitors, and our Facebook page. Through this collaboration, Aroostook County was able to collect 1,797 pounds of unused and unwanted medications which translated to 61 boxes of medications now properly disposed of that cannot make it out onto our streets for illegal use.

Outcome measure: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital increased the number of partnerships with community-based substance use prevention efforts from 0 to 10. Due to COVID 19 restrictions we had to cancel some of our planned events. However, we were still able to hold 10 events related to substance use prevention efforts that collectively served 2,250 people directly and an estimated 300,000 others reached through social media, television and print.

Project lead: Dawn Roberts, Community Health and Volunteer Coordinator.

Next steps: In FY21, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will continue to increase the number of partnerships with community-based substance use prevention efforts from 10 to 12 by 9/30/21. We plan to continue to serve on established local partnerships with community-based substance use prevention efforts as well as seek out additional partnerships. AR Gould was recently chosen to participate in Aroostook Mental Health Centers (AMHC), HRSA RCORP Planning Consortium. This two year over \$200,000 planning grant has been awarded to AMHC to seek out resources available in the community and identify gaps to prevention and treatment. This grant will be a wonderful opportunity to see what is needed in Aroostook County. We are planning a lot of the same activities as last year; Great American Smoke Out, Wear Red, Drug Take Back Day, Walk With A Doc focused on pain medication reduction. In October we will provide an Air Out Tobacco Dirty Laundry Event with a local recreation center, this will be a new event for us this year. Hopefully COVID-19 will not hinder any of our plans going forward.

Priority #3: Access to Care

Objective: Increase the number of colorectal cancer educational opportunities in the community from 0 to 4 by 9/30/20.

Status: Completed

Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used): In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital implemented many different approaches to provide colorectal cancer educational opportunities to the community. Prior to COVID-19, we offered five in-person educational opportunities. After COVID-19 arrived and changed the way we previously conducted business, we had to re-think how we would provide educational opportunities moving forward. We incorporated the use of the following outlets to provide colorectal cancer education via hospital monitors, Facebook videos, pamphlets in offices, and radio. With valuable help from AR Gould's marketing and communications department we were able to meet our objective while faced with the challenges of the pandemic.

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

- Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP)
- Department of Federal Accounting Services (DEFAS)
- Maine Cancer Foundation (MCF)
- Nordic Heritage Center
- Power of Prevention
- Townsquare Media

Highlights: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital applied for and received a two-year Maine Cancer Foundation Colorectal screening Grant to increase the community's awareness about the benefits and the different types of colorectal screenings, availability and demystifying fears that surround these tests by providing quarterly educational opportunities for the public. AR Gould focused on screenings within primary care offices with the use of updated materials and resources. The \$70,710. grant is for 2 years and will help us with these goals. We also still have Screen Me flyers in all our outpatient clinics, show clips on the monitors and Facebook and continue to provide colorectal cancer educational opportunities to our community.

Outcome measure: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital was able to achieve our goals to increase the number of colorectal cancer educational opportunities by using many different techniques. Due to COVID-19 in-person activities were limited from March on. We held our annual health fair in October, added colorectal information to several events we held before the pandemic, conducted a virtual Walk With A Doc on Colorectal health, provided a radio advertisement called Medical Minute on colorectal health, had our general surgeon speak at a Healthy Aging luncheon, in addition to other efforts. In total we provided 9 educational opportunities to the community that reached over 81,000 people.

Project lead: Dawn Roberts, Community Health and Volunteer Coordinator

Next steps: In FY21, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will increase the number of colorectal cancer educational opportunities in the community from 8 to 11 by 9/30/2021. With the grant received by the MCF we will focus on increasing the number of screenings done in our Fort Fairfield Health Center as well as create new media and brochures for patients. Our hope is that these materials will remove the stigma of colorectal screenings that will in turn increase numbers. In FY21, thanks to the grant, we will be able to offer some free FIT testing to patients that are either not insured or underinsured to ensure accessible to those in need.

Priority #4: Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Weight

Objective: Increase the number of evidence-based programs focused on increasing access to and availability of physical activity from 1 to 3 by 9/30/20.

Status: Completed

Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used): In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital provided a number of programs focused on increasing access to and availability of physical activity and nutrition to the community. We leveraged many local partnerships to achieve these goals. Activities provided were either free or offered at a reduced cost to participants. We partnered with the AR Gould's Total Health Team to provide a fall hike up Haystack and a winter snowshoe hike at Nordic. We partnered with Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Good Shepherd Food Bank (GSFB), and Graves Shop and Save to provide grocery store tours and a series of nutrition classes. We provided four Healthy Aging luncheons for seniors and participated in local health fairs to promote our Fit-n-Fun Series of events. We offered two free skate days, reduced cost ski passes/ rentals, and reduced cost tubing passes. Also offered was a new program, Walk With A Doc, which allowed the public to walk and talk with a provider in a casual out-of-office environment while getting out and getting physically active. In February our Wear Red for Women's Heart Health event featured information on healthy eating, physical activity, and weight management. March brought about our partnership with Nordic for the Winter Frolic Event that provided free ski lessons, snowshoe lessons, and fat bike demonstrations. Beginning March 15th, our planned events were cancelled and replaced with Facebook messaging and online contests due to COVID-19 restrictions. A very successful online event was the spring Garden Kit Project that provided a garden growing kit to anyone that requested one; we were able to provide 101 garden kits all over Aroostook County to help youth understand where their nutritious vegetable come from. Another online activity that had a positive response was the Spring Get Out and Get Moving challenge. Each week in May participants who sent in a photo of a healthy activity would be entered into a drawing for a gift basket. We provided a Yoga in the park activity in June that was well attended and utilized COVID-19 precautions. Our objectives were met with this goal, and despite the pandemic, AR Gould was able to pivot in ways that allowed for creative forms of engagements to ensure our community members still had physical activity and nutrition opportunities available.

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

- Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP)
- Aroostook Area Agency on Aging (AAAA)
- Aroostook State Park
- Aroostook Center Mall
- Aroostook Band of Mic Macs
- Big Rock
- Beacon Health – Cara Miller
- Crown Ambulance
- Department of Finance and Accounting (DEFAS)
- Good Shepherd Food Bank (GSFB)
- Graves Shop and Save
- Let's Go 5-2-1-0
- Maine Agri Women
- Nordic Heritage Center
- Northern Maine Community College (NMCC)
- Presque Isle Recreation Center
- Presque Isle Housing Authority

Highlights: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital used local collaborations to achieve the goals of increasing local programming around nutrition and physical activity. Not only do these collaborations bring in subject matter experts, but they provide an opportunity for these programs to work alongside each other to get the biggest impact and reach the most people. By starting a new program called Walk With A Doc, we were able to provide a learning opportunity for community members while they participated in a physical activity. These walks also provide an opportunity for citizens to meet with providers in a relaxed atmosphere where they feel comfortable to discuss topics and encourage them to see that provider when needed. After doing a poll with the Senior Connections group, we were able to better understand areas of interest for this population, such as a strong desire for nutrition education. This proved true with the abundant participation in both our nutrition classes and the grocery store tours. Youth also expressed interest in nutrition education as demonstrated in the tremendous response to the garden kit project. While COVID-19 changed some of the activities we had planned, AR Gould's community health team, along with help from Marketing and Communications, were able to continue with the programming and messaging in a different way.

Outcome measure: In FY20, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital provided 43 evidence-based programs focused on increasing access to and availability of physical activity and nutrition activities to the community. This far exceeded our original objective by 41 additional programs. Twenty-nine unique sites were exposed to these interventions and 1,738 people attended these events in person. Information was also provided to people in other ways, through local television, multiple Facebook videos, hospital monitors, posters and brochures in the community, radio and mailings. COVID-19 changed the way we engaged the community and due to creative approaches, we were able to continue our outreach efforts, just in a more socially distanced manner.

Project lead: Dawn Roberts, Community Health and Volunteer Coordinator

Next steps: In FY21, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will continue to provide evidence-based programs focused on increasing access to and availability of physical activity. It is unlikely we will be able to provide additional programming due to COVID-19 and social distancing but hope to maintain our offerings at 43. Some of the programs we plan to continue include: Walk With A Doc; hopefully reinstating our Healthy Aging luncheons; Community Health Talk; free skate, ski and swim events; and nutrition classes and store tours when allowed. We also plan to continue with our collaborative events with Let's Go! 5-2-1-0, SNAP, local recreation centers, Presque Isle Housing Authority, and other community partners working towards the same goals. It is our hope that we will once again be able to offer more in-person events, but if that is not possible, we will find new and creative ways to continue to provide programs that educate participants on physical activity opportunities and nutrition education.

Conclusion

Northern Light AR Gould 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 Light
A.R. Gould Hospital

Progress report update

FY 2021 Progress Report

Priority #1: Social Determinants of Health

Objective: Increase the number of sites implementing screening and referral for health-related social needs from 0 to 1 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 AR Gould Hospital participated in the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Workgroup, which met bi-weekly through November 2020. The Workgroup suspended meetings after this date to accommodate new system-level SDOH efforts. In January 2021, Northern Light Health activated four critical path project teams to plan and operationalize a system approach to identifying patients with social health needs. These groups oversaw standardization of the Cerner Social History Tool, which will ensure patient demographics and health history are documented in a consistent fashion across all Northern Light Health member hospitals. The existing “Food Insecurity” form in Cerner was then updated to include six additional evidence-based questions to assess patients’ housing status and safety, transportation, utilities, daily activities, and isolation. The updated screening form aligns with most of the recommendations developed by the SDOH Workgroup members. Both the “SDOH Screening” form and the updated Social History Tool went live in Cerner on 5/18/21 and are now available for use. Additional efforts during this year included foundational work to operationalize the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) and developing recommendations for implementation of a social care network platform (Aunt Bertha). These additional Cerner functions are slated to go live in fiscal year 2022 and will provide Northern Light Health with enhanced ability to understand social needs by populations and geographic location and provide seamless patient referrals to community-based organizations for assistance with social needs. Moving forward, the SDOH Workgroup will be re-established in FY22 as the “SDOH Team” and report to the Northern Light’s Quality Council and will be responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the effectiveness of Northern Light Health system’s implementation of SDOH screening and intervention.

Partners engaged: Northern Light AR Gould Hospital partnered with the following Northern Light Health members on this priority:

Acadia Hospital, Beacon Health, Blue Hill Hospital, CA Dean Hospital, Eastern Maine Medical Center, Home Care & Hospice, Inland Hospital, Maine Coast Hospital, Mayo Hospital, Mercy Hospital, and Sebec Valley Hospital. In addition, Northern Light Health's Information Services, Clinical Informatics, and Clinical Standards Group.

Outcome measure: In FY21, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital and other member hospitals were unable to initiate SDOH screening and meet the projected targets. This was an accepted outcome of the system led SDOH efforts, which were initiated after the FY20 community health improvement plan’s activities and targets had been established. Ultimately, several key system outcomes were met during this period, including standardization of how and where SDOH information is documented within the electronic health record and adoption of a standard SDOH screening form. This provides a successful foundation for SDOH efforts moving forward. While screening has occurred, because of inclusion on standard rooming workflows, the reporting

capability screening rates and/or results will be completed by IS following additional auditing and mapping of appropriate Cerner concepts and data.

Project lead: Dawn Roberts, Community Health & Volunteer Coordinator

Next steps: In fiscal year 2022 (FY22), Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will participate in SDOH team efforts to operationalize SDOH screening within practice locations, as well as contribute to development of the metrics that will be used to report and evaluate SDOH screening reach and effectiveness. Member hospitals will have a key role in supporting the implementation of Aunt Bertha, primarily through completing an inventory of existing community resources and referral partners and conducting a community resource gap analysis to identify potential weaknesses in their local community services networks. These activities are proposed Key Performance Indicators in the FY22 Annual System Goal and will inform the development of the resource directory within Aunt Bertha. Additionally, member hospitals will have an opportunity to participate in SDOH quality improvement initiatives as part of a recent award to Northern Light Health. This grant, provided through a collaboration between Pfizer, Inc., and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, will support discrete quality improvement projects to understand and improve SDOH screening and referral workflows.

Priority #2: Substance Use

Objective: Increase the number of partnerships with community-based substance use prevention efforts from 10 to 12 by 9/30/21.

Status: Completed

Strategy (approaches taken, and resources used) and highlights from this effort: In FY21, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital's Community Health and Volunteer Coordinator, Dawn Roberts, continued to increase partnerships with community-based substance use prevention efforts by attending meetings of local coalitions and continuing to make connections. Some of the 17 partnerships include Aroostook County Action Programs (ACAP) Drug Free Aroostook Coalition, MicMac Drug Task Force, Aroostook District Coordinating Council, Aroostook Mental Health Centers (AMHC), HRSA RCORP Planning Consortium, Aroostook County Collaborative and Health Service Advisory Committee (please see the list below for additional partnerships). Each of these groups brings several participants from different backgrounds to the table with information around what is happening, services that are available, and opportunities for collaboration. This partnership also explores the gaps in services that exist in Aroostook County.

AR Gould Hospital participated in several events that were related to substance use prevention, these included; The Great American Smoke Out, Walk with a Doc program, Party at the Pad Celebrations (Tobacco Prevention), Smoking Cessation Classes, Promotion of Naloxone Training classes, Air out Tobacco's Dirty Laundry (Easton Recreation Center), Drug Take Back Days, Gold Star Standards of Excellence Program (Gold Award), New Year - New You!- Smoking Cessation information Display, "Don't host" handouts, Quarterly Prevention Booklets, DFA signage- You Matter, Community Needs Assessment Planning, and a local Health Fair. We partnered with AMHC by resourcing one of our providers, trained to prescribe Medication-Assisted Treatment, one day a week in the AMHC Caribou office and we are now offering Medication-Assisted Treatment in our Emergency Department. This is an operational effort, and a contracted, paid for service.

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

Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP)– Tobacco Prevention, Tobacco Cessation, Drug Free Aroostook,
Health Service Advisory, Aroostook County Collaborative
Power of Prevention (POP)
MicMac Tribe
Local Law Enforcement
Aroostook Mental Health Center (AMHC)
Northern Maine Community College (NMCC)
The Northern Lighthouse (TNLH)
Boys and Girls Club
WAGM TV
University of Maine at Fort Kent (UMFK)
Cary Medical Center
Wabanaki Public Health
Easton Recreation Center

Outcome measure: In FY21, Northern Light AR Gould Hospitals Community Health & Volunteer Coordinator, Dawn Roberts, participated with the lead applicant Aroostook Mental Health Center (AMHC) in an 18-month planning effort for Rural Communities Opioid Response Program planning grant (HRSA). Through this process, that started in July 2020, we participated in monthly meetings and subcommittee work to conduct a needs assessment, gap analysis, strategic and action plan to strengthen and expand Substance Use Disorder/Opioid Use Disorder (SUD/ODU), prevention, treatment, and recovery services in Aroostook County. Through the work of the consortium, AMHC has been awarded the HRSA RCORP Implementation grant. This is a three-year, \$1,000,000 grant and allows the consortium to continue its work in reducing the morbidity and mortality of substance use in Aroostook County. AR Gould will continue to contribute expertise to represent in the implementation process and support activities to work towards long-term planning efforts that increase coordination of care between prevention, treatment, and recovery services.

Project lead: Dawn Roberts, Community Health & Volunteer Coordinator

Next steps: In FY22, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will maintain the number of partnerships with community-based substance use prevention efforts from 12 to 12 by 9/30/22. We hope to continue the same activities as last year, Great American Smoke Out, Wear Red, Drug Take Back Day, and a Tie-Dye against Tobacco event with a local recreation center. Although these events may take on a different look and feel due to COVID the plan is to still provide the information to patients and the community by any means possible.

Priority #3: Access to Care

Objective: Increase the number of colorectal cancer educational opportunities in the community from 6 to 8 by 9/30/21.

Status: Completed

Strategy (approaches taken, and resources used) and highlights from this effort: In FY21, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital worked to increase the number of educational opportunities in the community. While the traditional methods of spreading information such as health fairs were not an option due to COVID, we were able to find ways to engage the community regarding colorectal cancer information. We developed a video

about colonoscopies with Dr. Fredrickson and played it in all primary care locations, updated and distributed the Colorectal Cancer Brochure, handed out the brochure at our drive through flu shot clinics, displayed posters in primary care wait rooms in the Fort Fairfield Clinic, featured a Medical Monday segment on colorectal exams with Dr. Bernaiche, ran a press release in the local paper about the Maine Cancer Foundation (MCF) Colorectal Grant award containing information on why and how to get tested, sent information cards to our Healthy Aging group and attended one health fair at ACME Monaco where we provided information for employees. Through these methods we were able to reach over 76,000 people with colorectal cancer education.

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

- WAGM TV
- The Star Herald
- Aroostook County Action Program
- MCF
- ACME Monaco
- Facebook

Outcome measure: In FY21, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital leveraged 10 methods of communication with the community regarding Colorectal Health. By creating an informative video, using print media, updating the brochure, and getting it into as many hands as possible we were able to reach over 76,000 people in the Aroostook County Community resulting in meeting our 2021 goal, even with COVID restrictions.

Project lead: Dawn Roberts, Community Health & Volunteer Coordinator

Next steps: In FY22, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital will continue to increase the community's awareness of the benefits of colorectal screenings and availability. Provide information to patients and demystify fears and stigma of colorectal cancer. We plan to provide educational opportunities to community members through outreach events and media and provide education on and access to a limited number of free FIT tests through funding from the MCF by advertising this service in all AR Gould Primary Care locations in Aroostook County.

Priority #4: Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Weight

Objective: Maintain the number of evidence-based programs focused on increasing access to and availability of physical activity and nutrition opportunities at 43 by 9/30/21.

Status: In progress

Strategy (approaches taken, and resources used) and highlights from this effort: In FY21, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital provided 31 programs focused on increasing access to and availability of physical activity and nutrition opportunities in our community. This number is short of our anticipated goal of 43, several planned activities were unfortunately postponed due to COVID outbreaks and restrictions. Fortunately, the programs that were offered featured a wide array of opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to attend. Using different mediums to engage participants we were able to reach our target audience. Methodologies employed included: educational cards mailed, in person events, Facebook Contests/posts, handouts and other types of mailings encouraging people who may not have felt comfortable joining a group in person to

participate within their own circle and benefiting from some type of physical activity or nutrition activity that we provided.

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

- 5-2-1-0 Let's Go
- ACAP Head Start Program
- ACAP Nutrition Program
- Age Friendly Presque Isle
- Aroostook Area Agency on Aging
- Aroostook Center Mall
- Aroostook County Action Program
- Aroostook State Park
- Bike Coalition of Maine
- City of Presque Isle
- Dr. Bruce Alexander
- Easton Recreation Center
- Limestone Chamber-Recreation Center-Police Department
- Nordic Heritage Center
- Northern Maine Community College, Cooperative Extension
- Presque Isle Historical Society
- Presque Isle Recreation Center
- Prevention Services
- SAD 1
- St. Apollonia Dental Clinic
- Tobacco Prevention

Outcome measure: In FY21, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital provided 31 programs focused on increasing access to and availability of physical activity and nutrition opportunities in our community. Some of these programs included: six - Walk with a Doc events, two - hikes, eight - cooking classes, two - Party at the Splash Pad events, two - bike rodeo/safety events and many more activities designed to engage our community in physical activity and nutrition opportunities. Through different mediums we were able to engage participants in order to reach our target audience resulting in over 73,000 individuals being exposed to programming and messaging. While we came up short on the target goal of 43, the opportunities that the programming offered provided outstanding information for people of all ages and activity levels to create new and healthy habits for the future.

Project lead: Dawn Roberts, Community Health & Volunteer Coordinator

Next steps: In FY22, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital plans to maintain the number of evidence-based programs focused on increasing access to and availability of physical activity and nutrition at 25 by 9/30/22. This number has been reduced from the 2021 goal of 43 due to uncertainty surrounding COVID and what restrictions for programming will be in place in the coming year. Every opportunity to provide education and programming will be explored and weighted with the infection prevention team at AR Gould for safety and precautions and will be offered if approved by them. The hope is to exceed the goal of 25 in 2022, while keeping safety in the forefront of our community efforts.

Conclusion

Northern Light AR Gould 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.

