Fiscal Year 2026

Progress Report to our Community

Addressing community health needs.

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center 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, Eastern Maine Medical Center 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 Eastern Maine Medical Center 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 Eastern Maine Medical Center'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
Eastern Maine Medical Center

Addressing Community Health Needs: Fiscal Year 2026 (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; People who identify as a protected class; Individuals living in poverty.

Community based engagements and impact

FY26

By teaming up with local organizations, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center promoted vital mental health resources and training opportunities, making it easier for community members to find and get the support they need. The following events had strong attendance, active engagement, and valuable access to resources.

- **Youth Mental Health Summit:** Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center hosted its annual, a collaborative event designed to empower teenagers, families, and educators with the knowledge, resources, and skills needed to support youth mental health and well-being. Partnering with community organizations, attendees participated in breakout sessions, learned evidence-based coping and resilience strategies, and connected with local support services. The summit addressed a range of important topics, including suicide prevention, substance use, eating disorders, bullying, animal-assisted interventions, yoga, sound healing, art and nature-based therapy, sports, and nutrition. By combining education, community engagement, and practical support, the event helped reduce stigma, strengthen connections, and provide young people and their support networks with tools to promote mental wellness every day.

  Partners: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Andwell, Beacons of Hope, GreenTREE Yoga, Hope for Healing, Ivy Speaks, National Alliance on Mental Illness Maine, Northern Light Acadia Hospital, Northern Light EMMC, OUT Maine, Partners for Peace, Penquis Rape Response, Pet Partners of Eastern Maine, The Foggy Bee, The Lotus Rose, The Spiral Goddess Collective/Spiral Studio, The true YOU, University of Maine System, Unlimited Solutions Clubhouse, Wellness with Lexi, Wilde Serenity Sound & Soul

  Attendees: Summit totals included 160 youth from 10 local high schools; 40 parents, teachers, and administrators; 20 volunteers

- **Community Conversations**: Hosted an interactive Lunch & Learn focused on Story Medicine; Rewriting Stress from Inside Out, a practical framework that helps individuals identify and reframe the internal stories that contribute to stress, emotional exhaustion, and diminished self-worth. Participants explored how these narratives can influence well-being and learned strategies to create healthier perspectives. Particularly relevant for healthcare professionals and others in high-stress roles, the session provided attendees with real-time tools to support resilience, prevent burnout, and enhance overall well-being.

  Partners: Suzanne C. Carver, writer, speaker, and authenticity coach who helps women reclaim their power by transforming the stories they live.

  Attendees: over 20 staff and community members

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Clinical actions supporting mental health

Depression screening:

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center 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.

- FY26: Depression screening was completed for 76.76% of eligible EMMC patients.

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 Eastern Maine Medical Center's social media platforms, such as Facebook, is measured by reach, which represents the number of unique individuals who see this information.

- FY26: Shared 13 social media posts promoting behavioral and mental health awareness and access to care, reaching an average of 2,588 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 2,059 individuals per post.



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: Individuals with substance use disorders; Individuals living in poverty.

Community-based engagements and impact

FY26

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center engaged the community in numerous educational outreach efforts focused on substance use prevention. Participation was strong at the following events:

- Youth Mental Health Summit (substance use breakouts): As noted in the Mental Health section, Eastern Maine Medical Center hosted its annual Youth Mental Health Summit that included breakout sessions addressing substance use and its effects on young people. Because substance use and mental health challenges are often closely linked, with each potentially contributing to the other, these sessions provided valuable education and discussion opportunities for attendees.

Partners: Bangor Public Health & Community Services, Healthy Acadia, Maine CDC, Youth SUD, Northern Light Acadia Hospital, Northern Light EMMC.

Attendees: Summit totals included 160 youth from 10 local high schools; 40 parents, teachers, and administrators; 20 volunteers

- Drug Take Back: Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center, in partnership with Northern Light Pharmacy, 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 for safe disposal that were then measured by total weight equaling 633 lbs.

Partners: Northern Light Pharmacy

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 who are uninsured and underinsured.

Community based engagements and impact

FY26

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center offered support prevention and management of chronic conditions by providing healthy food access and nutrition information in partnership with community organizations. Engagements were well received and formed connections and access to needed resources.

- Fresh Produce Days: At Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center, the Fresh Produce Days initiative distributes free fresh food to the community on the first Tuesday of every month to ensure fresh, healthy food reaches local residents, families, and staff.

Partners: Good Shepherd Food Bank, Hannaford, and employee donations

- Community Cupboard: EMMC hosts an emergency Community Cupboard stocked in partnership with Hannaford Supermarkets, through a generous donation, and staff and visitor donations, that collected over 3000 pounds of food. Employees have access 24/7 to the cupboard in order to provide a bag of nutritious groceries to any patient or neighbor experiencing food insecurity. You can request assistance directly from any staff member. In FY26, the Cupboard served over 2,800 individuals and over 5,000 pounds of fresh produce was distributed.

Partners: Hannaford, Good Shepherd Food Bank, and employee/community donations.

Over 2,800 individuals served and over 5,000 pounds of fresh produce was distributed.

Clinical actions supporting chronic conditions

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center 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 Eastern Maine Medical Center who had a mammogram to screen for breast cancer.

- FY26: Breast cancer screening was completed for 80.29 % of eligible EMMC patients, a rate that aligns with national benchmarks.

Colorectal cancer screening

Percentage of patients 45-75 years of age at Eastern Maine Medical Center who were screened for colorectal cancer.

- FY26: Colorectal cancer screening was completed for 74.41 % of eligible EMMC 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 120,414 patients screened, 1,837 patients identified as positive for food insecurity, and 1,371 food bags given

Additional actions supporting the chronic conditions priority

Community education

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

- FY26: Shared 45 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 7,172 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.

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Enhancing Community Resource Accessibility

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center 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.