

Progress Report to our Community

Fiscal Years
2023-2025

Addressing community health needs.

Northern Light Maine Coast 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, Maine Coast 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, Maine Coast 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 Maine Coast 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 Maine Coast 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 Maine Coast 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 2,066 individuals trained.

Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Children’s Development Services	Downeast Horizons	Homeless Provider Resource Network
Community Health and Counseling Services	Downeast Partners & Friends	Kids Peace
Curriculum Coordinators in Hancock County	Downeast Partners Collaboration*	Maine Department of Corrections
Department of Health and Human Services	Downeast Restorative Justice	Maine State Police Liaisons
Downeast Community Partners	Eagles Nest Clubhouse*	Next Step Domestic Violence Project
Downeast Family YMCA	Eastern Maine Development Corp.	Regional School Unit #24
	Families First Community Center	Special Children’s Friends
	Healthy Acadia	WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)
	Help Me Grow	

- Two community organizations* trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA); 22 individuals trained in PFA.
- Developed directory of behavioral health resources for youth and adults in the LGBTQ community.
- Engaged in “Help Me Grow” with the Department of Health and Human Services
- Resource discussion with OPTIONS counselor
- Engaged in the Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach Naloxone and Safety (OPTIONS) initiative coordinated by the Maine Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) and Community Health and Counseling Services

Fiscal Year 2024 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

AMHC	Healthy Acadia Inspire & Warming Center*
Community Health & Counseling Services	Maine Pediatric and Behavioral Health Partnership
Down East Community Partnerships*	Medical Neighborhood Team
Eagles Nest Clubhouse*	Northern Light Acadia Hospital
Ellsworth Public Library*	

- Four community organizations* trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA); 45 individuals trained in PFA.
- Medical Neighborhood Team collaboration including behavioral health partners AMHC, Community Health & Counseling Services, and Northern Light Acadia Hospital.

Fiscal Year 2025 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Down East Family YMCA	Downeast Community Partners
Down East YMCA Childcare Directors*	Eagles Nest Clubhouse*
Downeast Career Center	Emmaus Center

- Two community organizations* trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA); 45 individuals trained in PFA.
- Continued Medical Neighborhood Team collaboration including behavioral health partners AMHC, Community Health & Counseling Services, and Northern Light Acadia Hospital.
- Behavioral Health Provider list for children/youth developed, maintained, and distributed as necessary by Maine Coast Hospital Pediatrics providers.

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.

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 Maine Coast 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 platform.

- In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, Maine Coast Hospital participated in a monthly systemwide workgroup focused on engagement efforts to educate community partners on the availability and uses of 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 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 platform as specific "folders" containing a minimum of five relevant community resource links providing findhelp 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](#) 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, 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 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 CPPM staff use of findhelp and Maine 211 to address food security and other patient needs.

Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Age Friendly Sullivan	Good Shepherd Food Bank	Next Step Domestic Violence Project*
Beth C. Wright Cancer Resource Center	Hancock/Washington County Homeless Providers Coalition	Prosper Consortium
Community Caring Coalition	Healthy Acadia*	Restored Hope
Downeast Community Partners	Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County	Simmering Pot
Downeast Family YMCA	Inspire Warming Center	Substance Use Prevention Council hosted by Healthy Acadia
Downeast Partners for Children and Families	Maine Health Access Foundation	Heart of Maine United Way
Downeast Substance Treatment Network	Medical Neighborhood Team	WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)
Ellsworth Chamber of Commerce		
Friends in Action*		

- Three community partners* added 16 programs to the findhelp directory:
 - Friends in Action: Food and Medicine Delivery, Friendly Visits, Simple Home Repairs, Telephone Check-In, Transportation, Yard Work
 - Healthy Acadia: INSPIRE Recovery Center, Neighbor4Neighbor, Thai Chi, You've Got A Friend Fund
 - Next Step Domestic Violence Project: Community Education & School Programming, Confidential 24-Hour Helpline, Emergency Shelter, Legal Assistance, Support Groups, Transitional Housing
- 153 food bags distributed for patients in need, in partnership with Good Shepherd Food Bank
- 941 lbs. of free, fresh, local produce distributed August, Sept, and October to patients from three participating practices in partnership with the Good Shepherd Food Bank Mainers Feeding Mainers program.

- Sponsored of the Heart of Maine United Way’s Hancock County Food Drive to support food security effort.
- Partnered with Downeast Community Partner’s Thaw Fund to support the purchase of heating fuel for people living in poverty in Hancock County.
- Participated in Downeast YMCA Healthy Kids Fair and the WIC Community Baby Shower providing health and wellness information at both events.
- Food donation of approximately 43 gallons of homemade soup and other food to community members via Inspire Warming Center, a partnership with Healthy Acadia
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.

Fiscal Year 2024 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Acadia ATV Club	Good Shepherd Food Bank
AMHC	Hancock County Sherriff’s Office
Bar Harbor Food Pantry*	Healthy Peninsula
Blue Hill Heritage Trust	Healthy Acadia*
City of Ellsworth	H.O.M.E., Inc.
Comfort Cases	Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County
Community Health & Counseling Services	Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry*
Downeast Community Partners*	Mainers Feeding Mainers
Downeast Family YMCA*	Medical Neighborhood Team
Downeast Housing Collaborative	Next Step Domestic Violence Project
Downeast Substance Treatment Network	Open Table MDI*
Ellsworth Public Library	Prosper Consortium Restored Hope

- Six community partners* added seven programs to the findhelp directory:
 - Bar Harbor Food Pantry: Food pantry
 - Downeast Community Partners: Free bus rides for seniors
 - Downeast Family YMCA: Camp Discovery
 - Healthy Acadia: Tobacco use prevention, Prosper program
 - Loaves and Fishes of Ellsworth Food Pantry: Food pantry
 - Open Table MDI: Bar Harbor Community Supper
- Warming Center - weekly donations of soup and other food provided to an emergency warming center in collaboration with Healthy Acadia.
- 228 supplemental grocery bags distributed to patients, in partnership with Good Shepherd Food Bank. Each bag contained food and community resources.
- 1,764 lbs. of fresh produce distributed to patients though the Mainers Feeding Mainers partnership with Good Shepherd Food Bank and local farmers.
- Planned and coordinated employee donation drive for Hancock County Food Security Network in partnership with Healthy Acadia.
- Sponsored the Downeast Community Partners heating fuel fundraiser.

- Participated in: Healthy Hibernation Fair, Hancock County Food Drive (collected over 1600 personal hygiene products for distribution across Hancock County), Downeast Family YMCA Healthy Kid’s Day Health Fair, and Pridefest.
- Convened the Medical Neighborhood Team monthly meeting focused on highly complex patients/community members to address issues such as behavioral health, substance use, homelessness, and domestic violence.
- Held Ride for the Cure-Breast Cancer Awareness in Partnership with the Acadia ATV Club-information on breast cancer awareness and Talk with a Doc.
- Maine Coast Pediatrics collaboratively worked with Comfort Cases to provide backpacks filled with comfort and personal care items for youth entering the foster care system.
- Created Baby’s First Library Card initiative with Ellsworth Public Library and Dixon Birthing Center and registered 30 cards in the first six months.
- Shared Community Health Needs Assessment local planning for Hancock county, co-lead
- Participated in the WABI TV Healthy Living Segment: Going Back to School: Immunizations with Sheena Whittaker, MD

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. There was also significant growth in searches by Washington County residents with 1,469 searches in 2025 compared to 603 in 2023. Search data trends show that food assistance remains the dominant need in Hancock County, while food and utilities assistance were the most frequently searched needs for Washington County.

Northern Light Maine Coast 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 (NRSO)
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

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 Maine Coast 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 Maine Coast Hospital participated in the Maine Naloxone Distribution Initiative¹, 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, Maine Coast 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.

Continued on next page

¹ [Distribute Naloxone – Maine Drug Data Hub](#)

Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Downeast Substance Coalition
Downeast Substance Treatment
Network
Downeast Substance Use
Prevention Council

Hancock County Sherriff's Office
Healthy Acadia
Hub and Spoke Clinical Advisory
Council

Inmar/Northern Light Maine Coast
Pharmacy
Inspire Warming Center
Restored Hope for Recovering
Addicts

- Distributed six state-sponsored naloxone kits.
- Prosper Consortium meetings
- Stocked Deterra medication waste bags, a program in partnership with the Hancock County Sherriff's Office and Healthy Acadia.
- Staff trained in Trauma Informed Care
- Engaged in collaborative efforts with listed partners.
- 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.

Fiscal Year 2024 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

AMHC
Hancock County Sherriff's Office
Healthy Acadia

Maine Tobacco Helpline
Mount Desert Island Hospital
OPTIONS

- Distributed 38 state-sponsored naloxone kits.
- Collected 150 lbs. of unwanted or expired medication in the new locked kiosk installed February 2024 in the waiting room near the main entrance of the hospital that is accessible 24/7 in partnership with Inmar.
- Participated at the March 6 "Black Balloon" event hosted by AMHC recognizing lives lost to overdoses in Maine.
- Collaborated with Mount Desert Island Hospital to develop a resource list for community access to Narcan.
- Made available Deterra drug disposal bags and substance use resource list at all Maine Coast Primary Care Practices.
- 516 Narcan kits distributed to community members at the Blue Hill Fair through a collaborative with Opiate Free Island Project
- Participated in Narcan distribution at the Stonington Lobster Boat races in partnership with Opiate Free Island Project.

Fiscal Year 2025 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Healthy Acadia

- Distributed 36 state-sponsored naloxone kits.
- Continued to make available Deterra drug disposal bags and substance use resource list at all Maine Coast Hospital Primary Care Practices.

- Continued to collaborate with Healthy Acadia's Substance Use support community resource guide for inclusion in food bags along with other resources.
- Drug take-back Kiosk continues to provide people with a safe and anonymous place to dispose unwanted, unused, or expired medications.