

Community Benefit Report 2019



Northern Light
HealthSM

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Throughout Northern Light Health, we're rolling up our sleeves to provide exceptional care to our communities. We are inspired by the work we do every day, the patients we serve, our co-workers, and the direction our health delivery system is moving to make healthcare work for Mainers.

Our patients benefit when we work together as a team; whether it's in Portland at Northern Light Mercy Hospital, or in Aroostook County at Northern Light AR Gould Hospital, we are committed to delivering care focused on the needs of each person, all while guiding families and individuals through the care experience. We also maximize our impact when we work with patients to address the social determinants of health – poverty, nutrition, transportation, and so on. As you read our 2019 Community Benefit Report, you will see stories about our member organizations engaging and working with our communities to make healthcare accessible and straightforward.

In 2019, we addressed issues in our communities, including food insecurity, health literacy, and the opioid crisis. At the same time, we are celebrating and embracing diversity with Northern Light Acadia Hospital's participation at the Bangor Pride Week festival and parade. We know that our neighbors are consistently looking for places where they can go for personalized, individualized care—and we want them to choose us. We are determined to be the best option for them while continuing to raise quality through innovation, teamwork, and efficiency. This is our promise to our patients, their families, and the communities we serve.

Read on to learn more about collaborations within Northern Light Health and with our community partners. We feel energized and excited by the work that is happening in our communities and look forward to what we can accomplish in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Michelle Hood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

M. Michelle Hood, FACHE
Northern Light Health President and CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry McCrum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barry McCrum
Northern Light Health Board Chair

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—in our hospitals, primary and specialty care practices, long-term and home healthcare, and ground and air medical transport and emergency care—are committed to making healthcare work for you.

2019 Community Benefit

What is Community Benefit?

Northern Light Health provides a wide range of free or reduced-cost programs and services to those who are sick, injured, or disabled. In addition, every Northern Light Health member organization plays a vital community role working in partnership with others to assess community health needs and improve population health through prevention and intervention efforts.

Community benefits are provided via a broad range of community health improvement activities. They are programs, services, and investments designed to improve the health of our communities and increase access to healthcare in response to identified community health needs. These benefits are designed to:

- Improve access to healthcare services
- Enhance the health of the community
- Advance medical or healthcare knowledge
- Relieve or reduce the burden of government or other community efforts

Community benefit activities are integral to the mission of Northern Light Health. While at times unnoticed, Northern Light Health community investments improve health and promote wellness for all who work, play, learn, and make Maine their home. This Community Benefit Report highlights the Northern Light Health commitment to community improvement by quantifying the value of programs, services, and charitable care provided.

Reportable Benefits:

As supported by national models, such as those developed by the Catholic Health Association and the Internal Revenue Service guidelines, the following categories represent the benefits Northern Light Health provided to the community in 2019:

- Traditional Charity Care
- Unrecoverable Interest Income
- Unpaid Cost of Medicaid
- Unpaid Cost of Medicare
- Community Health Improvement Services
- Health Professions Education
- Research
- Cash and In-Kind Contributions
- Community Building Activities
- Community Benefit Operations



System Community Benefit

Total: \$220,986,917

Community Health Improvement Services

\$2,420,155

Health Professions Education

\$1,352,386

Research

\$1,833,726

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

\$297,404

Community Building Activities

\$632,701

Community Benefit Operations

\$1,876,934

Traditional Charity Care

\$19,742,227

Unrecoverable Interest Income

\$2,130,334 on \$52.1M

Unpaid Cost of Medicaid

\$65,253,749

Unpaid Cost of Medicare

\$125,447,301



Definitions of Reportable Benefits

Traditional Charity Care: \$19,742,227

Northern Light Health is committed to treating all patients who need our care regardless of their health insurance or financial status. Traditional charity care is the amount of free or discounted health services provided to persons who cannot afford to pay for services and meet Northern Light Health's criteria for financial assistance. To promote the health and wellbeing of the communities served, uninsured or under-insured individuals with limited financial resources, who do not qualify for various entitlement programs, are eligible to receive free or discounted healthcare through our organization.

Northern Light Health's financial assistance policy provides two levels of support:

- 100% free care to patients for medically necessary services if their family income is less than 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- Gross family income between 150% and 250% of the Federal Poverty Level may qualify for a significantly discounted care.

Northern Light Health ensures the public is aware of our financial policy in accordance with the 501 (r) statute through on-site financial counselors, policy availability and visibility, specifically at patient intake areas, and on our organization's website northernlighthouse.org/billing-help. We also send our financial assistance notifications to community based organizations across our system so we reach the population that is most in need. Financial counselors also help patients find other sources of health coverage for which they may be eligible. In 2019, Northern Light Health provided \$19,742,227 in traditional charity care.

Unrecoverable Interest Income: \$2,130,334 on \$52.1 million

Unrecoverable interest income represents projected loss of interest from funds used to subsidize underpayments related to the cost of care provided to individuals on state Medicaid receiving services through Northern Light Health. In 2019, Northern Light Health subsidized Medicaid underpayments of \$52.1 million resulting in unrecoverable interest income of \$2,130,334.

Unpaid Cost of Medicaid: \$65,253,749

Unpaid Cost of Medicare: \$125,447,301

Northern Light Health members, who provide care to patients with insurance coverage through Medicaid and Medicare, are often not reimbursed fully by the government for the cost to provide care. In 2019, Northern Light Health was underfunded \$190,701,050 by these insurance programs.



Community Health Improvement Services: \$2,420,155

Community health improvement services respond to documented health needs in our communities and include:

- Community health education efforts provided to the community in the form of presentations, lectures, programs, and wellness initiatives such as nutrition improvement, physical activity, and substance use provided to schools, community groups, support groups, and others.
- Community-based clinical services such as screenings (blood pressure, health-risk appraisals, cholesterol, immunization clinics, skin cancer, etc.).
- Healthcare support services focused on increasing access and quality of healthcare services, especially to those living in poverty and other vulnerable populations such as community support referral services, transportation, and assistance with public program enrollment.
- Social and environmental improvement activities address the social, economic, and physical environment such as improving availability of healthy food options, violence prevention, and economic development activities.

In 2019, Northern Light Health provided \$2,420,155 in community health improvement services.

Health Professions Education: \$1,352,386

Training and education of physicians, interns and residents, medical students, nurses and nursing students, and other health professionals is vital to providing the highest standard of care to our community members. In 2019, Northern Light Health provided \$1,352,386 in health professions education.

Research: \$1,833,726

Research to support the development of medical advances for our patients through the adoption of new techniques and treatment protocols has long been considered an investment in the health of our community members. From a community benefit perspective, such research includes clinical and community health research as well as studies on healthcare delivery that can be generalized and shared with the public for the purpose of improving healthcare. In 2019, Northern Light Health provided \$1,833,726 in research.

Cash and In-Kind Contributions: \$297,404

To address certain identified needs of our community, our member organizations recognize that partnering with other organizations may be the best way to address community needs and improvement efforts. Through the donation of restricted funds and in-kind contributions to these organizations, we are working in partnership to advance the health of the communities we serve. In 2019, Northern Light Health provided \$297,404 in cash and in-kind contributions.

Community Building Activities: \$632,701

These activities address the root causes of health problems, often related to poverty, homelessness, and environmental hazards. Northern Light Health is proud to partner with several community building initiatives such as those focused on regional economic development, housing opportunities, and early child care and education. In 2019, Northern Light Health provided \$632,701 in community building activities.

Community Benefit Operations: \$1,876,934

Addressing community needs takes a team approach. Northern Light Health regularly conducts research to assess community health needs and plans appropriate intervention strategies. By implementing and evaluating community benefit activities, we ensure our collective efforts are meaningful, effective, and accountable to those we serve. In 2019, Northern Light Health provided \$1,876,934 in community benefit operations.

References:

Catholic Health Association of the United States; A Guide for Planning and Reporting Community Benefit: Categories and Definitions, 2015. Available from <https://www.chausa.org/docs/default-source/community-benefit-guide-2015/2015-cb-guide-categories-definitions.pdf?sfvrsn=4>. Accessed November, 2019. Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service; 2018 Instructions for Schedule H (Form 990)

Total: \$15,224,438

Community Health Improvement Services

\$60,500

Health Professions Education

\$585,593

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

\$386

Community Benefit Operations

\$121,469

Traditional Charity Care

\$8,028,979

Unrecoverable Interest Income

\$49,135 on \$1.2M

Unpaid Cost of Medicare

\$6,378,376

Celebrating Diversity

Despite many social and political gains over the last several years, individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ have significantly higher rates for risk factors such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, homelessness, and suicide. Northern Light Acadia Hospital encounters this reality with our LGBTQ+ patients of all ages. Now, more than ever before, is the time to celebrate diversity and demonstrate our acceptance, unconditional support, and compassion for all members of the LGBTQ+ community.

During the week of June 16, 2019, the Greater Bangor community celebrated Pride Week, which is organized locally by Health Equity Alliance. It culminated with a Pride Parade and Festival on June 22. Northern Light Acadia Hospital supported local pride activities by being a sponsor of Bangor Pride 2019, and more than 50 employees from Northern Light Acadia Hospital, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center and the Northern Light Health home office participated in the parade. Additionally, Acadia hosted an informational table during the festival.

The overall community benefit provided by Northern Light Acadia Hospital and employees from other Northern Light organizations was significant, sending a clear message to our LGBTQ+ friends and neighbors—We celebrate and embrace diversity!



View Northern Light Acadia Hospital's full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/66292d11-bbf0-416e-887c-4ec83fad3fd0/Acadia-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Document_FINAL.pdf.aspx

Total: \$24,516,870

Community Health Improvement Services

\$97,208

Health Professions Education

\$500,506

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

\$34,500

Community Benefit Operations

\$14,951

Traditional Charity Care

\$590,474

Unrecoverable Interest Income

\$240,290 on \$5.9M

Unpaid Cost of Medicaid

\$5,002,468

Unpaid Cost of Medicare

\$18,036,473

Connecting Seniors Through Education

Keeping our older population young at heart by breaking bread and socializing is what Northern Light AR Gould accomplishes each month. Compared to the rest of Maine, Aroostook County has a higher percentage of adults over the age of 65 and has higher rates of adults reporting three or more chronic conditions. One of the ways Northern Light AR Gould Hospital is attempting to improve the health of this aging population is through education.

On the second Monday of the month, from January through June and August through November, Northern Light AR Gould Hospital holds a two hour “Healthy Aging Luncheon” for members of our Senior Connection Club, which is open to community members 55 and older. The luncheon is a chance for our elderly community to socialize, to receive free health screenings, to be entertained, to become educated on a pertinent health topic, and to enjoy a delicious meal at a low cost. The luncheon begins with social time where entertainment in some form, usually music, is provided for the first half hour, which then segues into our keynote speaker. A variety of providers prepare an informative, 30-minute presentation on a topic they specialize in and is of interest to the aging population, including managing and preventing diabetes in our later years, or how to recognize and manage congestive heart failure. It also includes an interactive question and answer period.

This luncheon gives senior citizens access to providers outside the hospital setting and makes for a more open and casual experience. AR Gould is proud to provide these community health education efforts as part of our community benefit strategy to enhance the health and wellness of our aging population.



View Northern Light AR Gould Hospital’s full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/93d0c5de-85e8-4bb5-b4a1-1c7e22c11c6d/TAMC-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Document_FINAL.pdf.aspx

Total: \$1,583,272

Community Health Improvement Services

\$20,796

Community Building Activities

\$101,238

Community Benefit Operations

\$236,972

Traditional Charity Care

\$354,910

Unrecoverable Interest Income

\$36,987 on \$0.9M

Unpaid Cost of Medicare

\$832,369

Making a Difference with Coordinated Care

Providing timely care for people in our region is what we strive to do and thanks to a grant, people in rural Maine are receiving the care they need. In February 2019, Healthy Peninsula and Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital received a Rural Health Transformation grant from the Maine Health Access Foundation (MeHAF) to support the Age-Friendly Coastal Communities (AFCC) community paramedicine project. This project provides coordinated medical, and social services support to improve access to timely, coordinated care for isolated, underserved older and/or disabled patients of Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital's primary care clinics who live on the Blue Hill Peninsula, Deer Isle, or Stonington.

Coordinated by Healthy Peninsula, a longtime Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital community health partner, the project is an innovative collaboration among the hospital, Castine Fire Rescue Department, Memorial Ambulance Corps, Peninsula Ambulance Corps, and a network of social/community-based service providers that have been working together for several years to provide more coordinated, informed resources for healthy aging in our communities. The in-home care is provided by trained emergency medical technicians and paramedics, as prescribed by the patients' primary care providers, and will include services such as medication reconciliation, wound care, blood pressure checks, falls risk assessment. In addition, the project includes a social work component to connect patients to community-based resources.



View Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital's full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/7ad12efa-9d3a-4e4c-9364-c674a3795a4d/Blue-Hill-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Document_FINAL.pdf.aspx

Total: \$1,353,882

Community Health Improvement Services

\$5,508

Health Professions Education

\$36,403

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

\$5,027

Community Building Activities

\$13,837

Community Benefit Operations

\$99,837

Traditional Charity Care

\$193,385

Unrecoverable Interest Income

\$10,531 on \$0.3M

Unpaid Cost of Medicare

\$989,354

Savings Lives Through Donation

Working together with our communities to ensure we can provide lifesaving care is crucial. Northern Light CA Dean Hospital donated a Life Pak 12 Cardiac Monitor/AED as well as a Stryker stretcher to Rockwood Fire and Rescue. Rockwood Fire and Rescue is a volunteer department with approximately 14 members. Rockwood Fire and Rescue is a non-transporting rescue service that services approximately 300-year-round residents with the population nearly tripling in the summer months. CA Dean Hospital provides all patient transports for Rockwood. The transport times between Rockwood and CA Dean Hospital are anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours. CA Dean gets an average of 60 calls in the Rockwood area per year.

Rockwood Fire and Rescue will use the Stryker stretcher for their rescue vehicle which gives the patient a place to lay down during assessment and allows them to be in the vehicle rather than out in the elements.

The Life Pak 12 Cardiac Monitor/AED will give the EMS service the ability to assess, monitor, and treat heart issues and emergencies. These donations improve patient care and outcome for residents and visitors to the area.



View Northern Light CA Dean Hospital's full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/cdeb91b8-b64e-4145-a902-e96c3db50e02/CA-Dean-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Document_FINAL.pdf.aspx

Total: \$108,848,260

Community Health Improvement Services

\$614,949

Health Professions Education

\$133,994

Research

\$1,833,726

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

\$3,530

Community Building Activities

\$36,734

Community Benefit Operations

\$515,854

Traditional Charity Care

\$6,695,914

Unrecoverable Interest Income

\$1,357,763 on \$33.2M

Unpaid Cost of Medicaid

\$50,611,792

Unpaid Cost of Medicare

\$47,044,004

Support Group for New Moms Gives Children Lifetime Benefits

There are numerous articles written about the benefits of breastfeeding and the challenges new mothers face as they navigate this very important task. Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center knows a little support, some extra time spent, and displays of kindness can go a long way.

One of the many community benefits the medical center offers is the Breastfeeding Support Group. Each Friday, something special happens: The Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center Breastfeeding Support Group meets and nursing mothers connect to offer each other advice, guidance, comfort, and friendship.

The weekly group serves as educational and social time for new moms to connect with one another and talk about similar challenges. Our international board-certified lactation consultants share information about the health benefits of breastfeeding for both mother and child and help problem-solve issues mothers face. From these sessions, moms learn solutions and techniques to common complications, tips around returning to work, nutrition, and community-based resources.

Participants have commented that the group, which meets every Friday at 10 am for an hour, is the highlight of their week and has helped them succeed at breastfeeding. This extremely important group, week in and week out all year long, has offered this community many benefits and will continue to do so moving forward. For those future moms out there, we're here for you!



View Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center's full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/2a28fe20-5d91-4492-8af1-c8c0f766a482/EMMC-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Document_FINAL.pdf.aspx

Total: \$652,914

Community Health Improvement Services

\$137,675

Health Professions Education

\$5,533

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

\$247

Community Benefit Operations

\$208,902

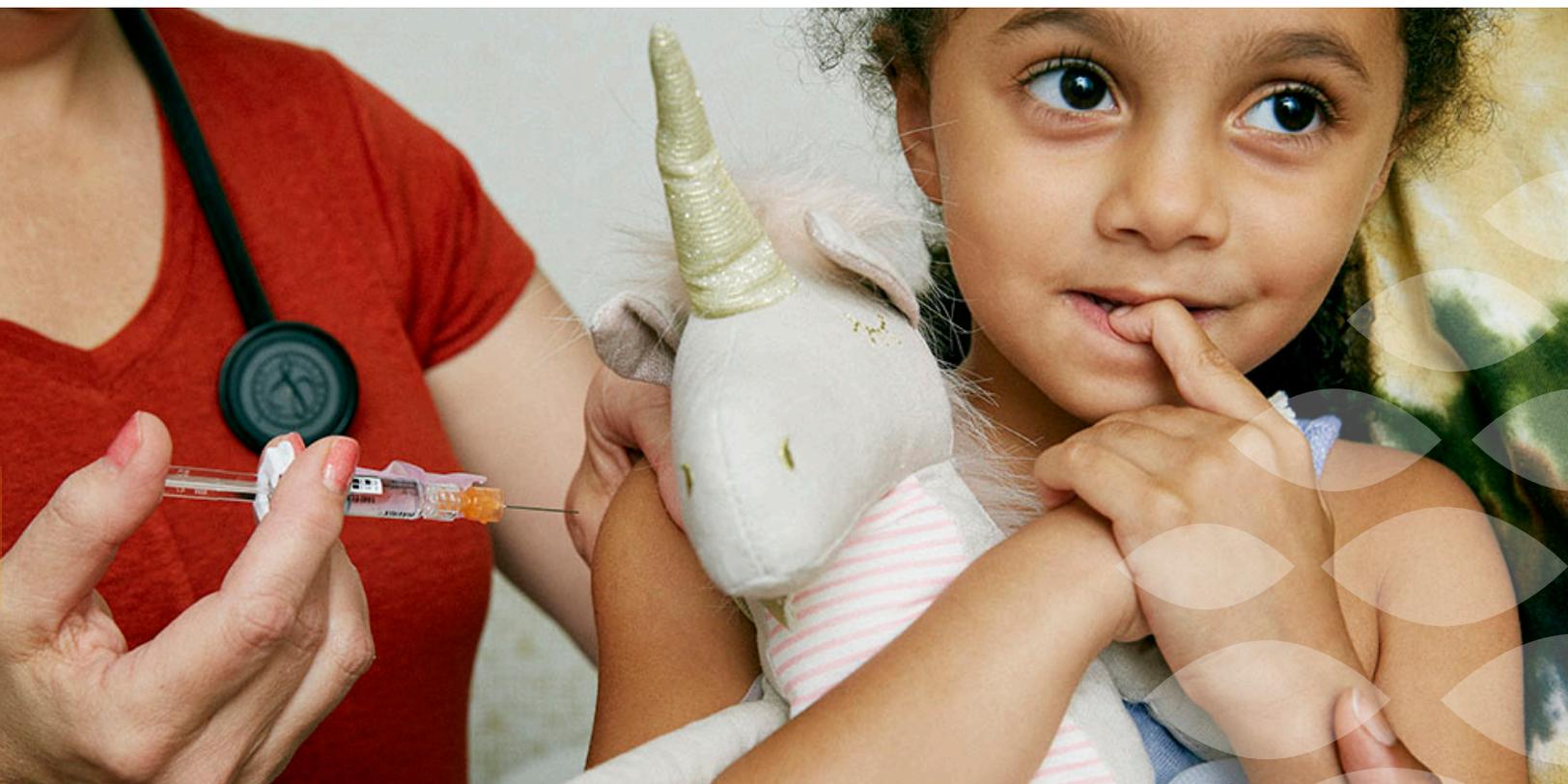
Traditional Charity Care

\$97,901

Unpaid Cost of Medicaid

\$202,656





A Shot of Inspiration

When the Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) learned there was a confirmed case of flu in a 20-month-old child at the Portland Family Shelter, with others showing symptoms, and no one else they could turn to for flu vaccine, it caused concerns for a pending outbreak. So, Maine CDC called Catherine Bean, RN, at Northern Light Home Care & Hospice. Within two hours, Catherine answered the call and within 24 hours she had her vaccines and supplies packed up and headed for the shelter.

Some were doing laundry in a corner, while others were sitting in chairs set up stadium style in front of a TV on one wall. On the other wall, was a pile of mattresses to be handed out at bedtime. The people that were there were mostly new Americans. Some had only been here for 10 days. None of them spoke English. Then, Catherine saw him—a 20-month-old toddler strapped to his moms back.

“He was leaning over, and you just had to look at this baby, and you knew he was sick,” explains Catherine. “And as a parent, you know that your kid would be home being rocked in a bed, not in the shelter hoping that they hand out a mattress and you’d be one of the lucky ones to get one. The mom was also sick, and she’s trying to get through the day.”

A week later, Catherine followed up with the shelter and learned that they did not have another case of flu. The supplies she brought over along with the flu shots helped stop the outbreak. What moved Catherine most, was how little these people had and how grateful they were. “It was January. It was a night that may have gotten to zero, the snowbanks were high, and they came from warm climates to be homeless on the streets of Portland, Maine in January. And this was a better option for them—that really got to me,” she says.

View Northern Light Home Care & Hospice’s full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/99e7a91f-a939-43d1-999b-c9a9dacbee12/VNA-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Document_FINAL.pdf.aspx



Northern LightSM Inland Hospital

Total: \$7,411,080

Community Health Improvement Services

\$119,774

Health Professions Education

\$65,594

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

\$144,349

Community Building Activities

\$11,373

Community Benefit Operations

\$39,556

Traditional Charity Care

\$476,350

Unrecoverable Interest Income

\$159,760 on \$3.9M

Unpaid Cost of Medicaid

\$1,905,784

Unpaid Cost of Medicare

\$4,488,540

Supporting Public Transportation

Getting a ride to a medical appointment or the grocery store is a daily challenge for some people in rural northern Kennebec County. Not everyone drives, or has a car, or can afford to pay for a taxi. Recognizing this reality and the importance of helping people with this social need, Northern Light Inland Hospital is proud to support KVCAP's Kennebec Explorer public transportation system with a community benefit grant in 2019.

The Kennebec Explorer stops at Inland Hospital four times every week day and makes regular stops at many other locations around Waterville. Using low-cost public transportation has become a regular part of Dianne Couture's life. The 73-year-old doesn't drive anymore but still needs to get around town. "I have regular blood work at Inland, and have to go to other places like Marden's and Walmart," Dianne says. "It's very convenient for me and allows me to stay as independent as possible."

Kennebec Explorer Public Bus System Numbers that make a difference

2019: 19,107 rides in our area

June 2018 - June 2019

14,498 rides in Upper Kennebec County

4,609 rides in Somerset County



View Northern Light Inland Hospital's full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/67955dec-0cc6-4950-8280-ec01ea3ebf5b/Inland-Hospital-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Document_FINAL.pdf.aspx

Total: \$12,839,475

Community Health Improvement Services

\$30,183

Community Building Activities

\$49,975

Community Benefit Operations

\$76,947

Traditional Charity Care

\$855,270

Unrecoverable Interest Income

\$173,157 on \$4.2M

Unpaid Cost of Medicaid

\$959,851

Unpaid Cost of Medicare

\$10,694,092

Health Literacy Brings Hope After Treatment

A diagnosis of cancer often leads to concern, confusion, and many unanswered questions for the person affected and their family. Many of these questions deal with what the future holds. Will the affected person be able to continue their present activities? How will they obtain and maintain fitness and function? At Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital, we know that these questions are of utmost importance to patients, and we strive to provide answers.

One of the many community benefits Maine Coast offers are our health literacy efforts. The hospital reaches out in a variety of ways to bring free and vital information to our community. The health literacy efforts include sessions focused on a single issue, health fairs, and public health announcements via local media.

Cora Fahy, a physical therapist assistant found her normal routine overturned when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She turned this diagnosis into a mission to help others, became certified in cancer rehabilitation and uses her new knowledge to inform our community. During a series of educational efforts Cora has worked to develop and present comprehensive community information on cancer, including information on nutrition, exercise, and cancer treatment. This information has helped many to realize that a diagnosis of cancer does not mean that they must give up on the activities they love. With the right information they can continue to live, learn, and grow before, during, and after their treatment.



View Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/41c13524-fa69-42e0-915a-14c816febda9/Maine-Coast-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Document_FINAL.pdf.aspx



Northern LightSM Mercy Hospital

Total: \$45,793,378

Community Health Improvement Services

\$878,972

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

\$26,853

Community Building Activities

\$372,160

Community Benefit Operations

\$136,742

Traditional Charity Care

\$1,886,319

Unrecoverable Interest Income

\$72,961 on \$1.8M

Unpaid Cost of Medicaid

\$6,571,198

Unpaid Cost of Medicare

\$35,848,173





Bridging Two Cultures

From the first day that the city of Portland opened a temporary shelter at the Portland Expo for newly arrived asylum seekers from Africa, Northern Light Mercy Hospital worked to coordinate assistance. From serving food, supplying linens, to laundering the personal clothing of the new arrivals, employees from across Mercy volunteered time to assist their new neighbors.

Marta Gonzalez de Vega, a member of the Northern Light Mercy Physical Therapy team, is representative of the great work done by so many at Mercy. Marta had served breakfast at the Expo every morning since the temporary shelter opened. She moved to Maine in 2018 from Spain and is fluent in several languages, including Portuguese, which is the native language of many of the asylum seekers that have come to Maine from places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Marta's language skills bridged a divide between two cultures and have given families a new avenue to open up about their journeys and ask questions about their new home.

View Northern Light Mercy Hospital's full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/1b76f560-50af-477f-bf6c-0744db75f371/Mercy-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Document_FINAL.pdf.aspx

Total: \$2,075,977

Community Health Improvement Services

\$287,836

Health Professions Education

\$24,763

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

\$611

Community Building Activities

\$11,841

Community Benefit Operations

\$22,531

Traditional Charity Care

\$562,725

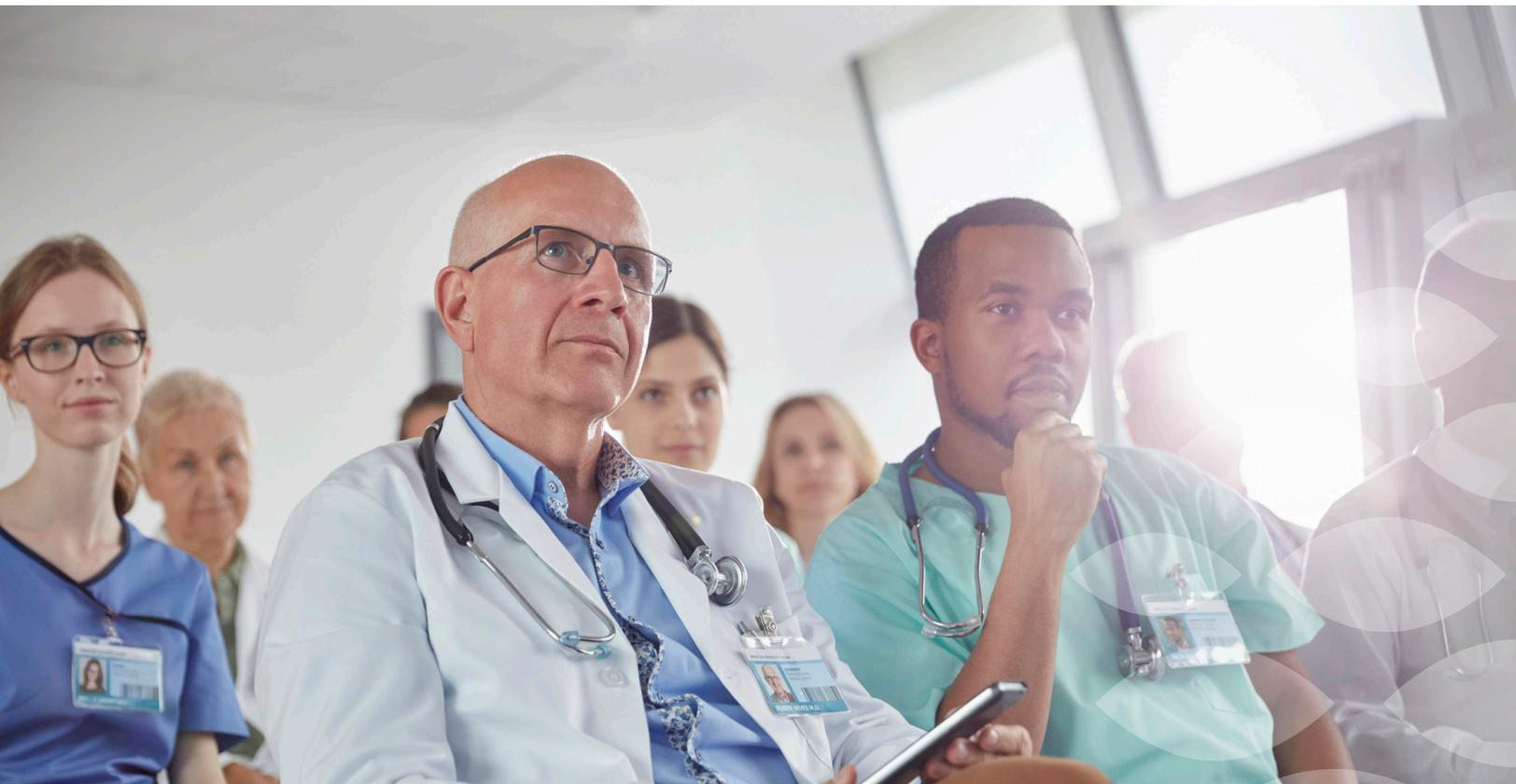
Unrecoverable Interest Income

\$29,750 on \$0.7M

Unpaid Cost of Medicare

\$1,135,920





Raising Awareness Through Film

As the most expansive integrated health system in Maine, Northern Light Health is keenly aware of how far-reaching and devastating the opioid crisis is in our state. At Northern Light Sebasticook Valley Hospital, we continue to diligently work to train our providers on best practices for prescribing prescription drugs while disseminating educational materials in our facilities, at local school departments, community pharmacies, and other locations around the community to ensure safe prescription drug safety.

To further increase our efforts in the community, with the help from the CARA Local-Crisis Grant, Northern Light Sebasticook Valley Hospital and HealthySV screened the Netflix documentary, *Recovery Boys* at the Pittsfield Community Theater. Showing this film raised awareness on Maine's public health crisis. *Recovery Boys* is an intimate look at four young men in West Virginia attempting to reinvent their lives and mend broken relationships after years of drug misuse.

Following the documentary, a panel discussion was held and moderated by Mary Nadeau, principal at Nokomis High School in Newport. Among the 41 attendees, great conversation was sparked around substance use disorder.

This event ignited action and Northern Light Sebasticook Valley Hospital is creating a team to determine the next steps on how to combat opioid crisis on a local level.

View Northern Light Sebasticook Valley Hospital's full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/87c54ede-d0c6-4199-9902-cf8a034db70d/SVH-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Documen_FINAL.pdf.aspx



Teamwork Leads to Better Care

When a patient needed immediate support, her provider at the Northern Light Primary Care Windham location knew exactly where to find help; down the hall with Beacon Health embedded nurse care manager Amber Lussier. The patient had not seen a primary care provider in 15 years and was offered an appointment after two trips to Northern Light Emergency Care at Mercy Hospital. When she told her provider she wasn't taking medications because she couldn't afford them, and she was couch surfing, the provider walked down the hall and asked Amber for help.

Amber reviewed the electronic medical record and called the patient. Upon hearing her patient was homeless; Amber immediately made a referral to our Community Care Team. Later the same day, Holly Blanchard, Beacon Health licensed clinical social worker is on the phone with the patient continuing the conversation and engagement in a way that the patient felt heard and supported.

Having a care manager embedded at our practices helps swiftly identify needs and establishes a relationship and collaboration with a team approach between patients and providers.

View Northern Light Beacon Health's full Community Health Strategy online

https://northernlighthealth.org/getmedia/f6adcf6a-e7f8-4d45-bf8e-be57851a5a98/Beacon-Community-Health-Strategy_Web-Document_FINAL.pdf.aspx



Northern Light HealthSM

Total: \$687,371

Reflects home office community benefit activity only

Community Health Improvement Services
\$166,754

Cash and In-Kind Contributions
\$81,901

Community Building Activities
\$35,543

Community Benefit Operations
\$403,173



Partnering to End Hunger

A community's health can be determined in part by the availability and accessibility of healthy food. For many, reliable access to affordable, nutritious food is a constant challenge.

At Northern Light Health, we recognize hunger is a significant health issue for many of our patients and their families. This is why we are proud to partner with Good Shepherd Food Bank to expand access to healthy food in central, northern, and downeast Maine. By helping to site and outfit Good Shepherd's new distribution facility located in Hampden, Maine, Northern Light Health and other Food For All partners are increasing capacity to source and deliver 10 million more meals to those in need each year.

By screening patients for hunger and connecting them with a variety of hunger relief resources, we are closing the food gap for many in our communities, making it possible to lead healthier lives. All Northern Light Health members have committed to assessing and addressing our patient's social needs, inclusive of food insecurity, and will undertake activities outlined in the Looking Ahead in 2020 section of this report.

To learn more about our Community Health Needs Assessment process and strategies online, visit:

<https://northernlighthealth.org/Community-Health-Needs-Assessment/About-the-CHNA-Reports>

Looking Ahead

Northern Light Health conducts a shared Community Health Needs Assessment every three years. This process generates county level health profiles containing almost 200 data points related to health outcomes, health behaviors, healthcare access and quality, and the social, community, and physical environment that affect one's health. With this data, Northern Light members meet together with community partners to prioritize and respond to significant health needs. These data, community perspectives, and priorities are documented in our [2019 Shared Community Health Needs Assessment \(Shared CHNA\)](#) reports.

Committing to meaningful and impactful action in partnership with local communities, Northern Light Health members respond to high priority health needs with a local organization specific [Community Health Strategy](#) to guide implementation activities to address identified community health priorities over the next three years (FY20-FY22).

Among other high priority health issues, Northern Light Health has identified two key areas of significant need identified by every county in Maine. Accordingly, our health system is committing to working at the local, regional, and statewide levels to address social determinants of health and substance use.



in 2020

Social Determinants of Health

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 household income, availability of safe housing, education, access to healthcare services, and healthy food. 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 traditional healthcare models may not be enough to adequately improve health outcomes or reduce health disparities without also addressing how people live.

Looking ahead, Northern Light Health members have committed to assessing and addressing our patient's social needs and will undertake activities to include:

- Food Insecurity – Increasing the number of patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources
- Social Needs – Increasing the number of sites implementing screening and referral for health-related social needs

Substance Use

Substance use, including alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, have a major effect on individuals, families, 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 Health members are committed to specific activities which include:

- Access to Treatment – Increasing the number of medication-assisted treatment options for opioid use readily available in local communities
- Prevention Partnerships – Increasing the number of partnerships with community-based substance use prevention efforts

As we embark on this vital work in 2020, we look forward to partnering with community and public health agencies and providing annual updates to our community on the progress of these important initiatives.



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