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M. Michelle Hood

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



Barry McCrum

Barry McCrum
Northern Light Health
Board Chair

A New Day

In Maine, we have a tradition of leading the way and using our common sense and Yankee ingenuity to make life better for ourselves, our families, and our communities. It appears in our state motto “Dirigo” from the Latin word for “I lead.” We were the first state to elect a woman, Margaret Chase Smith, to both houses of Congress. We are home to the country’s first veteran’s hospital, and we are the first state to greet a new day as the rays of the sun touch our easternmost peaks and shores before any other place across the continental United States.

The light of a new day symbolizes a rebirth or an awakening. And this renewed purpose to make healthcare work for people across our great state is what we are experiencing as we embrace our new name—Northern Light Health.

In the pages of this year’s annual report, you will see examples of how we are rolling up our sleeves to raise quality through innovation, teamwork, and efficiency. We have fostered new clinical relationships with Massachusetts General Hospital, a world-class medical research hospital. We are using population health data in new ways to be smarter about how we deliver care. And we have created new programs that bring healthier locally-sourced foods to our hospitals while supporting the hard-working farmers and fishermen who make up the very core of our identity here in Maine.

We are working to make healthcare more accessible and straightforward while also making great strides to reduce our costs and improve our operating margins. We are finding new ways to guide our patients and deliver care based on the needs of each person. It’s a New Day in Maine. We invite you to join us on this new journey.





A New Light

Welcome to Northern Light Health

“Open up, give me a big ahhh,” Sheena Whittaker, MD, a pediatrician at Northern Light Pediatrics in Ellsworth asks of her 12-year old patient, Ellis, as she shines a light in his mouth. They are in a pediatrics exam room where Ellis is getting a check up. The windows allow in a generous amount of light; the walls are warm yellow and decorated with Dr. Seuss decals like the Cat in the Hat. Dr. Whittaker wears many hats too. Not only is she a pediatrician, but she is also the senior physician executive for Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital in Ellsworth.

“Medicine is very controlled, and it’s very scientific and careful, and it should be; but kids bring a fun aspect to it,” Dr. Whittaker explains. “If we can fortify children to be strong mentally, physically, emotionally, and psychologically, we’re going to produce stronger, kinder, healthier children, a better adult population, and a stronger community.”

Dr. Whittaker may be based at Maine Coast Hospital, but she is part of Northern Light Health, formerly Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems. In addition to changing its name, Northern Light Health has re-identified its priorities and is becoming more integrated across the entire system which spans from Portland to Presque Isle and Greenville to Blue Hill.

Dr. Whittaker sees the move to Northern Light Health as a step in the right direction that helps improve patient care. “Being united medically means we have resources from the whole Northern Light Health system. Whether we’re at Northern Light Maine Coast, Northern Light Blue Hill, or Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center, we have access to all of the specialty services easily, consecutively, consistently. So, it doesn’t matter which hospital a patient walks into, they are receiving the best medical care they possibly can get,” explains Dr. Whittaker.

Michelle Hood, FACHE, president and CEO of Northern Light Health, and Matt Weed, senior vice president and chief strategy officer have not only worked to implement this new brand identity but to spread the message of what it means

“At Northern Light Health, we want to make healthcare work for everyone, whether that’s an individual or a community.”

Michelle Hood,
Northern Light Health
President and CEO
pictured with
Matt Weed,
Northern Light Health
Chief Strategy Officer





beyond the name change. They also called on leaders and front line employees throughout the system to help.

“At Northern Light Health, we want to make healthcare work for everyone, whether that’s an individual or a community. We’re going to roll up our sleeves and bring a lot of energy and enthusiasm to our continuing work,” explains Michelle. “We’re raising the bar and that is a simple but substantive way of saying we can’t rest. We’re always looking for a better way to do things. Our system is very broad not just in geography but in the types of services that we offer, and we want to meet people where they are.”

Northern Light Health is accomplishing this by making investments in telemedicine, converting to one unified electronic health record system that links all member hospitals together, and creating new clinical relationships with world-class organizations like Massachusetts General Hospital and Dana Farber Cancer Institute.



Watch the video at www.northernlighthealth.org/annualreport




To learn more about Northern Light Health and our locations across Maine, visit www.northernlighthealth.org.



“A rebrand to Northern Light Health spans time—it celebrates how far we as a system have come, but it also creates a single shared starting line for where we need to go next,” Matt explains. As chief strategy officer, Matt was instrumental in the rebranding effort which was a necessary evolution as healthcare in America is moving toward integrated systems. “This in part is driven by economics and financial sustainability—in all states including Maine, the healthcare industry is being required to coordinate expertise in a way that avoids unnecessary costs.”

Businesses, governments, and individual consumers are looking to contract with systems for their healthcare needs because this is how they will get the highest quality at the lowest cost. More importantly still, Matt feels that what people want is to know that when the need arises, they or their loved one will receive competent, compassionate care.

“This is the brand promise,” concludes Matt. “It’s what our neighbors and our family members and a person we’re meeting for the first time can expect when they come to our physicians and to our hospitals, and when they interact with any other person or service in the system. If we’re not doing it perfectly today, we’re motivated and driven by the brand promise to improve; and if we are doing it perfectly today, the brand promise says we wake up and do it again tomorrow.”



Lori Boynton finds peace and comfort
tending her animals in the backyard of
her Lamoine home.

A New Focus

Oncology Pharmacy Management Program



Lori Boynton is at her happiest at home in her backyard, a spacious spread of land in Lamoine with barns, a paddock, and animals. She finds a shady spot on a sunny summer day to feed afternoon snacks to her donkey, Clementine, and her mule, Mr. Tibbs. She cracks a smile and laughs as Clementine quickly scoffs down a fresh carrot.

“I’m the beast of burden. They don’t do any work at all,” she laughs, “I do all the work and that’s my therapy which has been awesome.”

“It’s such a shocking thing when you hear you have cancer, and I just thought it’s going to be stage one, it’ll be no problem; it was actually stage three! It makes you think much differently about your time here.”

Lori Boynton

To look at Lori, with her thick wavy brown hair and healthy complexion, it’s hard to imagine that just months ago she was battling cancer and undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

“It’s such a shocking thing when you hear you have cancer, and I just thought it’s going to be stage one, it’ll be no problem; it was actually stage three! It makes you think much differently about your time here,” she says.

Lori was diagnosed with stage III colon cancer in October 2017 and would undergo treatments through May 2018. She had to go to Northern Light Cancer Care for radiation treatments but was able to take oral chemotherapy medication at home. Having already started on chemotherapy treatments at the hospital, Lori knew how it made her feel.

“You’re kind of in the cloud. It’s kind of foggy for lack of a better word. Before, I could multi-task and I could just keep things going in my brain and then it was gone!”

“What Lori was experiencing is not uncommon,” explains Sheila Pascual, MD, who was Lori’s oncologist, “A lot of literature has been written about what they call chemo brain or brain fog and it’s a neural-cognitive dysfunction

where there’s a decline or deficit in memory, learning new things, attention.”

Lori might have been worried about trying to keep track of her medications, appointments, bills, and daily chores, except that she was an outpatient in Northern Light Pharmacy’s Oncology Pharmacy Management Program and she had help keeping track of it all. A team of pharmacists, nurses, and financial patient advocates occupy a room on the first floor of the Lafayette Family Cancer Institute. They spend their time on the phone with patients, helping them with everything from finding discount drugs to managing their medications, and coordinating care with their medical team.

“Before this program was implemented, patients had no local source to obtain these medications and were forced

“Before this program was implemented, patients had no local source to obtain these medications and were forced to go through national mail order specialty pharmacies that were not integrated with the oncology practice so the physicians had a very difficult time coordinating their patient’s care.”

Matt Marston,
Manager, Specialty Pharmacy Program
Northern Light Pharmacy

to go through national mail order specialty pharmacies that were not integrated with the oncology practice so the physicians had a very difficult time coordinating their patient's care," explains Matt Marston, manager of the Specialty Pharmacy Program.

Lori reaped the benefits of that level of care. Every week on Fridays, she would receive a phone call from Renee Vachon, RN, staff nurse at the Oral Pharmacy Management program. The two instantly hit it off.

"Lori was the type of person that I connected with immediately. It's funny when you speak with someone on the phone and you know that you get along. She's a really special person. I followed her throughout her treatment of oral chemotherapy," explains Renee.

"She was very warm and very receptive and no matter what question I had for her, even if to my own ears it sounded stupid, she was just so sweet to me. I felt like I was talking to someone in my family or that I had known all my life because her response to my concerns and my needs was awesome," Lori says.

In addition to helping them get appointments and manage their medications they also help patients get discounts and financial aid for their medications. Matt says many of their patients pay nothing out of pocket for drugs that can cost up to 20 thousand dollars a month. And they can get their drugs, in many cases, on the same day that they go in for their treatment, unlike through mail order pharmacies which can sometimes take several weeks.



“My hope would be that patients feel supported and feel very comfortable reaching out to us. They are the reason why we’re here and I want them to feel very comfortable,” explained Renee. It’s clear she achieved that goal with Lori. “It just makes me smile to think of her,” Lori says about Renee.

The oral oncology pharmacy management program launched in January 2018 at Northern Light Health Eastern Maine Medical Center. There are plans to expand it to other Northern Light hospitals soon.



“Lori was the type of person that I connected with immediately. It’s funny when you speak with someone on the phone and you know that you get along. She’s a really special person.”

Renee Vachon, RN, Oral Pharmacy Management program



Watch the video at www.northernlighthealth.org/annualreport

A New Solution

Using data to improve population health



Bre Erickson drops her son Owen off at daycare in Greenville before heading out to a busy day at work.



“When you live in rural Maine, you have to make some sacrifices, and it’s nice that these women don’t need to make sacrifices in their healthcare and can get quality healthcare close to home.”

Kyrsten Suttan, MD, OB/GYN, Mayo Regional Hospital

Her alarm sounds at 5:30 in the morning, signaling the all too sudden start to another busy day. Like most single moms, Bre Erickson does a lot of juggling. Her first order of the day is motivating her sleepy six-year-old son, Owen, to get out of bed. Owen is an active boy with dirty blonde hair, deep brown eyes, and a heartwarming smile that his mom coaxes out of him as she stands behind him, squeezes him with a hug, and plants a kiss on his cheek.

“He likes to sleep in, so he’s a tough one to get going in the morning. We get ready, kennel the dogs, and head off to daycare or rec or whatever is on the agenda for the day. Then I go to work sometimes in Greenville, sometimes in Pittsfield,” explains Bre. She serves as communications manager for two Northern Light Health hospitals—CA Dean Hospital in Greenville and Sebec Valley Hospital

in Pittsfield. It’s a hectic balance, managing her career and her time with her son.

“Time with him is very important, and it’s limited because you’re working 40 hours a week and traveling a minimum of 50 miles a day on top of that.”

While Bre wants to take care of herself, she doesn’t want to sacrifice any more time with Owen. So, she is happy to have her medical needs met close to home. In addition to a primary care provider, she also has an OB/GYN physician who sees her in Greenville—Kyrsten Suttan, MD.

“When you live in rural Maine, you have to make some sacrifices, and it’s nice that these women don’t need to



Megan Ryder, Practice Director,
Northern Light Health Center, Greenville

make sacrifices in their healthcare and can get quality healthcare close to home,” Dr. Sutton explains.

Dr. Sutton is an employee of Mayo Regional Hospital, but under a clinical affiliation agreement between Mayo and Northern Light Health, she travels to Northern Light Health Center in Greenville to see patients like Bre once a month. She also sees patients at the Northern Light Health Center in Sangerville once a month.

If not for this partnership between Mayo and CA Dean, many women from the Greenville and Sangerville areas of Piscataquis County would have to travel to Bangor or Pittsfield for their OB/GYN care. Megan Ryder, who is the practice director for the Northern Light Health Center, Greenville, says Mayo and Northern Light Health formed this partnership for the greater good of the people of Piscataquis County.

“We have the patients that needed that gynecology service, and we have space in this brand-new expansion in Sangerville and in our clinic in Greenville. Mayo had the

gynecologist. So, just combining our resources made a great service line for both of our hospitals,” explains Megan.

Megan says CA Dean did need the proof that their alliance with Mayo would meet the need in a cost-effective way for both hospitals, so they turned to Beacon Health, the population health office of Northern Light Health.

The mission of Beacon Health is to analyze claims data and find ways to improve population health for the various regions of our state. “Patients in the Sangerville and Greenville areas sometimes travel up to 90 minutes each way to get this care and that’s a real burden for patients, especially in winter when they might have to make several visits in a short period of time. And if that means missing work, they might skip those appointments and not get the care they need, explains Will Seavery, PharmD, BCPS, associate vice president of Population Health for Beacon Health, adding that the data showed the need existed and the care could be provided if Northern Light Health could partner with Mayo.



Beacon Health employees Carrie Arsenault, Vice President of Operations; Will Seavey, PharmD, BCPS, Associate Vice President of Population Health; and Michael Donahue, President, consult with each other.

Bre is grateful that the partnership is making healthcare work for not only her, but all her friends and neighbors in Greenville. Following a recent visit with Dr. Sutton, she was able to pick up Owen from daycare and head over to the playground at his school. She watched him navigate the maze of obstacles, slide down the slide and climb back up, and then she pushed him on the swings. As he laughed, Bre cracked a smile of her own from ear to ear—leaving no mystery as to where Owen gets his heartwarming smile.

“It’s so important to have healthcare close to home because it’s not only difficult for me to take time from my work schedule but time away from my son. So, if you don’t have healthcare here in this area, you can lose an entire day once you figure in a couple of hours of travel and the time of the appointment,” Bre says, “And I feel like Northern Light Health really gets that.”



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Bre Erickson,
Communications Manager,
Northern Light
Sebasticook Valley Hospital
and CA Dean Hospital



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A New Reach

Using telemedicine to treat sleep disorders

Art and Rosemary Coffin
enjoy a walk together on
a beautiful summer day
in Ashland.





“Dr. Weed has made a difference in our lives by improving the quality of Art’s life.”

Rosemary Coffin

“If it hadn’t been for him, I might not even be alive now.”

Art Coffin, patient,
pictured with David Weed, DO,
Northern Light Sleep Diagnostics

Artemas Coffin and his wife, Rosemary, walk with a spring in their step as they navigate the wooded pathways behind their farmhouse in Ashland. Leaping down the path ahead of them is their giant malamute, Bullet, a rescue dog that has found a new, loving home with the Coffins. They are each dressed in jeans and matching green t-shirts, embroidered with an American Flag that Art sewed himself. “He keeps us busy,” Rosemary explains as she pats the scruff of Bullet’s neck.

Art and Rosemary are retired. They worked at the Aroostook County Sheriff’s Department and Art also worked at a sawmill. They like to keep busy in retirement. In addition to taking Bullet for walks, Rosemary enjoys working in her vegetable gardens and Art enjoys riding around on his four-wheeler. They have the energy to enjoy their hobbies, in large part, due to Art’s decision (at Rosemary’s insistence) to seek treatment for a medical condition known as obstructive sleep apnea. “I wasn’t resting. I could be at work standing at the lathe and go to sleep standing up,” Art recalls. Art was tired during the day because he wasn’t sleeping well at night. He said that due to his condition, he would stop breathing as many as 60 times an hour and wake up gasping for breath. In addition to that, he would snore so loudly it would keep Rosemary awake. “I could not rest because he was either snoring and keeping me awake, or I was laying there awake so I could poke him when he didn’t breathe,” Rosemary recalls.

Finally, Art made an appointment to see David Weed, DO, a physician who is board-certified in sleep medicine by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, and heads the Sleep Medicine program at Northern Light AR Gould Hospital in Presque Isle. “Art Coffin came to me many years ago with symptoms of daytime tiredness and fatigue,” Dr. Weed recalls. “He was the first patient we saw here.”

AR Gould’s Sleep Medicine Program has evolved considerably since then. It now includes a state-of-the-art four-bed sleep disorders center that is fully accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. Dr. Weed conducts sleep studies for patients like Art Coffin in the sleep center. “You go there, and you sleep for eight hours or thereabouts, and they have you hooked up and monitor your breathing and your pulse and respiration,” Art said. Dr. Weed was able to diagnose Art with obstructive sleep apnea and get him set up with a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machine, a device which increases air pressure in the throat so that the airway does not collapse when a person breathes in. “It took a little while to get used to it, the constant pressure,” says Art, “Now when I go to bed, I put the mask on and the machine starts automatically, and I get a good night’s sleep.”

Art and Rosemary's situation is not uncommon. In fact, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, one out of every three Americans report not getting enough sleep. "We know that untreated sleep apnea is associated with diabetes, high-blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, memory change, anxiety, depression, and irritability; a lot of patients would describe themselves as being in a fog," says Dr. Weed.

Because sleep disorders are such a widespread concern, Northern Light Health is using telemedicine to bring Dr. Weed's expertise to even more patients in Maine. "Telemedicine affords us an opportunity to be more far-reaching in our effect. When I don't have to rely on the patient coming to us, we can go to them using an iPad," he says. Dr. Weed uses that iPad to chat with patients weekly at Northern Light Inland Hospital's sleep lab in Waterville.

Darrel Conner comes in to Inland to speak with Dr. Weed routinely via telemedicine technology. Like Art Coffin, he too suffers from obstructive sleep apnea and must use a CPAP machine. "My wife kept nudging me at night time and said you're not breathing, you should be breathing. She nudged me quite a few times and said maybe we should have you checked out to see what's going on," he says.

Darrel is glad he sought help. He too sleeps much better using his CPAP machine and says talking with Dr. Weed via an electronic screen is just as good as in person. "I feel like I get very excellent care here. When we talk on Skype, it is just like you and I talking right here," Darrel says. Besides Inland, Dr. Weed provides sleep medicine services to other Northern Light Health member hospitals.

It's made a difference in the lives of the Coffins and the Conners. Darrel has the energy to tinker on old cars with his wife in their garage. Art and Rosemary Coffin are also both getting a better night's sleep as a result.

"He has made a difference in our lives by improving the quality of Art's life," Rosemary says. "If it hadn't been for him, I might not even be alive now," Art chimed in.

"My wife kept nudging me at night time and said you're not breathing you should be breathing. She nudged me quite a few times and said maybe we should have you checked out to see what's going on."

Darrel Conner,
Northern Light Health patient,
pictured with wife, Tootie



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Above, James Clarke, MD, Senior Physician Executive, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center, during a meeting with clinicians from MGH. Center, Daniel Goodman, DO, Hospitalist, Northern Light Mercy Hospital, reviewing patient charts. Right, Peter Slavin, MD, President Massachusetts General Hospital

A New Relationship

Our affiliation with Massachusetts General Hospital



As a hospitalist at Northern Light Mercy Hospital, Daniel Goodman, DO, typically starts his day reviewing patient charts and determining which patients he should visit and in which priority. But one day last fall Dr. Goodman was interrupted on his daily rounds by his medical student.

“He told me that one of my patients who had come into the hospital with a serious infection had a concerning facial droop and a level of lethargy that was worrisome,” explains Dr. Goodman. Upon seeing the patient, he agreed with his medical student’s assessment and immediately ordered a CT scan to make sure there wasn’t any bleeding in the brain. “If it had been a bleed it would’ve been an acute emergency and neurosurgery would’ve been notified immediately. For this patient, once I learned he was not bleeding, I needed to get more information,” says Dr. Goodman.

“Whether they live in Presque Isle or whether they live in Ellsworth or whether they live in Lincoln, we’d like to treat people as close to their home as we can and would like to connect them through technology, through relationships, through expertise, to the highest level of care in a timely fashion.”

James Clarke, MD, Senior Vice President and Senior Physician Executive at Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center

Because this patient had several underlying medical conditions, Dr. Goodman decided to consult with one of the neurologists at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), a resource at his disposal thanks to a full spectrum of TeleNeurology services available to Mercy through MGH.

“Within a relatively short amount of time of reaching out to them I was on the phone with the neurologist from MGH, and she was brilliant,” he said. “I had told her all my neurological findings, and she gave me some tremendous recommendations.” An MRI would reveal the patient indeed had an acute stroke but would end up with no lasting neurological deficits. “And for all intents and purposes, he received the treatment he required. He received it in a timely fashion, and a lot of that is because I was able to get in touch with MGH as quickly as I could and I think that’s the big takeaway,” explains Dr. Goodman.

The TeleNeurology program between Mercy and MGH has been in place for several years. It allows providers from both institutions to communicate via phone or video conferencing, share images and clinical information, and provide seamless patient care on routine, urgent, and acute cases. The success of this program is one reason for a newly-expanded relationship with MGH—beyond Mercy Hospital—to the entire Northern Light Health system.

“We’ve enjoyed a strong affiliation with Mercy Hospital for a number of years, and have seen a very successful TeleNeurology program,” says Peter Slavin, MD, president of MGH. “I think the program points to the potential for this broader agreement with Northern Light Health.”

In April of 2018, Northern Light Health signed its expanded clinical affiliation agreement with MGH. The agreement centers on advancing care models through technology and greater coordination of care for patients who use services offered through both health systems, with an overall goal of lowering costs. While the areas of specialty included in the clinical affiliation may evolve over time, the current agreement establishes the foundation for collaboration in the following areas: cardiovascular, pediatric subspecialties, neurosciences, transplant, telemedicine, orthopedics, behavioral health, and cancer.

“This relationship is new for us and one we’re excited about partly in terms of patient care but also in research and academics. We think it can improve the care that we deliver,” explains James Clarke, MD, senior vice president, and senior physician executive at Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center. Dr. Clarke is part of the leadership team of clinicians that has been meeting with

counterparts at Mass General to work out the details of the clinical affiliation.

“Our collective focus remains on providing patients with exceptional access to the top experts,” says Dr. Slavin. And now, with advances in technology and telemedicine, we can overcome any physical distance between places like Boston and Bangor.”

In most circumstances, patients of Northern Light Health can receive convenient, close-to-home care via traditional appointments with providers in Maine or through telemedicine with providers at Mass General. For any procedure or subspecialty care that can’t be delivered in Maine, care would be transferred to MGH.

“Whether they live in Presque Isle or whether they live in Ellsworth or whether they live in Lincoln, we’d like to treat people as close to their home as we can and would like to connect them through technology, through relationships, through expertise to the highest level of care in a timely fashion,” Dr. Clarke states.

The relationship is still in its early stages, but it promises to make healthcare work for the people of Maine by making connections with world-class centers like MGH.



Watch the video at www.northernlighthealth.org/annualreport

A New Flavor

Healthier, better tasting hospital foods



Danner Curtis hands a box of fresh blueberries from Dan-a-Dew farms (cover photo) to Dede Sylvester, Lead Cook at Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital.



“Supporting the grow local movement is a personal mission that I have; it’s something that I brought with me when I became an employee here.”

Barb Haskell, Food Service Director, Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital

As the sun rises over the Blue Hill Peninsula on a sunny morning in late July, the drops of dew begin to sparkle on the ripening blueberries that dot the acres of fields at Dan-A-Dew farms. Danner Curtis is dressed in jeans and a button up short sleeve blue checkered shirt. His salt and pepper hair escapes out the front and sides of his baseball cap, and his skin is tanned from working in the sun.

“We are very proud of what we put in our boxes and put our name on,” Danner said as he held up a pint of ripened blueberries. “Either my wife, myself, or a member of the family is always the person at the end of the belt and always the last person seeing the blueberries go out the door,” Danner explains. He and his wife, Dewey, run a fresh pack blueberry growing operation. They rake 24 acres of fields in Blue Hill using a mechanical harvester. It’s a piece of equipment that you walk behind like a lawnmower. It has

tines on a spinning cylinder that scoops up blueberries off the plant and drops them into a bin.

Danner has a few local boys he hires to help him harvest the fruit and a group of migrant workers that help sort and pack it. The sorting and packing take place inside a climate-controlled barn. Workers feed the berries onto the stainless-steel packing machine which moves them along a conveyor belt and drops them through a series of filters to remove any stems or debris. The workers then package the berries for the fresh market or freeze them for later sale.

Meanwhile, less than five miles away from the farm at Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital, which sits at the mouth of Blue Hill Bay, lead cook Dede Sylvester is slicing up blueberry pies she made from Dan-A-Dew farm blueberries. The kitchen is bustling as the staff gets ready

for the lunchtime crowd. Baked salmon and blueberry pie top the menu. “The difference between really fresh local produce and the stuff you get at the grocery store or from a big food supplier is miles apart, and you don’t really even need to do that much to it to make it taste good,” Dede explains.

Danner personally delivers two ten-pound boxes of blueberries to Dede and her staff every month. He is just one of the local growers that she gets produce from. Dede’s supervisor, food service director Barb Haskell is the one leading the charge on the grow local movement. “It’s a personal mission that I have; it’s something that I brought with me when I became an employee here,” explains Barb.

In addition to managing Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital’s food service program, Barb is also an ambassador of Health Care Without Harm, a non-profit organization that seeks to get healthcare organizations to reduce their environmental footprint. She has attended conferences and learned about ways to make small changes that over time can have a meaningful effect. First, she found some area farmers that she could buy local produce from. Those farms include Dan-A-Dew farm for blueberries and Young Farm for other produce. Barb also removed all polystyrene containers and replaced them with biodegradable alternatives. Instead of using disposable plastic utensils in the cafeteria, they

use reusable silverware. They also purchase hormone free frozen chicken breasts. It’s more expensive so they serve less of it.

Barb is taking what she’s learned through Health Care Without Harm and sharing that with other food service directors throughout Northern Light Health. She is working with Nicole King, food and nutrition coordinator for Northern Light Health’s Community Health and Grants department to spread that message. “Blue Hill is a shining example of what we should be doing. Barb has worked hard to source local products, which is not always easy for every site or hospital to do, but we hope Barb can share her experience with other sites and encourage them to become more involved sourcing local products,” Nicole says.

Nicole’s goal is to increase the purchasing of locally grown foods and antibiotic free proteins systemwide. She is hosting workshops and organizing farm tours to help make the process a little less daunting for food service directors, not just within Northern Light Health but across the state. “These efforts show a commitment to our local economy and our local communities that we are advocating for their health and that we care about them always. It’s better for our patients, our staff, and our community members.”



“Blue Hill is a shining example of what we should be doing. Barb has worked hard to source local products, which is not always easy for every site or hospital to do, but Blue Hill is successful.”

Nicole King,
Food and Nutrition Coordinator,
Northern Light Health

Meanwhile, back at Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital, the cafeteria is busy on a Friday afternoon in July. Two boys are each digging into a big piece of blueberry pie topped with a heaping mound of whipped cream. Their faces are stained

with blueberries, and they're laughing. They may not know where the blueberries came from in their slices of pie, but Dede, Barb, and Danner know, which fills them all with satisfaction.



Two boys enjoying Maine blueberry pie at Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital on a late July day at the start of the blueberry harvest.



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News Highlights



New Communication

When you or a loved one need emergency medicine, you would naturally want your care team to be able to communicate fast and effectively. Cell phones allow us that ability to send instant texts, but as healthcare providers and protectors of your private health information, we need to make sure the technology is secure. That's where TigerConnect plays a role. It's a compliance approved texting platform our care teams are using right now to share clinical information in real time. It's just one more way we are using innovative new tools to provide better, more coordinated care.



New Treatment

Northern Light Mercy Hospital has developed a better way to battle the opioid epidemic by equipping its Emergency Department staff with a new tool to get people started on the path to recovery. Mercy's Rapid Access Treatment Program allows ED staff to begin treating people who meet the clinical criteria for opioid use disorder with suboxone while they are in the Emergency Department. The patient also receives a patient navigator who can immediately plan for a comprehensive assessment and ongoing treatment. As part of the program, a recovery coach will also remain engaged with the patient to assist with treatment and set up community supports such as sober housing, recovery-oriented support groups, and employment assistance.



New Technology

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center recently became the first hospital in Maine to acquire a next-generation surgical robot. This technology, the most advanced of its kind in the nation, provides greater range of motion, a clearer, more defined three-dimensional view for the surgeon, and better access to the surgical site.

"This new technology is a natural step forward for Eastern Maine Medical Center's robot-assisted surgery program," says Michelle Toder, MD, a general and bariatric surgeon and medical director of the hospital's Surgical Weight Loss program. "As a surgeon who performs hundreds of procedures with the help of the robot each year, it is comforting to know that my patients will continue to benefit from having access to some of the most highly specialized medical care in northern New England."

The heart of a logger

Scott Hanington is everything you'd expect a Maine logger to be. He's rugged, family-oriented, and proud of Wytopitlock, the small southern Aroostook County village where he's lived for nearly six decades. Look beyond his burly physique, however, and you'll find a much softer side.

"I may not look it on the outside, but I'm a big marshmallow when it comes to kids," he said.

Scott's not alone. His fellow professionals in the Maine logging and forest products industry are some of the most generous people you'll find anywhere. Their passion? Helping children get the lifesaving care they need at Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center, the region's Children's Miracle Network Hospital, and other Northern Light hospitals throughout Maine.

Their support goes back to 1995, when the Professional Logging Contractors of Maine (PLC), the statewide industry group for the logging and forest industry formed and joined the Log A Load for Kids movement. Log A Load for Kids is a nationwide program that began in 1988 in South Carolina. The concept was simple: loggers and wood-supplying businesses would donate the value of a load of logs to their local Children's Miracle Network Hospital.

Bids for kids

On May 4, 2018, loggers and others in the forest products industry emerged from the heavily forested rural regions of Maine to attend the PLC Annual Meeting and Auction in Brewer. Scott's been the auctioneer for the event from the very beginning, and his quick wit is legendary.

"Way back when we had our first PLC meeting, we learned about the young son of a logging contractor who had been mauled by a dog," said Scott. "At the annual meeting, we had a few items, and someone says 'Geez, Scott Hanington could auction them off.' That's how my career started as an auctioneer."

The 2018 auction was fast paced. The sharp-tongued loggers traded quips with each other and with Scott as they repeatedly raised their bid cards. Just about every item sold for more than its value. Then, Scott came to the most prized auction item of the night: six fishing flies hand-tied by Noah Tibbetts, 14. Suddenly, everyone in the room was fully engaged and Scott began his rhythmic chant.

"Eight hundred fifty, now how 'bout nine? How about nine? Got eight fifty, now have nine, thank you very much! Got nine, looking for nine fifty. Got nine fifty, how about nine seventy-five? Nine seventy-five once! Nine seventy-five twice! Sold!"

Noah beamed with pride as his flies sold for more than most of the evening's signature auction items.

A special bond

Ask the loggers about Noah, and they'll gush glowingly about the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals 2014 State of Maine Champion Child. Noah's a fixture at their events,



Noah Tibbetts receives a check on behalf of Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center Children's Miracle Network Hospitals from Dana Doran, Professional Logging Contractors of Maine Executive Director and David Cole, American Forest Management District Manager.



Noah Tibbetts: the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals 2014 State of Maine Champion child, has a special superpower; healing strength. His Nickels for Noah fundraiser has raised more than \$25,000 to help sick kids.

including the Annual Meeting and Auction and an annual golf tournament in Lincoln.

"Noah, for some reason, that young boy got ahold of my heartstrings," said Scott.

Three weeks into his life, Noah was admitted to Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center and diagnosed with bacterial meningitis, a life-threatening disease that can be especially difficult for an infant to overcome. With the help of a highly skilled pediatric care team, Noah overcame the disease, though he continues to receive respiratory treatments to this day. His journey inspired several loggers involved in Maine Log a Load for Kids to do something for Noah and his family that they'll never forget.

"One year, we auctioned off a Red Sox shirt, and we arranged for the person who bought it to give it to Noah," said Scott. "After that, one of our members donated four Red Sox tickets to Noah and his family. Then, I announced that every contractor in the room that raised their hand

was going to give an extra \$100 so Noah's family could have spending money for their trip. Thirty-eight contractors raised their hand."

Noah is just as passionate about giving back. He's making sure that other kids have access to the care they need at Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center.

In 2014, he started Nickels for Noah, a fundraiser that invited his classmates at the Brewer Community School to donate nickels for a month to support Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. His event grew with the support of several local businesses, other schools, and even a child from Medway who was inspired to donate his change, totaling \$40.30, to the cause. Noah's raised more than \$25,000 since 2014 through Nickels for Noah and other fundraising efforts.

Inspired by a young man who has given so much while facing his own health issues, Scott wrote a poem for Noah and read it at a recent PLC Annual Dinner and Auction.

"Everybody in the room had tears in their eyes," he said. "Noah, I call him my wingman. He gets treatment and then goes home and plays a little league game. I wish I were that tough."

Generosity in action

For Scott, the importance of quality, accessible healthcare became personal many years ago when his son and daughter-in-law faced tragedy when their twins were born with twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome, a rare condition where twins share a placenta. Only one of the twins survived. It was one of many medical hardships the family has experienced in recent years which fuels Scott's passion for helping local kids.

"The simple fact is, everybody helped us, so we want to give back," he said. "When you see the smiles on their faces, how can you not try to help them?"

In 2018, Log A Load for Maine Kids raised \$118,000 for Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, adding to their 25-year total of more than \$1 million. Every dollar stays in northern, central, and eastern Maine to fund the technology and programs that Maine children need to recover from serious illnesses and injuries.

"You know," said Scott, "They're tougher than a bald owl. Those kids, they persevere."

Northern Light Health Foundation Financials

Giving by Organization

Acadia Hospital	\$56,413
AR Gould Hospital	\$189,882
Blue Hill Hospital	\$522,973
CA Dean Hospital	\$333,961
Eastern Maine Medical Center	\$1,932,343
Home Care & Hospice	\$376,563
Inland Hospital	\$220,322
Maine Coast Hospital	\$ 583,315
Mercy Hospital	\$4,763,695
Northern Light Health Foundation/ Eastern Maine Medical Center Children's Miracle Network Hospitals	\$634,794
Sebasticook Valley Hospital	\$140,395
Total	\$9,754,657



Donors make a difference

Northern Light Health donors change lives every day across Maine by supporting patient needs that fuel their passion for giving back. Some of those who benefit include:

57 women and 73 children

Found care and support at McAuley Residence, a donor-supported community housing program of Northern Light Mercy Hospital designed to break the cycle of addiction, homelessness, and poverty for single women and their children.*

20 children

Enjoyed a traditional summer camp experience at Camp Hope, a donor-funded camp held by Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center and The Bangor Y. Camp Hope is for kids who have been treated for cancer or blood disorders and their siblings.

300+

Acadia Hospital patients with Alzheimer's, dementia, and other conditions found comfort by interacting with a donor-funded interactive therapeutic robotic baby harp seal.



Community Benefit

Total Community Investment by Category

Community Health Improvement Services	\$2,134,289
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Health Professions Education	\$1,426,701
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Research	\$2,066,673
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Cash and In-Kind Contributions	\$383,451
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Community Building Activities	\$724,553
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Community Benefit Operations	\$1,998,925
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Traditional Charity Care	\$28,010,885
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Unrecoverable Interest Cost on funds used to subsidize state MaineCare/Medicaid underpayment on \$40.2M	\$1,872,236
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Unpaid Cost of Public Programs:

Medicaid	\$53,041,009
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Medicare	\$129,520,478
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Total Systemwide	\$221,179,200
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Member Community Benefit to our Communities

Acadia Hospital	\$14,477,179
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AR Gould Hospital	\$26,532,224
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Blue Hill Hospital	\$2,350,241
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CA Dean Hospital	\$1,357,421
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Northern Light Health	\$994,665
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Eastern Maine Medical Center	\$102,215,938
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Inland Hospital	\$10,256,586
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Maine Coast Hospital	\$12,957,883
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Mercy Hospital	\$46,554,919
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Sebastiack Valley Hospital	\$2,692,028
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Northern Light Home Care & Hospice	\$790,116
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Consolidated Balance Sheets

Years Ended September 30, 2018 and 2017

(in thousands of dollars)

	2018	2017
ASSETS		
Total current assets	\$470,884	\$416,296
Assets limited as to use:		
Capital replacement and other designated uses	359,123	354,300
Self insurance funds and other trusts	57,721	122,181
Donor restricted gifts	86,927	87,880
Total assets limited as to use	503,771	564,361
Property and equipment, net	758,450	734,667
Amounts due from State of Maine (Medicaid)	1,857	3,610
Other long-term assets	21,261	21,686
Total assets	\$1,756,223	\$1,740,620
LIABILITIES		
Total current liabilities	\$243,515	\$220,643
Accrued post-employment benefits	194,438	203,105
Long-term debt	532,853	544,511
Other long-term liabilities	11,026	13,527
Total liabilities	981,832	981,786
Total net assets	774,391	758,834
Total liabilities and net assets	\$1,756,223	\$1,740,620

We pursue fresh ideas and new approaches to ensure an ever higher standard of care that is innovative and efficient.

Financials

Consolidated Statements of Operation

Years Ended September 30, 2018 and 2017

(in thousands of dollars)

	2018	2017
Net operating revenue	\$1,672,060	\$1,654,176
Operating expenses:		
Salaries and employee benefits	993,504	975,437
Supplies and other	674,590	665,564
Total expenses	1,668,094	1,641,001
Income from operations	3,966	13,175
Investment gains and losses	5,550	23,109
Excess of revenue over expenses before noncontrolling interest	9,516	36,284
Noncontrolling interest	(666)	(323)
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$8,850	\$35,961
Operating margin	0.24%	0.80%
Total margin	0.53%	2.14%
Reinvestment in clinical equipment, technological advancements, and facilities	\$67,062	\$104,825



Who we are



Joint Ventures

County Physical Therapy, LLC
LifeFlight of Maine, LLC
New Century Healthcare, LLC
Rosscare Nursing Homes, Inc.
Advanced Collections
Services, LLC
MedComm, LLC
Uniship Courier Services, LLC
Penobscot Logistics
Solutions, LLC

Our mission, vision, and values

Our Mission

We improve the health of the people and communities we serve.

Our Vision

Northern Light Health will be a national leader in healthcare excellence.

Our Values

To accomplish its mission and vision, Northern Light Health will embrace these values:

Integrity:

We commit to the highest standards of behavior and doing the correct thing for the right reasons.

Respect:

We respect the dignity, worth, and rights of others.

Compassion:

We deliver care focused on the needs of each person and guide families and individuals through the experience with kindness and professionalism

Accountability:

We take a responsible and disciplined approach to achieving our priorities and responding to an ever-changing environment.

- 1 Presque Isle**
Northern Light AR Gould Hospital
Northern Light Home Care & Hospice
Work Health
- 2 Greenville**
Northern Light CA Dean Hospital
- 3 Pittsfield**
Northern Light Seabasticook Valley Hospital
Work Health
- 4 Bangor**
Northern Light Acadia Hospital
Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center
Northern Light Foundation
Northern Light Home Care & Hospice
Northern Light Laboratory
Northern Light Pharmacy
Work Health
Work Force
Brewer
Beacon Health
Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center
Northern Light Health
Northern Light Laboratory
Northern Light Pharmacy
- 5 Waterville**
Northern Light Home Care & Hospice
Northern Light Inland Hospital
Work Health
- 6 Ellsworth**
Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital
Northern Light Home Care & Hospice
- 7 Blue Hill**
Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital
- 8 Portland**
Northern Light Home Care & Hospice
Northern Light Mercy Hospital
Northern Light Laboratory
Northern Light Pharmacy
Work Force



What we do

405
Heart
surgeries

33,426
Admissions

68,272
Imaging
tests

32,469
Inpatient
& outpatient
surgeries

3,189
Births

123,786
Emergency
department
visits

338,139
Hospice &
telehealth
home
health visits

434,135
Primary care/
clinic visits



LifeFlight of Maine

- 424 Traumatic Injury Transports
- 1504 Helicopter Air Transports
- 344 Ground Transports
- 129 Towns responded to for scene calls
- 229 Fixed Wing Air Transports
- 247 Total Scene Calls



The Cianchette Building
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Brewer, Maine 04412
northernlighthealth.org



Receive Northern Light Health
news all year.

