Fiscal Year 2026

Progress Report to our Community

Addressing community health needs.

Northern Light CA Dean 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, CA Dean Hospital creates healthier communities through the provision of services, resources, and programs beyond our hospital's walls.

Results from the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment along with community input informed the development of our three-year Community Health Implementation Strategy. Northern Light CA Dean Hospital recognized the value, reach, and influence of aligned engagement efforts with a shared purpose. The following three systemwide priority areas were adopted by Northern Light Health member organizations to engage in common strategy to leverage the effect on our communities in a consistent and measurable way.



This report is an update on Northern Light CA Dean Hospital's progress on our community health strategy for fiscal year 2026 (FY26),October 2025 – September 2026 representing the first of three years of our three-year, FY26 – FY28 community health improvement plan.

Northern Light SM
C.A. Dean Hospital

Addressing Community Health Needs: FY26 Update



Mental Health

Northern Light Health continues to advance mental health equity by offering expanded access to care through school-based programs, telehealth, and integrated care models that make it easier for individuals to access this service where they already receive medical care.

Goal: Improve mental health by strengthening care environments and communities

Shared Objective: Provide community-based training/education to increase awareness, reduce stigma, and improve access to mental health services and resources.

Population(s) of focus: Youth with mental health needs; Individuals living in poverty.

Community based engagements and impact

FY26: By teaming up with local organizations, Northern Light CA Dean Hospital promoted vital mental health resources and training opportunities, making it easier for community members to find and get the support they need. The Positive Action Teams, supported by CA Dean Hospital, is a youth-led initiative focused on community change and health promotion. Through school partnerships, youth worked collaboratively to make a positive impact within their schools focusing on a number of topics including mental health, wellness, and positive school change. In FY26, the following events took place:

Partners: Bangor Public Health & Community Services, Community Health and Counseling Services, Dexter Regional High School, Foxcroft Academy, MaineGeneral Health, Maine Youth Action Network, Northern Light Mayo Hospital, OPTIONS, PENQUIS, Piscataquis Community Secondary School, Piscataquis Recovery Wellness Center, Ridgeview Middle School, SeDoMoCha Middle School, University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

- 6th Annual Youth Summit: brought together 12 community organizations where 125 youths from Piscataquis County and the Dexter region of Penobscot County spent time engaging in roundtable discussion focused on mental health, substance use and other prevention related topics.
- School-wide wellness days focused on mental health (building resilience, healthy activities, promoting resources, reducing stigma, and addressing mental health needs) were hosted at Ridgeview Community School and Dexter High School.
- Piscataquis Community Secondary School's Positive Action Team middle schoolers conducted a "kindness confetti" event and "kindness confessions" where positive messages were distributed to address mental health.

Clinical actions supporting mental health

Depression screening:

Northern Light CA Dean Hospital is committed to screening our patient population, who are 12 years old and older, for clinical depression using an age-appropriate standardized depression screening tool. Patients with a positive screen are referred to services and/or resources as appropriate. Screening results are compared to national benchmarks.

- FY26: Depression screening was completed for 78.84% of eligible CA Dean Hospital patients, a rate that aligns with national benchmarks.

Additional actions supporting the mental health priority

Community education posts

Connecting with our community through a variety of communication platforms is an important way we share information about mental health awareness and connect individuals with available resources. Behavioral and mental health-related content published on Northern Light CA Dean Hospital's social media platforms, such as Facebook, is measured by reach, which represents the number of unique individuals who see this information.

- FY26: Shared five social media posts promoting behavioral and mental health awareness and access to care, reaching an average of 1,758 individuals per post.

Systemwide collective impact

Collectively, Northern Light Health member hospitals produced the following results:

- FY26:
  - Depression screening was completed for 77.54% of eligible patients, throughout Northern Light Health, a rate that aligns with national benchmarks.
  - Shared 76 social media posts promoting behavioral and mental health awareness and access to care, reaching an average of 2,060 individuals per post

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Substance Use

Northern Light Health advances equity in substance use prevention and care by providing a range of substance use disorder (SUD) services across multiple locations and care settings throughout Maine, providing specialized SUD services for adolescents and community-based integrated care, and through collaboration with community organizations to improve prevention, treatment, and recovery education and awareness.

Goal: Improve access and services to reduce the impact of substance use in our communities.

Shared Objective: Provide education and promotion of substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery.

Population(s) of focus: Youth experiencing high ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) scores; Youth living in poverty.

Community based engagements and impact

FY26

Northern Light CA Dean Hospital engaged the community in numerous educational outreach efforts focused on substance use prevention. These events saw strong attendance and active engagement, featuring lively discussions and valuable access to resources. Over 400 local students at 18 different education sessions were engaged in the following substance use prevention programming.

Partners: Dover-Foxcroft Police Department, Greenville Consolidated School, Northern Light Mayo Hospital, Piscataquis Community Secondary School, Ridgeview Community School, Ridgeview Middle School, SeDoMoCha Middle School.

- Prime for Life: programming engaged youth in school grades six-12, to help students understand the risks of alcohol and drug use and encouraged healthy decision making focused on changing high-risk behaviors, prevention, and goal setting.
- CATCH My Breath programming engaged youth in discussions around youth vaping prevention and education specific to the dangers of e-cigarettes and nicotine addiction.
- You & Me: Together Vape-Free programming engaged youth to prevent e-cigarette use through education, addressing misperceptions, and improved coping skills.

Partners: Northern Light Pharmacy, Dover-Foxcroft Police Department

- Drug Take Back: Northern Light CA Dean Hospital, in partnership with Northern Light Pharmacy and the Dover-Foxcroft Police Department, offers convenient consumer drug take-back resources as part of Northern Light Health's safe disposal initiative. Community members were encouraged to discard unwanted/unused medications in secure drop-off receptacles at the police department at any time for safe disposal that were then measured by total weight equaling 25 lbs.
- Safe storage locking bags and resources: 200 were distributed at community events, education opportunities, and pop-up markets.

Additional actions supporting the substance use priority

Community education

Substance use-related posts published on Northern Light CA Dean Hospital's social media platforms, such as Facebook, are measured by reach, which represents the number of unique individuals who see this information.

- FY26: Shared nine social media posts focused on substance use awareness and access to care, reaching an average of 539 individuals per post.

Systemwide collective impact

Collectively, Northern Light Health member hospitals produced the following results:

- FY26: Shared 31 social media posts focused on substance use awareness and access to care, reaching an average of 3,909 individuals per post.



Chronic Conditions

Northern Light Health continues to advance equity in chronic conditions by combining data-driven population health strategies, rural access initiatives such as our Mobile Mammography unit that travels around Maine and makes getting a mammogram as easy as possible, and care coordination so that our patients and communities have opportunities to prevent, manage, and live well with chronic disease.

Goal: Improve chronic condition outcomes through prevention and early detection.

Shared Objective: Provide education and empower community members in the prevention and management of chronic conditions through healthy behaviors.

Population(s) of focus: Individuals living in poverty; Individuals living with food insecurity; Individuals living with three or more chronic conditions.

Community based engagements and impact

Partners: Good Shepherd Food Bank, Maine CDC, Northern Light Mayo Hospital, Piscataquis Community Secondary School, Ridgeview Elementary/Middle school, SeDoMoCha Middle School, University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

FY26: Northern Light CA Dean Hospital partnered with local community organizations to educate and empower community members in the prevention and management of chronic conditions through healthy behaviors. Engagements were well received and enabled connections and access to needed resources. The following events provided Maine QuitLink resources to help individuals quit using tobacco, smoking, vaping or other smokeless products, as a way to improve health and lower risk of serious disease.

- Piscataquis Community Secondary School's Trunk or Treat event in collaboration with our youth coalition members, distributed Maine QuitLink materials and other prevention resources to parents.
- Hosted 4 pop-up markets in Piscataquis County (Greenville, Milo, Dover-Foxcroft, Sangerville) where Maine QuitLink prevention resources were provided to attendees.
- Hosted a substance-free movie event at the Center Theater, for families to attend. Provided attendees "Quit Like a Mainer" and Maine QuitLink resources.
- Engaged local schools to offer evidence-based tobacco prevention curriculum focused on reducing the prevalence of youth use (particularly vaping) and Maine QuitLink resources for cessation efforts.
- QuitLink and Quit Like a Mainer resources placed in all primary care and specialty care waiting areas.

This year brought unexpected budget shifts that briefly paused our ability to provide free emergency food bags for our patients. However, Northern Light CA Dean Hospital remained committed to the work of addressing chronic conditions and food insecurity, the emergency food bag program was re-established. Patients were also encouraged to access resources such as the Piscataquis Regional Food Center for longer term solutions to food insecurity. In addition, a local food insecurity guide was included with resources to connect families to other external resources.

Clinical actions supporting chronic conditions

Northern Light CA Dean Hospital engages in evidence-based interventions and services that promote appropriate and effective prevention, early detection, and treatment of chronic conditions to improve overall health. Screening results are compared to national benchmarks.

Breast cancer screening

Women ages 40-74 years of age at CA Dean Hospital who had a mammogram to screen for breast cancer.

- FY26: Breast cancer screening was completed for 78.16 % of eligible CA Dean Hospital patients, a rate that aligns with national benchmarks.

Colorectal cancer screening

Percentage of patients 45-75 years of age at CA Dean Hospital who were screened for colorectal cancer.

- FY26: Colorectal cancer screening was completed for 70.19 % of eligible CA Dean Hospital patients, a rate that aligns with national benchmarks.

Food bag distribution

Bridging the gap between health and hunger through screening and the provision of food bags to patients in need.

- FY26: Food security screening rates resulted in 8,342 patients screened, 99 patients identified as positive for food insecurity, and 49 food bags given.

Additional actions supporting the chronic conditions priority

Community education

Education specific posts related to chronic health conditions on Northern Light CA Dean Hospital's social media platforms, such as Facebook, are measured by reach, which represents the number of unique individuals who see this information.

- FY26: Shared 32 social media posts promoting education on and care for chronic health conditions, including cancer, cardiology, diabetes, food insecurity, and respiratory health, reaching an average of 1,143 individuals per post.

Systemwide collective impact

Collectively, Northern Light Health member hospitals produced the following results:

- FY26:
  - Breast cancer screening was completed for 79.87% of eligible patients across our healthcare system, a rate that aligns with national benchmarks.
  - Colorectal cancer screening was completed for 71.62% of eligible patients across our healthcare system, a rate that aligns with national benchmarks.
  - Food security screening rates resulted in 311,385 patients screened, 4,124 patients identified as positive for food insecurity, and 2,090 food bags given.
  - Shared 264 social media posts promoting education on and care for chronic health conditions, including cancer, cardiology, diabetes, food insecurity, and respiratory health, reaching an average of 2,631 individuals per post.

Enhancing Community Resource Accessibility

Northern Light CA Dean Hospital encourages staff, patients, and community members to use the free, open-access 211 Maine or findhelp.org to find, contact, and/or make referrals to community-based services. In addition, Northern Light Health will:

- Maintain ongoing partnership with MaineHealth and 211 Maine to improve resource listings and community engagement approaches for findhelp.org and 211 Maine.
- Continue our collaboration with Maine CDC, MaineHealth, 211 Maine, and Community Care Partnership of Maine to ensure all community food security resources are included in findhelp.org and 211 Maine.

- Participate in the Maine Community Information Exchange (CIE) collaborative led by the United Ways of Maine to explore creation of a statewide closed-loop network connecting healthcare providers and community-based organizations.