



Community Health Implementation Strategy

Addressing Community Health Needs
Fiscal Year 2026-2028

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Letter from the President and Board Chair

We believe in providing Mainers with what they truly deserve—the absolute best in healthcare. This means actively Mainers have developed a reputation throughout the years for our hard work and willingness to lend a helping hand to a neighbor in need. It's our goal to uphold those same standards when it comes to providing healthcare for our community. In order to do so, we engage our community members and work with partners to ensure we understand the greatest barriers preventing our neighbors from living their healthiest lives.

Every three years, through the Maine Shared Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), Northern Light Health collaborates with Central Maine Healthcare, MaineGeneral Health, MaineHealth, Maine Community Action Partnership, and the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention to work with local organizations to engage communities to help identify priority health needs through a statewide assessment of community health needs. The data collected informs our community health improvement efforts for the next three years, resulting in this Community Health Implementation Strategy - our road map toward building healthier, thriving communities. Within, you will find our identified data-driven priority areas accompanied by the reasons for their selection and our intended actions to address the need.

We hope that you will take a moment to review the content within and please reach out with any questions or ideas you may have at communitybenefits@northernlight.org. By continuing our collaborative efforts and addressing our local priorities, we can build a healthier Maine today, and for generations to come.



Kevin Tesseo
Chair, Board of Trustees
Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital



John Ronan, FACHE
President, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital
Senior Vice President and Regional President, Northern
Light Health

Introduction

Northern Light Health and our employees care deeply about our neighbors and communities. Our member organizations work hard to understand and address priority needs. We meet regularly with community partners to plan and implement local solutions that make it possible for people in our communities to lead healthier lives. By working together, we promote a culture of stewardship and foster vibrant communities.

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

About Northern Light Health

At Northern Light Health, we're building a better approach to healthcare because we believe people deserve access to care that works for them. As an integrated health delivery system serving Maine, we're raising the bar with no-nonsense solutions that are leading the way to a healthier future for our state. Our care team—in hospitals, primary and specialty care practices, long-term and home healthcare, behavioral healthcare, and ground and air medical transport and emergency care—are committed to making healthcare work for you: our patients, communities, and employees. For additional information, visit <https://northernlighthealth.org/About-Us> to access our annual report.

About Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital in Ellsworth, is a full-service hospital, serving both Hancock and western Washington Counties.

Our 64-bed Maine Coast facility provides emergency, primary and specialty care, acute inpatient, diagnostic, and surgical services.

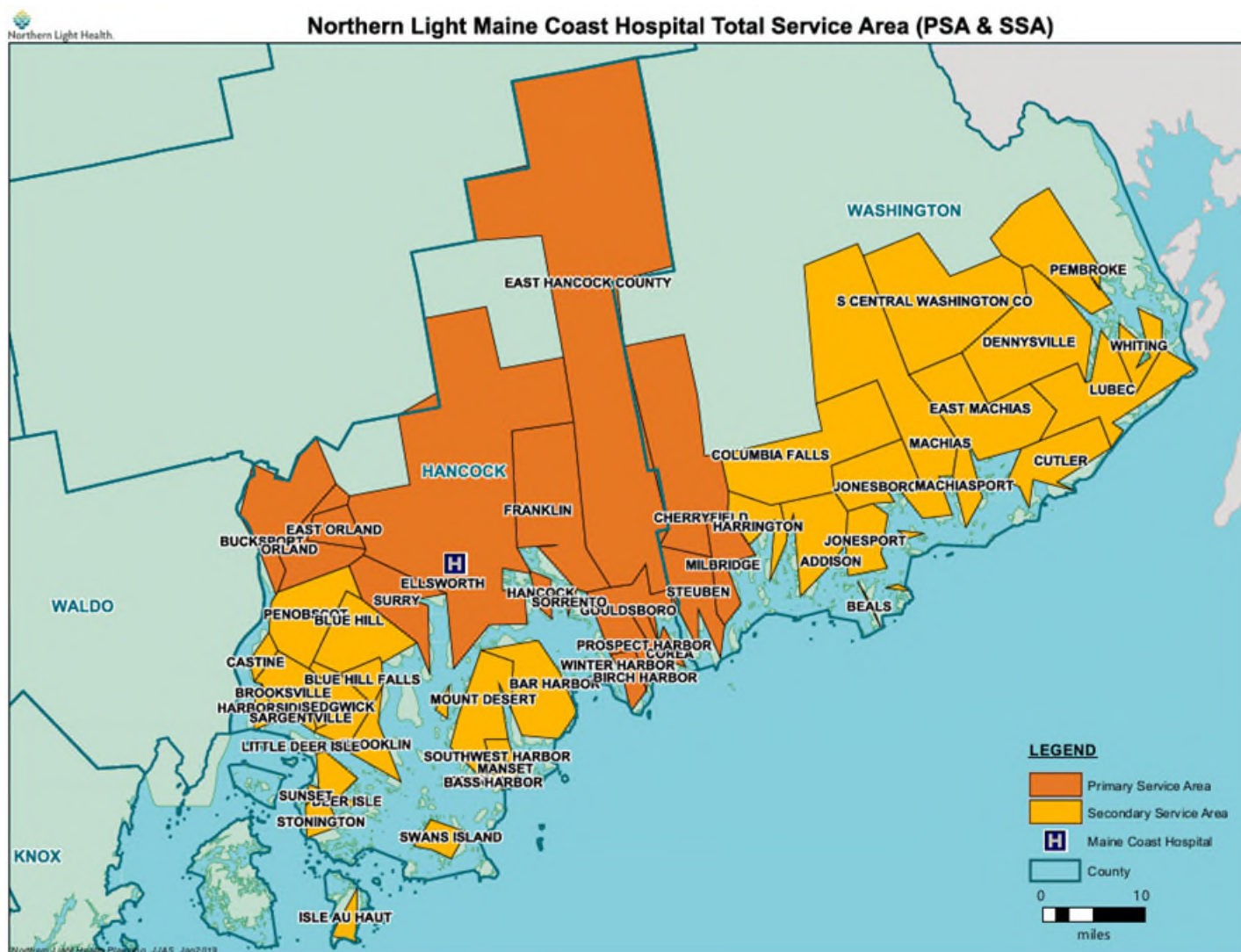
Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital is dedicated to providing exceptional medical care with the personal touch and convenience only a community hospital can offer. Maine Coast has earned both national and state recognition for patient safety, outcomes, and patient satisfaction levels.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital is a member of Northern Light Health, an integrated health delivery system in Maine with nine hospitals, home care and hospice, emergency transport network, population health company, and retail pharmacy.

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Definition of Community Served

Located in Ellsworth, Maine, Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital has a service area comprised of both primary and secondary service areas, together referred to as the total service area. Total service areas (TSAs) are developed by the Northern Light Health Planning department based on neighboring zip codes from which a majority of a hospital's inpatient admissions originate. TSAs can sometimes overlap due to hospital locations or because of the specialty services provided by the hospitals.



Reference the associated Hancock [County Health Profile](#) for key demographic information.

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Addressing Community Health Needs

Shared Community Health Needs Assessment

In 2025, Maine’s four largest healthcare systems – Northern Light Health, Central Maine Healthcare, MaineGeneral Health, and MaineHealth – as well as the Maine Community Action Partnership, and the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention partnered to research and publish a shared Community Health Needs Assessment (Shared CHNA). The Shared CHNA provides a comprehensive review of health data and community perspective on a broad set of health issues in Maine. Value in partnering is derived from the recognition that the partners’ missions cut across the multitude of factors that influence a person’s health and well-being and the overlap in service areas, patient populations, and services and programs.

This assessment cycle, the Maine Shared CHNA continued its collection and analysis of data covering community conditions and social drivers of health, protective and risk factors, and health conditions and outcomes at the urban, county, state, and national level. This cycle saw expanded efforts to engage communities across Maine; conducting statewide focus groups with the following populations: multigenerational Black/African American; veterans; people who identify as a protected class; women; youth; and young adults. In addition, county-level focus groups engaged people having low-income, key informant interviews were held with individuals having specialized knowledge or experience relevant to community health and well-being issues, and a statewide community survey, which was open to anyone in living in Maine, to learn about local resources and strengths of their communities and their own health and well-being. Both the quantitative and qualitative data were used to inform a health and well-being prioritization process held with stakeholders at county-based forums. These reports and the community input received are fundamental to achieving our goal of being a trusted and valued partner to improve the health of the people and communities we serve.

Results of the 2025 Shared CHNA along with community input were used to inform the development of this three-year Community Health Implementation Strategy by Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital. The efforts identified within help demonstrate our commitment to our community, as we provide benefits reflective of our mission and tax-exempt status. These benefits include a focus on the clinical, social, and environmental factors that influence the ability of people to lead healthier lives.

Community Health Implementation Strategy

This Community Health Implementation Strategy was developed with input from community stakeholders including those who serve priority populations, public health partners, business leaders, and community advocates.

Priorities were selected after weighing the severity of each priority area, availability of known and effective interventions, determination that the priority area was un-addressed or under-addressed, and community collaborations underway with Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital reserves the right to amend this Community Health Implementation Strategy as circumstances warrant. For example, certain community health needs may become more pronounced and require enhancements or a refocus to the selected priorities of focus.

Process and Methods for Priority Selection

Community members and stakeholders identified priority areas based on three domains as detailed in the county-level Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) report:

[Community conditions](#)

- Factors that affect people's health and well-being in the places where they live, work, and play.

Protective and risk factors

- Protective factors are characteristics associated with more positive health and well-being outcomes.
- Risk factors are characteristics associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes.

Health conditions and outcomes

- Health conditions refers to a person's state of health.
- Health outcomes are the changes in one's health status as a result of healthcare services or interventions.

The county CHNA forum priority voting revealed that *mental health, substance use, and chronic conditions* were among the top priorities identified in almost every county. Northern Light Health recognized the value, reach, and impact of aligned engagement efforts with a shared purpose and therefore, identified these three priority areas for Northern Light member hospitals to engage in common strategies to achieve greater statewide impact. We are uniquely positioned to have the most impact on these priorities through system and community-clinical collaborations to meet the needs of those we serve.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's Community Health Implementation Strategy was developed to include our systemwide shared priority areas of work reflecting upon the quantitative health profile indicators and qualitative prioritization derived from the Shared CHNA's community engagement process. Maine Coast Hospital's planning team also considered local readiness and capacity to address these needs in partnership with our communities. Our planning team included representatives with knowledge and insight of the communities we serve.

Members of Maine Coast Hospital's Community Health Implementation Strategy team included individuals representing the following organizations:

- Maine CDC, Downeast District Public Health Liaison
- Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital, Director of Quality
- Northern Light Maine Coast Executive Physician
- Northern Maine Coast Hospital, Community Health Lead

The following criteria were used for the health need selection process:

- **Shared CHNA prioritization:** How the health priority ranked in the Shared CHNA.
- **Systemwide:** Priority areas of work as determined by Northern Light's Community Health Workgroup.
- **Health equity:** Which populations are disproportionately affected by the priority area of focus; which populations may be experiencing unique barriers to resolve the issue; and what data or themes emerged from the CHNA Forums, the County Data Health Profile, and the Community Engagement Profile that reinforce selecting one or more populations of focus.
- **Ability to leverage local community assets:** Identification of potential community partnerships to engage in order to address the priority need, or to build on current programs, emerging opportunities, or other community assets.
- **Expertise:** Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital experts and local partnership experts in various priority areas.
- **Feasibility:** Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital has the ability to have an effect given the community benefit resources available.

Annually, our internal team will convene to determine if changes need to be considered to best address the priority health needs of our community.

NOTE: There were no written comments received related to the most recently conducted Shared CHNA and Community Health Implementation Strategy for inclusion in this report.

Evaluation Efforts

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will monitor and evaluate the strategies related to this priority area of work for the purpose of tracking the implementation of those strategies as well as to document the anticipated impact. Through internal quarterly reporting practices, we plan to document and track measures, approaches and resources used, partners engaged, and highlights related to this priority area of work. These quarterly reports will inform our fiscal year-end Progress Report to Our Community that will be made publicly available on our Community Health Implementation Strategy web page.

Feedback Opportunity

Contact communitybenefits@northernlight.org with feedback on this report.

Approval from Governing Board

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's Community Health Implementation Strategy and Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) were reviewed by the hospital's governing board and a resolution was made to approve and adopt both the Shared CHNA and the Community Health Implementation Strategy on May 22, 2025.

Selected Priorities of Focus

Northern Light members will engage in the following three systemwide priorities to leverage the effect in our communities in a consistent and measurable way:



Behavioral Health

Rationale

Behavioral health encompasses mental health, substance use, and health behaviors. Untreated behavioral health needs stemming from a variety of factors such as adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other factors, are associated with financial and housing instability through increased unemployment or underemployment and fragmentation of supportive social relationships. Individuals with unaddressed behavioral health needs often cycle in and out of poverty and homelessness, worsening their mental and physical health outcomes. Behavioral health can affect an individual's ability to practice good health behaviors and seek care or resources when needed. Limited healthcare options, lack of support, and fear of stigma may

prevent individuals from seeking help, indicating an ongoing need to increase mental health awareness, dispel common misperceptions, and address barriers to accessing behavioral healthcare.

The Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's Community Health Implementation Strategy team recognizes that addressing behavioral health through specific mental health and substance use needs are priorities for our community with a focus on health equity, especially for those who may be experiencing health disparities. There are substantial local community assets and Maine Coast Hospital has resources available to help support these needs. Furthermore, there are many options for evidence-based mental health and substance use interventions and services that promote appropriate and effective prevention, identification, and treatment for behavioral illnesses.

Priority: Mental Health

Intended actions to address the need

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will strengthen communities and care environments to improve awareness of mental health needs and improve health outcomes by:

- Providing identification and treatment of depression through routine screening.
- Providing evidence-based training and education to schools and other youth-serving organizations.
- Reducing the stigma surrounding mental health through education, community-based programs, and promotion of available resources.
- Collaborating with community organizations to increase community awareness of mental health needs and strengthen resources and support networks.
- Promoting Northern Light Health's findhelp.org as a resource for community services and supports.

Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital anticipates:

- Increased access to depression screenings in primary care settings.
- Improve community awareness to help reduce mental health stigma.

Programs and resource allocation

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will:

- Dedicate internal staff resources (e.g., community health lead, marketing and communications, and primary care office staff, etc.) to address and promote activities related to this priority.
- Promote activities such as the provision of Provide Psychological First Aid (PFA) training to educators, caregivers, community members and healthcare providers to reduce stigma and improve efforts connected to this priority.
- Work with community outreach staff to promote and share resources related to stigma reduction with community and school partners.
- Design and share depression screening warning signs and crisis hotline information via social media and on patient waiting area monitors to improve awareness and intervention opportunities.

Planned collaborations

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will collaborate with:

- Northern Light Acadia Hospital, who provides behavioral and mental health services and expertise throughout Maine, in the delivery of services in our area.
- AMHC, Community Health and Counseling Services, Hancock County Sheriff's office, Ellsworth Police Department, Maine State Police, Healthy Acadia Hancock County Schools, Downeast YMCA, Downeast Community Partners, Healthy Acadia, Emmaus Center, H.O.M.E.

Population of focus

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital has resources and partnerships available to be leveraged in support of this need specific to the following populations:

- Individuals with mental health needs
 - Almost 24% of Hancock County adults report having medically recognized depression and over 22% report having medically recognized anxiety during their lifetime. Over 10% of adults reported current symptoms of depression at the time of the assessment.
- Individuals who are uninsured and underinsured
 - Over 10% of Hancock County residents are uninsured, which is significantly higher than the state and national rate. Nearly 10% of residents report cost barriers to health care.

Priority: Substance Use

Intended action to address the need

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will improve access and services to reduce the impact of substance use in our communities through prevention, treatment and recovery by:

- Increasing access to Medication Assisted Treatment through primary care offices.
- Providing community education and promotion of substance use prevention and treatment options.
- Partnering with community organizations to support and promote substance use recovery resources.
- Promoting Northern Light Health's findhelp.org as a resource for community services and supports.

Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital anticipates increasing access to Medication Assisted Treatment and improved community knowledge of substance use prevention/treatment resources throughout Hancock County.

Programs and resource allocation

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will allocate staff time of the senior physician executive, physician practice leadership, healthcare practitioners, community health lead, and the director of quality to work toward increasing access to Medication Assisted Treatment and improved community knowledge of substance use prevention/treatment resources.

Planned collaborations

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will collaborate with AMHC, Community Health and Counseling Services, Healthy Acadia Substance Use Prevention, Hancock County schools to support substance use prevention and treatment; and promote substance use recovery resources.

Population of focus

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital has resources and partnerships available to be leveraged in support of this need specific to the following populations:

- Individuals with substance use disorders
 - Hancock County experiences higher overdose and alcohol-induced deaths compared to national statistics. Over 9% of Hancock County adults engage in chronic heavy drinking, which is higher than both the state and national rates.
 - 25% of adults in Hancock County have used marijuana in the past 30-days, while almost 20% are current cigarette smokers.
- Individuals who are uninsured and underinsured
 - Over 10% of Hancock County residents are uninsured, which is significantly higher than the state and national rate. Nearly 10% of residents report cost barriers to health care.

Chronic Conditions

Priority: Chronic Conditions

Rationale

Chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, and obesity result in significantly higher rates of healthcare utilization and costs and cause poorer health outcomes and decreased quality of life. Individual behaviors such as avoiding smoking, limiting alcohol consumption, maintaining a healthy diet, and engaging in regular physical activity can significantly reduce the risk of developing chronic conditions. Community conditions such as poverty, housing instability, poor housing quality, and transportation issues are associated with higher risks of chronic conditions because they make it harder to access healthcare and maintain good health. A comprehensive approach to addressing chronic conditions, including environmental approaches, healthcare system interventions, and community programs, can support healthy individual behaviors and communities and improve access to services to prevent and manage chronic conditions.

The Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's Community Health Implementation Strategy team determined it was feasible to address this need with a focus on health equity, especially for those who may be experiencing health disparities. There are substantial local community assets and Maine Coast Hospital has resources available to be leveraged in support of this need. Furthermore, there are many options for evidence-based interventions and services that promote appropriate and effective prevention, early detection, and treatment of chronic conditions.

Intended action to address the need

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will improve chronic condition outcomes for our communities through chronic disease preventions, early detection, and health outcomes by:

- Ensuring that community members have access to chronic conditions screening and preventive care services.
- Partnering with community organizations to educate and empower community members in the prevention and management of chronic conditions through healthy behaviors.
- Supporting prevention and management of chronic conditions by providing access to healthy food options through distribution of food bags, and seasonal free produce markets in partnership with community organizations.
- Promoting Northern Light Health's findhelp.org as a resource for community services and supports.

Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital anticipates increasing access to screening and increased awareness.

Programs and resource allocation

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will allocate staff time:

- Primary Care Practices, Providers to optimize access to/reach of current preventive screenings.
- Provide food resources to patients that screen positive for food insecurity.
- Provide community education around healthy eating and active living to help reduce obesity rates while hosting County while hosting seasonal free produce farmers markets.
- Cancer awareness educational speaker series with Beth Wright Cancer Center.

Planned collaborations

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will collaborate with:

- Good Shepherd Food Bank and local farmers
- Healthy Acadia
- Beth C. Wright Cancer Resource Center

Population of focus

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital has resources and partnerships available to be leveraged in support of this need specific to the following populations:

- Individuals living in poverty
 - Nearly 11% of Hancock County residents, including over 13% of children, live in poverty. Across the lifespan, individuals living in poverty are at an increased risk for chronic conditions and lower life expectancy.
- Individuals living with food insecurity
 - Almost 13% of adults and 19% of youth experience food insecurity in Hancock County. Food insecurity can increase the risk of chronic conditions. Obesity-associated cancer rates were higher than the state and national rates.
- Individuals living with multiple chronic conditions
 - Over 16% of individuals living in Hancock County experience three or more chronic conditions.
 - Leading causes of death in Hancock County include heart disease and cancer. Incidence rates for female breast cancer and colorectal cancer are both higher than the state and national rates. Screening rates for both colorectal and breast cancer are below the state average.
 - Hancock County rates for hospitalizations due to high blood pressure have increased significantly since 2016-2018. The heart attack deaths rate has also increased and is now statistically higher than both state and national rates.
- Individuals who are uninsured and underinsured
 - Over 10% of Hancock County residents are uninsured and over 24% are enrolled in MaineCare. Almost 10% of residents report cost barriers to health care.

Health Priorities Not Addressed

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital considered all priorities identified in the Shared CHNA, as well as other sources, through an extensive review process. We recognize that domain specific priorities may inherently be linked to one another and that for priorities not specifically selected by Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital, community based organizations are poised to address and lead effective efforts. Priorities not selected, are listed below:

Community Conditions

- Aging related services was not selected as a standalone priority of focus as these efforts are connected to our other priority areas of work and we feel confident that our aging population will benefit from our planned work on those priorities. We will continue to engage in collaborative work and initiatives focused on aging related services that will provide support for this population.
- Housing was not selected as a standalone priority of focus but we understand its connection to higher risks of chronic conditions and will look to community benefit organizations focused on this issue to lead efforts.
- Provider availability was not selected as a standalone priority of focus as Northern Light Health currently has efforts to attract and retain providers. Northern Light recognizes the importance of provider availability to care for our community members and feel confident that our planned work on these efforts, in addition to our identified priority areas of work within this strategy, will have a positive impact on provider availability.

Protective and Risk Factors

- Adverse Childhood Experience (ACEs) was not selected as a standalone priority of focus, but we understand its impact on our behavioral health priority areas of work and will look to community benefit organizations focused on this issue to lead efforts.
- Nutrition was not selected as a standalone priority of focus, but we understand its connection to higher risks of chronic conditions. We will continue to engage in collaborative work and initiatives focused on nutrition but will look to community benefit organizations focused on this issue to lead efforts.

Health Conditions and Outcomes

- Access to long-term care was not selected as a standalone priority of focus, but we understand its connection to higher risks of chronic conditions and will look to community benefit organizations focused on this issue to lead efforts. Our hospital has current initiatives that are ongoing and part of our continual mission to improve access to care that support this priority.

Conclusion

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital is thankful for the participation and support of our community members and many area organizations in the Shared CHNA process and for contributing their knowledge of local community health needs. Through existing and future partnerships, collaborative efforts will be essential in addressing the identified community health implementation strategies prioritized within.

Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital will engage in another Shared CHNA in 2028 and looks forward to ongoing community participation in these important efforts.

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Appendix

Evaluation of Impact

Progress report on selected priorities from Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital's last (2022) Community Health Needs Assessment.

Northern Light Health and Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital are committed to promoting a culture of community stewardship and partnering together with community stakeholders to address high priority health issues. To do so effectively, we regularly monitor the effect of our community health efforts and make this information widely available to our communities in the form of annual Community Benefit statements, and this triennial Community Health Implementation Strategy. The following annual Progress Report to Our Community provides a summary evaluation of impact of the actions taken by Maine Coast Hospital to address community health priorities adopted in 2022.

Measuring and reporting on progress is critical to making a difference in the communities we serve, and in the lives of those we care for. The following annual Progress Report to Our Community is provided:

- Progress Report to Our Community Fiscal Years 2023-2024
- Fiscal Year 2025 progress report updates will be included upon its availability

For additional information, visit <https://northernlighthealth.org/Community-Health-Needs-Assessment/2022-Community-Health-Strategy>

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Progress Report to our Community

Fiscal Years
2023-2024

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) and 2024 (October 2023 – September 2024), representing the first and second 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 80 training sessions with 1,606 individuals trained.

Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

PARTNERS ENGAGED:

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

- 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.

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 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. 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.

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.

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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

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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 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 2,560 naloxone kits distributed throughout Northern Light Health's service area.

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

- Six state-sponsored naloxone kits distributed
- Prosper Consortium meetings
- Stocked Detera 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.

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

- 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.