

# Progress Report to our Community

Fiscal Years  
**2023-2025**

Addressing community health needs.

Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital is committed to shaping health improvement efforts in our service area based on sound data, personal and professional experience, and community need. Through collaborative efforts, Blue Hill Hospital creates healthier communities through the provision of services, resources, and programs beyond our hospital's walls.

We used the results of the 2022 [Community Health Needs Assessment](#) along with community input to inform the development of our three-year [Community Health Strategy](#). As a member of Northern Light Health's Community Health Council, Blue Hill Hospital recognized the value, reach, and influence of aligned engagement efforts with a shared purpose. The following three priority areas were adopted as shared priorities where Northern Light Health member organizations would engage in common strategy to achieve greater statewide impact:

- Mental health
- Social determinants of health
- Substance use

This report is an update on Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital's progress on our community health strategy for fiscal years 2023 (October 2022 – September 2023), 2024 (October 2023 – September 2024), and 2025 (October 2024 – September 2025) representing the three years of our three-year health improvement plan.



## PRIORITY: Mental Health

Three-year approach (2023-2025)		
Goal	Strategy	Objective
Provide youth and families with the mental and behavioral health resources they need to thrive.	Partner with schools and other community organizations to ensure youth and their families have improved access to mental health prevention, early intervention, and treatment services.	Educate and empower others to recognize, support, and respond to mental and behavioral health needs of youth.

### Shared objective:

Increase the number of individuals trained to support the mental health needs of youth.

Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital trained staff in Psychological First Aid (PFA), an evidence-informed approach to help anyone — children, adolescents, adults, and families — in the immediate aftermath of a traumatic experience and has proven to be effective when someone is experiencing a mental health crisis at any time. PFA shines a light on the impact of collective trauma, builds resiliency, and assists in self-care action plans by incorporating five evidence-based principles: safety, calming, connectedness, self and community reliance, and hope.

Certified Blue Hill Hospital staff then engaged schools and/or youth serving organizations to educate and empower individuals to respond to mental and behavioral health needs of youth using the PFA training model. Attendees received training in eight core elements: engagement, safety, stabilization, information gathering, practical assistance, connection to social supports, information on coping, and connecting with collaborative services. Systemwide collective impact of our shared objective, since this effort began in 2023, has resulted in 110 training sessions with of 2,066 individuals trained.

## Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Blue Hill Consolidated School	Healthy Acadia
Community Compass	Healthy Peninsula
Curriculum Coordinators in Hancock County (Union 93 and Union 76)	Help Me Grow
Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)	Maine Coast Fisherman
Downeast Community Partners (Blue Hill Peninsula preschool educators and Head Start)	Nichols Day Camp*
Downeast Partners & Friends	Stonington High School
Early Childhood Care Providers Group*	The Early Childhood Interest Group, chaired by Healthy Peninsula
	WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)

- Two community organizations\* trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA); 25 individuals trained in PFA.
- Developed directory of behavioral health resources for youths (and adults) in the LGBTQ community.
- Engaged in “Help Me Grow” and Children’s Behavioral Health Services with DHHS
- Provided resources and participated in YMCA Healthy Kids Fair, WIC Community Baby Shower
- Outreach to Director of Community Program to Maine Coast Fisherman regarding behavioral health support for fisherman
- Participating with the Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety’s Fisherman’s Empowerment grant project.

- Implementation of Medical Neighborhood Team to proactively address complex patient needs, including behavioral health issues, in a multi-disciplinary setting.
- Stonington High School – a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) from Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital offers regular mental health consultation to staff and students; helps provide educational resources; potential point of contact for PFA training.

## Fiscal Year 2024 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

AMHC	Medical Neighborhood Team
Community Health & Counseling Services	Memorial Ambulance Service*
Deer-Isle Stonington High School	Northern Light Acadia Hospital
H.O.M.E., Inc.*	

- Two community organizations\* were trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA); 34 individuals were trained in PFA.
- A Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), working with Stonington High School’s guidance counselor, assessed the school’s needs, related to mental health, to develop appropriate educational resources. The LCSW worked with approximately 30 students on an individual basis.
- Behavioral health partners AMHC, Community Health & Counseling Services, and Northern Light Acadia Hospital collaborated on the Medical Neighborhood Team.

## Fiscal Year 2025 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

AMHC	Early Childcare Providers Group
Community Health & Counseling Services	George Stevens Academy
Downeast Community Partners*	H.O.M.E. Orland*

- Two community organizations\* trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA); 35 individuals trained in PFA.
- Behavioral health partners AMHC, Community Health & Counseling Services, and Northern Light Acadia Hospital collaborated on the Medical Neighborhood Team.

## PRIORITY: Social Determinants of Health

Three-year approach (2023-2025)		
Goal	Strategy	Objective
Improve health outcomes for vulnerable populations.	Partner with community to improve equitable access to social supports, community resources, and healthcare services.	Connect individuals with community resources they need to improve their health and wellbeing.

### Shared objective:

Increase community partner engagement with [findhelp.org](https://findhelp.org).

Findhelp.org is the nation's leading social care network, making it easier to connect patients and their families with free or reduced-cost programs from local partners and national support services with dignity and ease, and is one component of Northern Light Health's response to need in the communities we serve. [Northern Light findhelp](https://findhelp.org) will continue to develop, allowing users to search and connect to community services.

Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital engaged in meaningful, trusted community partnerships to reach priority populations with equitable access to community resources and social supports and connect individuals with community resources they need to improve their health and well-being through the [findhelp.org](https://findhelp.org) platform.

- In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, Blue Hill Hospital participated in a monthly systemwide workgroup focused on engagement efforts to educate community partners on the availability and uses of [findhelp.org](https://findhelp.org). We assisted those community partners with adding their program information to the platform directory and with activating the ability to receive referrals or requests for information through the platform. Systemwide collective impact of our community engagement shared objective, since this effort began in 2023, has resulted in 69 partners offering 148 programs that increased engagement with FindHelp.
- In fiscal year 2025, Northern Light Community Health researched [findhelp](https://findhelp.org) data, and engaged clinical user feedback, to understand the most frequently searched social health needs in our geographic region to meet the needs of specific populations. These topic areas were featured on the [findhelp](https://findhelp.org) platform as specific "folders" containing a minimum of five relevant community resource links providing [findhelp](https://findhelp.org) users with easy access to the resources compiled by our organization. In fiscal year 2025, collectively across Northern Light Health, there were 50,990 searches for assistance conducted using [Northern Light Health findhelp](https://findhelp.org) compared to 21,027 searches in 2023. Search data trends show that food assistance remains the dominant need across Maine. This work is ongoing as we continue to identify best options for quick and easy access to resources.
- Additionally, in 2025, Northern Light Community Health participated in a food security resource collaborative convened by the Maine CDC Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Program that included staff from [findhelp](https://findhelp.org), Maine 211, MaineHealth, Community Care Partnership of Maine (CCPM) ACO, and community partners. This group identified food security resources in counties with high prevalence of cardiovascular disease (Somerset, Piscataquis, Aroostook, and Washington) that were not listed within [findhelp](https://findhelp.org) and Maine 211. Members of this collaborative added these missing resources to their respective platforms and plan to pursue a quality improvement project to increase CCPM staff use of [findhelp](https://findhelp.org) and Maine 211 to address food security and other patient needs.

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## Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Age Friendly Coastal Communities	Good Shepherd Food Bank	Opiate-Free Island Project*
Blue Hill Chamber of Commerce	Hancock/Washington County	Prosper Consortium
Bridging Neighbors Project	Homeless Providers Coalition	Restored Hope
Deer Isle Stonington Coalition on Substance Use	Healthy Acadia	Rotary Club
Down East Family YMCA	Healthy Island Project*	Simmering Pot
Downeast Community Partners	Healthy Peninsula*	Substance Use Prevention Council
Downeast Partners for Children and Families	Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County	Heart of Maine, United Way
Downeast Substance Treatment Network	Maine Seacoast Mission	WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)
Early Childhood Interest Group	Medical Neighborhood Team	
	Next Step Domestic Violence Project	

- Three community partners\* added six programs to the findhelp directory:
  - Healthy Island Project: HIP Lunch Box Program
  - Healthy Peninsula: Commodity Supplemental Food Program, Furry Friends Food Bank, Healthy Peninsula Family Resource Center, Simmering Pot Meal Delivery
  - Opiate-Free Island Project: Syringe Exchange Program
- Implementation of a closed-loop referral system between Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital and community partner Healthy Peninsula using the findhelp.org platform to support “Bridging Neighbors” volunteer resource connection collaboration.
- 81 food bags distributed to patients in need, in partnership with Good Shepherd Food Bank
- 600+ lbs. of fresh produce distributed to patients at Blue Hill Family Practice July-Sept in partnership with Mainers Feeding Mainers program.
- 37 “Welcome Baby” bags distributed to new families for a healthy start, in partnership with Healthy Peninsula
- Partnered with Downeast Community Partner’s Thaw Fund to support the purchase of heating fuel for people living in poverty in Hancock County
- Sponsored the Heart of Maine United Way’s Hancock County Food Drive to support food security efforts.
- Provided 120 quarts/month of free, fresh soup via Simmering Pot, a partnership with Healthy Peninsula
- Sponsored Down East Family YMCA Healthy Kids Fair and Pridefest celebration, a partnership with Healthy Acadia
- 40 Blood Pressure checks conducted at Juneteenth celebration in partnership with Healthy Acadia
- Partnered with Comfort Cases to stock 16 personal care backpacks to have for babies-teenagers entering Foster Care

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## Fiscal Year 2024 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

AMHC	Good Shepherd Food Bank
Blue Hill Peninsula Chamber of Commerce	Hancock County Sherriff's Office
Blue Hill Heritage Trust	Healthy Acadia
City of Ellsworth	Healthy Peninsula*
Community Compass	H.O.M.E., Inc.
Community Health & Counseling Services	Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County*
Deer Isle Adult Education*	Island Food Pantry*
Down East Family YMCA	Next Step Domestic Violence Project
Downeast Housing Collaborative	Northeast Center for Occupational Health & Safety
Ellsworth Public Library	

- Four community partners\* added seven programs to the findhelp directory:
  - Deer Isle Adult Education: High School Completion
  - Healthy Peninsula: Bridging Neighbors
  - Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County: Grief Support Groups, Volunteer Support, Evensong, Lending Library
  - Island Food Pantry: Food Pantry
- 1,702 quarts of soup were prepared and donated to the community meal program in collaboration with The Simmering Pot and Healthy Peninsula.
- 50+ patient referrals to the Bridging Neighbors program, a Healthy Peninsula program to reduce social isolation and loneliness, were conducted via findhelp.org, a platform for Blue Hill Hospital providers to make direct patient referrals to community organizations for identified social needs,.
- **165 supplemental grocery bags were distributed to patients**, in partnership with Good Shepherd Food Bank. Each bag contained food and community resources.
- **924 lbs.** of fresh produce were distributed at Northern Light Primary Care in Blue Hill through the Mainers Feeding Mainers partnership between Good Shepherd Food Bank and local farmers. The program was renewed for the summer of 2024.
- Employee donation drive for Hancock County Food Security Network was held in partnership with Healthy Acadia. More than 1600 personal hygiene and food items were donated by Northern Light Maine Coast and Northern Light Blue Hill Hospitals.
- In partnership with Healthy Peninsula, distributed 50+ "Welcome Baby" bags to new families for a healthy start.
- Participated in Healthy Hibernation Fair, Downeast Housing Collaborative, Blue Hill Clean Up days, Hancock County Food Drive (collected over 1600 personal hygiene products for distribution across Hancock County), Downeast Family YMCA Healthy Kid's Day Health Fair, Pridefest, Blue Hill Consolidated Fair Health & Safety Fair, WIC Community Baby Shower.
- Convened the Medical Neighborhood Team monthly meetings which focused on highly complex patients/community members to address issues such as behavioral health, substance use, homelessness, domestic violence.
- Served as supportive, consulting partner with Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety project: "In the Wheelhouse" to develop a fishermen's health and wellness pilot program focused on fishermen and intertidal fishermen in Stonington and Vinalhaven.
- Held Baby's First Library Card initiative with Ellsworth Public Library and Dixon Birthing Center; registered 30 cards.
- Shared Community Health Needs Assessment local planning for Hancock County, served as co-lead.



## Fiscal Year 2025 Partners and Community Impact

As a result of ongoing community engagement and promotion of [Northern Light Health findhelp](#), use of the platform to find assistance continues to increase. In 2025, there were 6,153 searches by Hancock County residents compared to 2,505 searches in 2023. Search data trends show that food assistance remains the dominant need in Hancock County.

Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital created the following findhelp resource folders:

### **Domestic violence/safe at home**

1. Legal Assistance - Next Step Domestic Violence Project
2. Emergency Shelter - Next Step Domestic Violence Project
3. Support Groups - Next Step Domestic Violence Project
4. Community Education & School Programming - Next Step Domestic Violence Project
5. Transitional Housing - Next Step Domestic Violence Project
6. Home Free - National Runaway Safeline
7. Confidential 24-Hour Helpline - Next Step Domestic Violence Project

### **Transportation**

1. Transportation - Friends in Action
2. Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMPT) - ModivCare Solutions, LLC
3. Free Bus Rides for Seniors - Downeast Community Partners (DCP)
4. Transportation Services - Island Connections
5. Medical and Compassion Air Transportation - Patient AirLift Services (PALS)
6. Road to Recovery - American Cancer Society
7. Medical Air Transportation - Angel Flight Northeast

### **Food resources**

1. Meals on Wheels - Eastern Area Agency on Aging
2. Food Pantry - Loaves and Fishes of Ellsworth Food Pantry
3. Community Cafes - Eastern Area Agency on Aging
4. Simmering Pot Meal Delivery - Healthy Peninsula
5. Food Pantry - Tree of Life
6. Commodity Supplemental Food Program - Eastern Area Agency on Aging
7. Bar Harbor Food Pantry - Bar Harbor Food Pantry
8. Maine Senior FarmShare Program - Maine Dept. of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry

### **Housing improvement programs**

1. Disability management Services - Aroostook Mental Health Services, Inc. (AMHC)
2. Single Family Housing Repair Loans & Grants Maine - USDA
3. Low Income Energy Audit and Air Sealing - Efficiency Maine
4. Home Modifications for Veterans - Homes for Veterans
5. Home Repair - Maine State Housing Authority
6. Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) - Maine State Housing Authority
7. Heat Pump Rebates - Efficiency Maine

### **Maine Hotline Numbers**

1. Deaf Domestic Violence Hotline - The National Deaf Domestic Violence Hotline
2. Domestic Abuse Hotline - Partners for Peace

3. Confidential 24-Hour Helpline - Next Step Domestic Violence Project
4. Overdose Prevention Hotline - Never Use Alone
5. Veteran Suicide Prevention - Veterans Inc.
6. National Child Abuse Hotline - Childhelp
7. Maine QuitLink - Maine DHHS
8. Suicide Prevention Hotline - The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
9. Child Abuse Hotline - Maine DHHS
10. Domestic Violence Hotline - The National Domestic Violence Hotline
11. Adult Protective Services 24 Hour Hotline - Maine DHHS
12. Domestic Violence Hotline for Teens & Young Adults - Loveisrespect
13. Poison Control Hotline - American Association of Poison Control Centers
14. Pregnancy Hotline - The American Pregnancy Hotline
15. The Maine Crisis Line (MCL) - Maine DHHS

**Behavioral health resources**

1. Children's Behavioral Health Home Services (BHH) - Catholic Charities Maine
2. Adult Outpatient Therapy - Community Health and Counseling Services
3. Crisis Services - Aroostook Mental Health Services, Inc. (AMHC)
4. Mental Health Services - New Communities
5. Therapy Services - Health Affiliates Maine
6. MDI Behavioral Health Center - Mount Desert Island Hospital
7. NAMI HelpLine - National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI)
8. SAMHSA's National Helpline - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
9. Military Mental Health Support - HicksStrong, Inc.
10. Community Family Support Services - Community Care
11. Mental Health Counseling - Dirigo Counseling Clinic
12. Mental Health Support and Crisis Text Hotline - Crisis Text Line
13. Behavioral Health Services (Children & Adult) - Mobius Inc.
14. Communities and Support Groups for Widows - Modern Widows Club
15. Anonymous Mental Health Support for Veterans, Service Members, and Intelligence Officers - Sound Off
16. Maine Early Childhood Consultation Partnerships - Maine DHHS
17. Telehealth Intensive Outpatient Program - Health Affiliates Maine
18. Veterans Suicide Prevention - Veterans, Inc.
19. Intensive Clinical Program - Home Base Program
20. VA Mental Health Services - US Dept. of Veterans Affairs

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## PRIORITY: Substance Use

Three-year approach (2023-2025)		
Goal	Strategy	Objective
Reduce deaths, disability, and suffering associated with substance use disorder.	Leverage community partnerships to reduce barriers and improve access to and availability of substance use prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction services. Optimize relationships with partners who can help us engage effectively with populations in need.	Improve pathways to prevention, treatment, and recovery for individuals with substance use disorder.

### Shared objective:

Improve distribution and preventive access to state sponsored Naloxone kits.

In collaboration with other Northern Light Health member organizations and community-based organizations, trained Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital staff representing pharmacy and community health departments worked diligently to improve processes and partnerships to reduce barriers and provide equitable access to state-sponsored Naloxone (Narcan) kits for priority populations.

Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital participated in the Maine Naloxone Distribution Initiative<sup>1</sup>, which provides state-purchased naloxone to community organizations, clinical sites, and end-users throughout Maine to distribute free of charge. Through a collaboration with Bangor Public Health & Community Services, Blue Hill Hospital worked in the emergency department and primary care settings to provide education on the use of these naloxone kits to end-users to facilitate the reversal of private overdoses in the community. Systemwide collective impact of our shared objective, since this effort began in 2023, has resulted in 3,257 naloxone kits distributed throughout Northern Light Health's service area.

### Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

#### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Deer Isle-Stonington Community Coalition on Substance Use	Hub and Spoke Clinical Advisory Council
Downeast Substance Treatment Network	Inspire Warming Center
Downeast Substance Use Prevention Council	Nichols Day Camp
Hancock County Sheriff's Office	Opiate Free Island Project
Healthy Acadia	Prosper Consortium
Stonington Lobster Boat races	Restored Hope for Recovering Addicts
	Blue Hill Fair

- Distributed 23 state-sponsored naloxone kits.
- Engaged in collaborative efforts with listed partners.
- Installed a locked kiosk in the waiting room of Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital's main entrance for disposal of unwanted or expired medication.
- Collected 125+ lbs. of expired unwanted, unused medications.

<sup>1</sup> [Distribute Naloxone – Maine Drug Data Hub](#)

- Stocked Primary Care Practices with Deterra medication waste bags in, a program in partnership with the Hancock County Sherriff’s Office and Healthy Acadia.
- Assisted in the distribution of 452 kits of Narcan, 350 fentanyl test strips and 46 Xylazine test strips at the Blue Hill Fair in partnership with Opiate Free Island Project and others.
- Distributed and provided education for 36 kits of Narcan at Ellsworth Pridefest with Healthy Acadia
- Distributed and provided education for 20 kits of Narcan at the Stonington Lobster Boat races.
- Sponsorship of the Opiate Free Island Partnership Recovery Celebration at the Island Community Center in partnership with OFIP and where Dr. Cobb was the guest speaker.
- Sponsorship of Opiate Free Island Partnership Jacinta presentation focused on recovery.

## Fiscal Year 2024 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

AMHC  
Community Recovery Celebration  
Hancock County Sherriff’s Office  
Healthy Acadia

Mount Desert Island Hospital  
Opiate Free Island Project  
OPTIONS  
Primary Care Stonington

- Distributed 57 state-sponsored naloxone kits.
- Deterra medical waste disposal bags were stocked and distributed at all primary care practices in partnership with Healthy Acadia and Hancock County Sherriff’s Office and also distributed at various community health fairs.
  - Opiate Free Island Project & Primary Care Stonington partnership distributed 50 Deterra drug waste bags.
  - Distributed Deterra bags supplied by partners Healthy Acadia to all other primary care offices in observation of Drug Take Back Day.
- Participated in Narcan distribution at the Stonington Lobster Boat races in partnership with Opiate Free Island Project.
- Collected 180 lbs. of materials and returned for disposal via the drug take-back Kiosk at Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital.
- Participated in Narcan distribution at the Stonington Lobster Boat races in partnership with Opiate Free Island Project.
- Dr. Michael Murnik discussed Narcan distribution for the Healthy Living Segment on WABI TV.
- Collaborated with Mount Desert Island Hospital on the development of a resource list of community access to Narcan.
- Healthy Acadia presented about Tobacco Prevention Programs for Youth at January Hancock County Providers Meeting.

## Fiscal Year 2025 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Healthy Acadia

Opiate Free Island Project

- Distributed 33 state-sponsored naloxone kits.
- Provided ongoing education at community events regarding the availability of Naloxone kits via the emergency department, primary care/outpatient, and inpatient settings.

- Continued efforts started in FY24 to distribute Deterra medical waste disposal bags
- Drug take-back Kiosk continues to provide people with a safe and anonymous place to dispose unwanted, unused, or expired medications.
- Presentation on Community Recovery Celebration, provided by Marianne VanDiver, PA in collaboration with Opiate Free Island Project.