

Fiscal Year 2020

# PROGRESS REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY

Addressing community health needs



**Northern Light**<sup>SM</sup>

Eastern Maine Medical Center

# Table of Contents

## Progress Report to Our Community

Introduction ..... 3

## Progress Report Update

Priority #1: Mental Health ..... 4

Priority #2: Social Determinants of Health ..... 4

Priority #3: Substance Use ..... 5

Priority #4: Access to Care ..... 6

Priority #5: Physical Activity, Nutrition, Weight ..... 7

Conclusion ..... 8





Rand O'Leary, MSA, FACHE  
President  
Eastern Maine Medical Center

The emergence of COVID-19 has brought unique challenges to our community, but with these challenges have come new opportunities. The needs of our patients and communities have called on us to unite and respond with unprecedented levels of collaboration. Trust in one another's expertise and commitment has been evident week after week as we respond to both emergent and extended needs. Our shared response has included joining together with the City of Bangor and our local healthcare partners to surround the needs of the communities we serve, ensuring proper access to testing and availability of care for all in need.

In 2019, Northern Light Health partnered with three healthcare systems and the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention to create a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). We used that assessment along with public input to develop a three-year strategy to improve the health and well-being of the communities that we serve.

This report is an update on the progress of our community health strategy for fiscal year 2020, representing the first year of our three-year health improvement plan. In addition to the extraordinary outreach and collaborative efforts during the coronavirus pandemic, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center continues to engage in priority areas of work, including:

- Mental health
- Social determinants of health
- Substance use
- Access to care
- Physical activity, nutrition, and weight

As Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center, we know that our neighbors are looking for places where they can go for personalized care—and we want them to choose us. We are determined to be the best option for them while continuing to collaborate with our community partners. I look forward to what we can accomplish in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Rand O'Leary  
Senior Vice President, Northern Light Health and  
President, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center

# Progress report update

## FY 2020 Progress Report

### Priority #1: Mental Health

**Objective:** Increase educational programs to raise awareness, readiness and access to mental health services from zero to one by 9/30/20.

**Status:** Completed

**Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used):** In fiscal year 2020 (FY20), Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center engaged in clinical discussions with Northern Light Acadia Hospital to partner on Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) coordination of efforts. EMMC added an additional psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner (PMHNP) at Cutler Health Center, in Orono, to service our patients with behavioral health challenges.

**Partners engaged:** Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center partnered with Northern Light Acadia Hospital on this priority.

**Highlights:** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center in partnership with Acadia increased the consults in Primary Care and has easier access to the provider at Acadia in an active provider model. Plan and approach underway to increase MAT and opioid treatment at EMMC and Acadia, respectively, as next steps. During the pandemic, we have been able to provide MAT training/mentoring through the virtual approach using technology. The team successfully navigated during this time all that needed to be accomplished.

**Outcome measure:** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center completed the targeted training using an Acadia Hospital educational program to train 31 line staff at EMMC.

**Project leads:** Rick Redmond, LCSW, AVP Access & Service Line Development at Acadia Hospital; Jesse Higgins, PMHNP, Director of Integrated Behavioral Health; Tammy Violette, RN, Director Physician Practices; Dr. Sarah Irving, Director EMMC Residency Program; Nicole Morse, RN, Nurse Manager, Family Medicine Center and Residency; Donna Ashe, Director Physician Practices.

**Next steps:** In fiscal year 2021 (FY21), Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center and Northern Light Acadia will formalize the hub and spoke model for behavioral health services. Also support any additional training necessary in the primary care setting as requested to continue to improve overall comfort with this patient population for front line staff.

### Priority #2: Social Determinants of Health

**Objective:** Increase the number of patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources from zero to 2000 by 9/30/20.

**Status:** Completed



**Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used):** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center implemented the use of validated two-question screening tool to identify food insecure patients, and established partnership with Good Shepherd Food Bank (GSFB) to enable practices to provide food to patients, and also refer food insecure patients to appropriate resources such as food banks, churches and other community organizations.

**Partners engaged:** Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center partnered with GSFB on this priority.

**Highlights:** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center began their initial journey to screen for food insecurity and built a program to assist those patients in need with food bags and/or referrals to other community partners. The program has become wildly successful, despite the pandemic, with over 24,000 screens performed, over 1,000 patients identified as food insecure, and 421 patients provided food bags or referrals to other community partners. Other positive outcomes from the program include staff awareness and appreciation of the focus on food insecurity by the organization, and the positive role we can all play to address food insecurity in our community. Our staff has also taken ownership and pride in using the intake process managed by registered nurses and medical assistants, empowering this staff to personally address the need, and have a personal contact and ability to help while doing so. The program has created a higher-level perception of the ability of staff to make a difference above and beyond the normal food drive approach!

**Outcome measure:** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center conducted 24,742 food insecurity screens, resulting in 1,032 food insecure positive patients over 12 sites, and 219 food bags distributed, and 202 referrals to other community partners.

**Project leads:** Dr. Sarah Irving, Director Residency Program; Nicole Morse, Nurse Manager Family Medicine Center and Residency; Donna Ashe, Director Physician Practices.

**Next steps:** In FY21, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center will increase the number of patients screened for food insecurity and referred to community resources from 3327 to 7000 by 9/30/21.

### Priority #3: Substance Use

**Objective:** Increase the number of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) options for opioid use readily available in local communities from one to two by 9/30/20.

**Status:** Completed

**Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used):** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center's eight residents in the EMMC Residency Program completed their MAT training in the first year of residency at EMMC. We are offering MAT services at three locations: Family Medicine & Residency, Orono Primary Care, and Husson Primary Care.

**Partners engaged:** Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center partnered with SAMHSA for MAT training Program (PCSS Module) on this priority.

**Highlights:** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center first year residency program, which includes MAT training, continues to be an excellent approach to expand capabilities within our community. The

Residency Program performs well on training physicians as first year residents and embedding that expertise into our primary care practices.

**Outcome measure:** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center was able to expand MAT services to three practices which include Family Medicine & Residency, Orono Primary Care, and Husson Primary Care and provided services to 603 patients, significantly above the target of 250 interventions.

**Project leads:** Dr. Sarah Irving, Director, Residency Program; Donna Ashe, Director, Physician Practices.

**Next steps:** In FY21, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center, in partnership with Northern Light Acadia Hospital, will extend to four primary care locations and 400 patient interventions with a focus on hub and spoke treatment networks for Suboxone Clinics and MAT coordination between Acadia Hospital and EMMC organizations.

#### Priority #4: Access to Care

**Objective:** Increase the number of primary care locations accepting new patients from two to four by 9/30/20.

**Status:** Completed

**Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used):** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center opened six of seven primary care practices to new patients utilizing a practice on rotation strategy for new patient assignments. Residency Program is doing double rotation schedule.

**Partners engaged:** Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center partnered with the following entities on this priority:

WellSpring Inc.; Michael Reid, VP Physician Services; Dr. James Clarke, SVP Physicians Medical Group; Dr. Billings-Lindsey, Physician Chair, Northern Light Health Medical Group; Northern Light EMMC Primary Care Managers, Northern Light EMMC Executive Leadership, and Northern Light EMMC Primary Care Steering Committees.

**Highlights:** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center opened six of seven primary care practices to new patients and saw an increased volume of 2,072 new patients over the last year, thus creating additional access for those we serve. Pandemic impacted increased volume, but we successfully continued to take on new patients. The key to success was the approach of utilizing weekly rotation schedules for the practices, in which each practice would be taking on new patients for a specific week. Use of the rotation strategy has significantly improved time to appointment for our patients, providing access to care for those in need.

**Outcome measure:** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center exceeded the original goal of opening an additional two practices, for a total of four practices, for taking on new patients. The innovation by the team to address patient access through the use of a rotation schedule between all seven practices resulted in the ability to open six full time practices by the end of the year with 2,072 new patients added to primary care, which is 1,072 more patients than originally planned.

**Project leads:** Dr. Sarah Irving, Director Residency Program; Donna Ashe, Director, Primary Care; Dr. Lisa Billings-Lindsey, Physician Directory Primary Care.

**Next steps:** In FY21, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center Primary Care Practices will continue their on-call rotation schedules, accommodating new patients, even in the midst of the pandemic. Primary Care Practices will follow the prescribed assignment of patients to practices and physicians considering patient gender preference, patient transportation needs, and other special needs. We will also implement a new patient process for contact within 30 days (safety check) from date of original call for services

### Priority #5: Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Weight

**Objective:** Increase the number of evidence-based programs focused on access to and availability of activities to improve overall health through a variety of different nutritional and/or physical activity options from zero to three by 9/30/20.

**Status:** Completed

**Strategy to achieve the objective (approaches taken, and resources used):** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center partnered with Community Based Organizations to provide access to and promote nutritional and/or physical activity options (e.g. Let's Go!, community programs, etc.) at Orono, Hampden, and Bangor school systems. The pandemic created the opportunity to leverage social media to provide continuous outreach and education to our students and prepare them for returning to school and athletic programs.

**Partners engaged:** Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center partnered with the following entities on this priority:

- Bangor school system
- Orono school system
- Hampden school system

**Highlights:** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center was able to adapt to the pandemic and subsequent shutdown of the state school systems. The team was still able to provide instructional videos, online social interactions, work out videos, as well as work directly with schools and coaches to determine best methods to support Phase 1 restart as specified by the State of Maine. The team utilized a virtual approach online to continue to work with the students and successfully reached 1,749 students through virtual instruction regarding physical challenges and education on returning to school and athletic programs during the pandemic.

**Outcome measure:** In FY20, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center completed nine evidence-based programs focused on increasing access to and availability of overall lifestyle changes, offering seven sites a curriculum for overall nutritional and/or physical activity options, and reached a total of 1,919 students throughout the year..

**Project leads:** John P. Stowe, Program Manager/Athletic Training Supervisor; Monique Bolduc, Practice Manager Orthopedic Clinic.

**Next steps:** In FY21, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center will continue to focus on Active Communities: Increasing the number of evidence-based programs focused on access to and availability of

activities to improve overall health through a variety of different nutritional and/or physical activity options from three to four by 9/30/21.

## Conclusion

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center 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.



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