

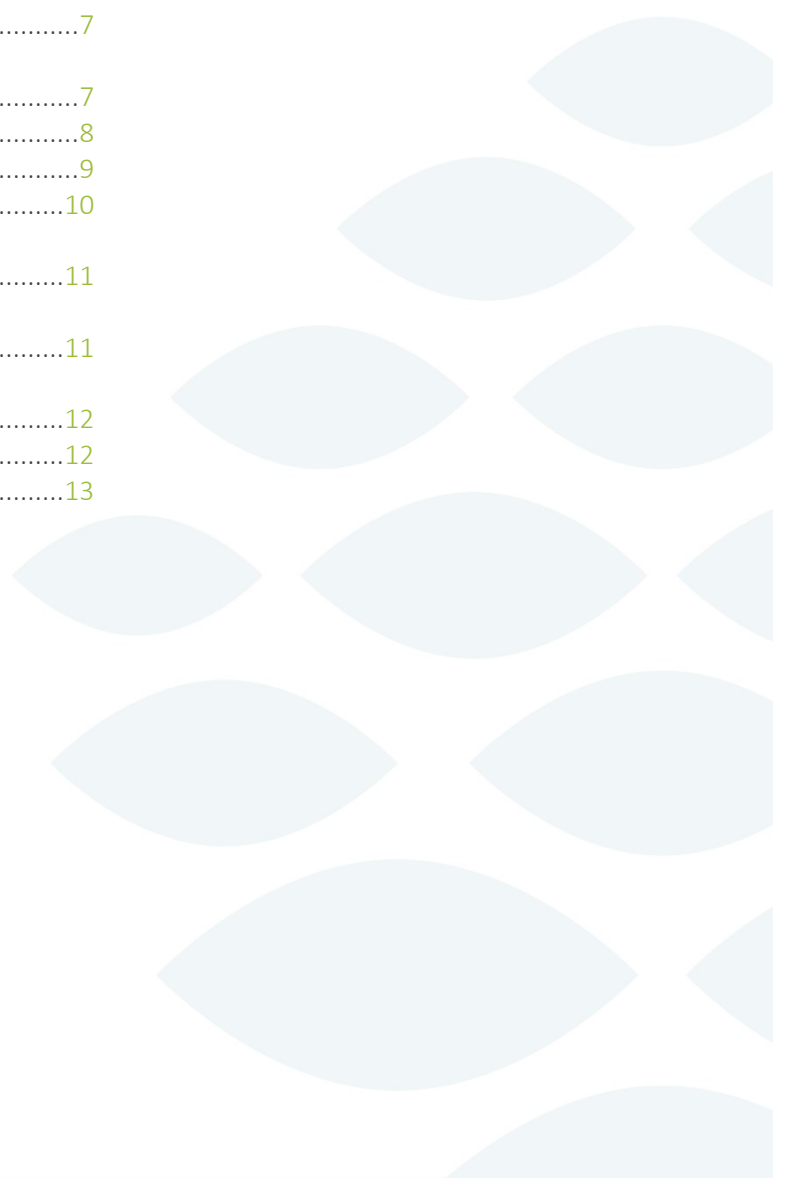


# Community Health Implementation Strategy

Addressing Community Health Needs  
Fiscal Year 2026-2028

# Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Introduction.....                               | 3  |
| Introduction .....                              | 3  |
| About Northern Light Health.....                | 3  |
| About Northern Light Mercy Hospital.....        | 3  |
| Definition of community served .....            | 4  |
| Addressing Community Health Needs .....         | 5  |
| Shared Community Health Needs.....              | 5  |
| Community Health Implementation Strategy .....  | 5  |
| Process and methods for priority selection..... | 5  |
| Evaluation efforts .....                        | 7  |
| Feedback opportunity .....                      | 7  |
| Approval from governing board .....             | 7  |
| Selected Priorities of Focus.....               | 7  |
| Priority: Mental Health .....                   | 8  |
| Priority: Substance Use .....                   | 9  |
| Priority: Chronic Conditions.....               | 10 |
| Health Priorities Not Addressed .....           | 11 |
| Conclusion .....                                | 11 |
| Appendix.....                                   | 12 |
| Evaluation of Impact.....                       | 12 |
| Progress Report FY23-FY25 .....                 | 13 |



# 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 Mercy 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 Mercy 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 Mercy Hospital

Northern Light Mercy Hospital, an acute care, non-profit hospital in Portland, Maine, is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. We advocate for a society in which all can realize their full potential and achieve the common good. We give priority to those that society ignores.

The greater Portland community has come to rely on the personal care and healing focus that Northern Light Mercy Hospital provides. All of our hospital rooms are private to enhance a speedy recovery and a more restful, less stressful stay for you.

Through our doors, you'll find the latest medical technology and a team of highly skilled doctors, nurses, physician assistants, therapists, and support staff. Alongside all of this technology and expertise, you'll find care that recognizes each patient as an individual – body, mind, and spirit.

Our community focus amounts to nearly \$12 million in benefits annually. These benefits range from unreimbursed and pro-bono medical services to community education and prevention outreach.

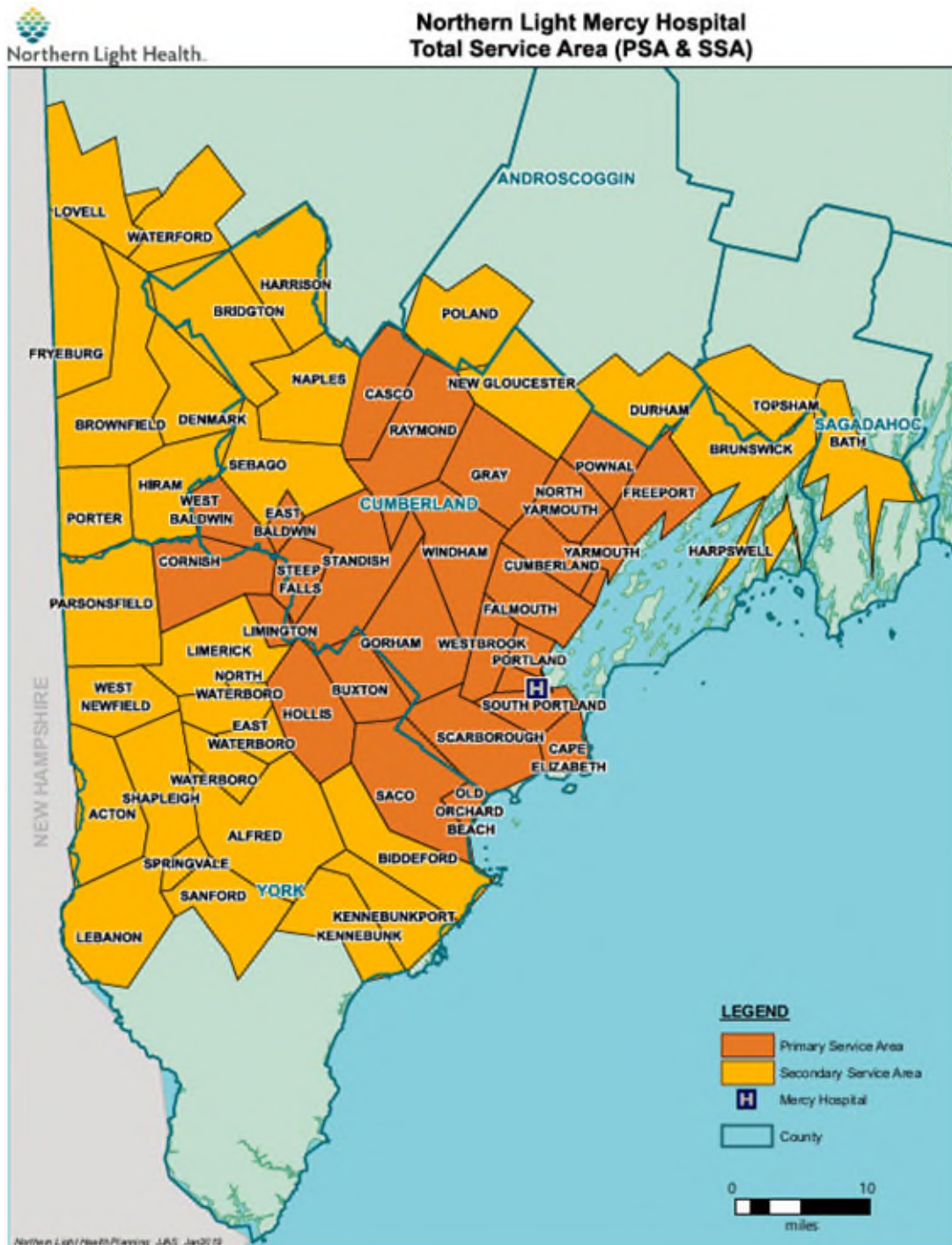
In 2018, we celebrated 100 years of serving the greater Portland community, and we invite you to learn more about our rich history. Explore the historical photos and essays that have been added to the Maine Historical Society's Maine Memory Network or read fascinating excerpts from the diaries of Sister Mary Annunciata, our first hospital administrator. An interactive flipbook was created in 2021 to highlight the history of our State Street hospital as we prepared to move all operations to our Fore River Parkway campus.

We look forward to serving you in our next century of care.

Northern Light Mercy Hospital is a member of Northern Light Health, an integrated health delivery system in Maine with 10 hospitals, home care and hospice, emergency transport network, population health company, and retail pharmacy.

## Definition of Community Served

Located in Portland, Maine, Northern Light Mercy 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 Cumberland [County Health Profile](#) for key demographic information.

# 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 Mercy 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 Mercy Hospital.

Northern Light Mercy 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 Mercy 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. Mercy 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 Mercy Hospital's Community Health Implementation Strategy team included individuals representing the following organizations:

- Melissa Skahan, MA, Northern Light Mercy Hospital, Vice President of Mission Integration
- Katie Kerr, MPH, Northern Light Mercy Hospital, Director of Mission & Ethics
- Kelly Bickmore, LCSW, Northern Light Mercy Hospital, Director of Behavioral Health
- Sadie Knott, PMHNP, Northern Light Mercy Hospital, Lead Integrated Behavioral Health Provider
- Emily Erickson, MD, Northern Light Mercy Primary Care, Primary Care Medical Director
- Dan Terry, Northern Light Mercy Hospital, Primary Care Practice Manager

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 Mercy Hospital experts and local partnership experts in various priority areas.
- **Feasibility:** Northern Light Mercy 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 Mercy 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](mailto:communitybenefits@northernlight.org) with feedback on this report.

## Approval from Governing Board

Northern Light Mercy 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 June 12, 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 Mercy 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 Mercy 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 Mercy 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](https://www.findhelp.org) as a resource for community services and supports.

### Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

Northern Light Mercy Hospital will increase awareness and understanding of mental health concerns, with a focus in underserved communities

### Programs and resource allocation

Northern Light Mercy Hospital partners with In Her Presence, a local community based organization, to operate the Frances Warde Home, a residence for homeless, pregnant women from underserved communities. Embedded in the program are frequent health promotion clinics and education specific to recognizing behavioral health concerns. Mercy clinical staff contribute to health promotion clinics and also provide on-site behavioral health services directly to resident children.

### Planned collaborations

Northern Light Mercy Hospital will collaborate with Sweetser and the State of Maine to provide peer counseling services in the emergency department to support patients in crisis. A continued partnership with In Her Presence allows collaboration in addressing community literacy around mental health concerns and encouraging treatment uptake. At the Frances Warde Home, collaboration occurs between City of Portland Public Health Nurses, Help Me Grow Maine from the Maine Department of Health and Human Services - Office of Child and Family Services. The goal is to provide education and resources to families with young children.

### Population of focus

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

- Individuals with mental health needs
  - Over 22% of Cumberland County adults report having depression, and over 22% report having anxiety over their lifetime.
- Individuals living in poverty
  - Over 7% of Cumberland County residents live in poverty. Individuals living in poverty are more likely to experience mental health needs than those not living in poverty.

## Priority: Substance Use

### Intended action to address the need

Northern Light Mercy 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](http://findhelp.org) as a resource for community services and supports.
- Expansion of McAuley Residence and designing programming for teens in families affected by substance use disorder

### Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

A second Portland-based location of Mercy's McAuley Residence includes programming for families with teens, addressing a significant un-met need across the state of Maine. Northern Light Mercy Hospital anticipates serving an additional ten families per year at the new McAuley.

### Programs and resource allocation

Northern Light Mercy Hospital will continue to expand Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) availability and resources in the primary care setting through integrated behavioral health. Mercy employs staff who provide clinical services to affected populations, in addition to a peer recovery coach. Northern Light Mercy Hospital has joined the State Innovation Model (SIM) Collaborative's planning team to contribute to the development of additional resources for persons with substance use disorder. Ongoing evaluation and program development will be conducted in order to address the rapidly changing landscape of substance use disorder in Cumberland County.

In our housing program for families affected by substance use disorder, expansion allows Mercy to serve families with older children. These families include children at risk for mental health and/or substance use concerns and the program's two-generational approach allows intervention and support during the critical pre-teenage and teenage years. Mercy employs the program director as well as the drug counselor. Volunteers are coordinated by Mercy staff in order to augment the program and provide connection to recovery community. Support from the internal Northern Light Health Foundation and grants teams provide direct and necessary fundraising and grant support in order to support this work.

### Planned collaborations

Northern Light Mercy Hospital will collaborate with Child Protective Services at the Maine State Department of Health and Human Services, CMG Behavioral Health Consulting, LLC., and other partners to surround families with support and services aimed at preventing youth substance use disorders. Partners in the current model and the expanded model include the Community Action Programs, local community colleges, treatment providers, childcare centers, and the local recovery community.

### Population of focus

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

- Individuals with substance use disorders
  - Cumberland County experiences higher rates of overdose deaths compared to state and national statistics. Additionally, almost 19% of adults in Cumberland County report binge drinking, a significantly higher proportion than state rate, and higher proportion than the national rate.
- Youth living in poverty
  - Nearly 7% of Cumberland County children live in poverty. Individuals experiencing poverty are at an increased risk for substance use disorders and social and emotional impacts across the lifespan.

# 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 Mercy 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 Mercy 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 Mercy 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, hospital-based food pantries, and pop-up produce markets in partnership with community organizations.
- Promoting Northern Light Health's [findhelp.org](https://www.findhelp.org) as a resource for community services and supports.

### Anticipated impact of these actions/expected outcomes

Northern Light Mercy Hospital anticipates seeing improvement in metrics related to the management of diabetes in primary care for attributed lives; improvement in hypertension amongst new moms in the perinatal period; increased breast cancer screening uptake amongst primary care populations. Mercy also anticipates decreasing the number of primary care patients who report being socially isolated.

### Programs and resource allocation

Northern Light Mercy Hospital will provide staff and resources to impact outcomes, including community health outreach worker, clinical staff, and others. Education and coaching provided aimed at the tenets of chronic disease self-management will be provided in community settings. Mercy staff will provide education regarding screening to vulnerable communities.

### Planned collaborations

Northern Light Mercy Hospital will collaborate with City of Portland Public Health Nurses and In Her Presence to address education and behavior change in the perinatal period for women with regard hypertension and diabetes. Partnerships with other organizations that support populations disproportionately impacted by diabetes and hypertension will be a focus. Mercy will also partner with Good Shepherd Food Bank and Wayside Food

Programs to address food insecurity amongst patients and will support efforts to address social isolation through community meals.

### Population of focus

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

- Individuals living in poverty
  - Over 7% of Cumberland County residents 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 multiple chronic conditions
  - Over 12% of individuals living in Cumberland County experience three or more chronic conditions, which is higher than the rate for the state of Maine.
  - Leading causes of death in Cumberland County include heart disease and cancer
- Individuals who are uninsured and underinsured
  - 5% of Cumberland County residents are uninsured and almost 22% are enrolled in MaineCare. Nearly 9% of residents report cost barriers to health care.

## Health Priorities Not Addressed

Northern Light Mercy 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 Mercy Hospital, community based organizations are poised to address and lead effective efforts. Priorities not selected, are listed below:

### Community Conditions

- Housing and poverty were not selected as a standalone priority areas of focus but we understand their connection to higher risks of chronic conditions and will look to community benefit organizations focused on these issue to lead efforts.
- Transportation 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 collaborates with patients in need of transportation to and from their healthcare needs by providing access to rides (e.g., taxi, vans, ride share programs, buses, etc.,).

### 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.

## Conclusion

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

# Appendix

## Evaluation of Impact

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

Northern Light Health and Northern Light Mercy 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 Mercy 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 2023-2025

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

*Continued on next page*

# Progress Report to our Community

Fiscal Years  
**2023-2025**

Addressing community health needs.

Northern Light Mercy 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, Mercy 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, Mercy 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 Mercy 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 Mercy Hospital has trained staff in various evidence-informed mental health interventions to help anyone — children, adolescents, adults, and families — in the immediate aftermath of a traumatic experience to assist someone who may be experiencing a mental health crisis at any time.

Mercy Hospital staff engaged trusted partnerships with schools, afterschool programs, and youth serving organizations to educate and empower individuals to respond to mental and behavioral health needs of youth using evidence informed models. In fiscal year 2023, a video, *Compassion Cures* was created in partnership with Be the Influence, a collaborative in the Lakes Region area. Mercy’s leadership and behavioral health staff used the video, participated in panel discussions, and offered subsequent trainings at schools, churches, and community settings. In fiscal years 2024-2025, Mercy Hospital partnered with In Her Presence to engage new Mainer children in programming to understand emotions and emotional regulation through a series of games, crafts and activities. Systemwide collective impact of our shared objective, since these effort began in 2023, has resulted in 110 training sessions with 2,066 individuals trained.

### Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

#### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Yarmouth Schools

Windham Schools

- Five Compassion Cures trainings.
- 64 people trained in Compassion Cures.
- New partnership with Yarmouth Schools - participates in Be the Influence Coalition, which includes schools, town leaders, and faith communities.
- Panel discussions, school trainings, faith leader presentations, and community events are underway.

### Fiscal Year 2024 Partners and Community Impact

#### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Bruni Family Centered Integrated Behavioral Health Program  
City of Portland Public Health Nurses

In Her Presence  
Northern Light Mercy Hospital Birthplace  
Sea Change Yoga for trauma-informed yoga

- Two “In Her Presence” community trainings.
- 34 people trained in “In Her Presence” which is a program offered to new Mainer children to understand emotions, emotional regulation through a series of games, crafts, and activities.

## Fiscal Year 2025 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

City of Portland Public Health Nursing  
In Her Presence

Sweetser  
Help Me Grow (Maine DHHS)

- Two “In Her Presence” community trainings.
- 35 people trained in weekly program offered to new Mainer children to understand emotions, and emotional regulation through a series of games, crafts, and activities.

## PRIORITY: Social Determinants of Health

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

### Shared objective:

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

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

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

- In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, Mercy Hospital participated in a monthly systemwide workgroup focused on engagement efforts to educate community partners on the availability and uses of [findhelp.org](https://findhelp.org). We assisted those community partners with adding their program information to the platform directory and with activating the ability to receive referrals or requests for information through the platform. Systemwide collective impact of our community engagement shared objective, since this effort began in 2023, has resulted in 69 partners offering 148 programs that increased engagement with FindHelp.
- In fiscal year 2025, Northern Light Community Health researched [findhelp](https://findhelp.org) data, and engaged clinical user feedback, to understand the most frequently searched social health needs in our geographic region to meet the needs of specific populations. These topic areas were featured on the [findhelp](https://findhelp.org) platform as specific “folders” containing a minimum of five relevant community resource links providing [findhelp](https://findhelp.org) users with easy access to the resources compiled by our organization. In fiscal year 2025, collectively across Northern Light Health, there were 50,990 searches for assistance conducted using [Northern Light Health findhelp](https://findhelp.org) compared to 21,027 searches in

2023. Search data trends show that food assistance remains the dominant need across Maine. This work is ongoing as we continue to identify best options for quick and easy access to resources.

- Additionally, in 2025, Northern Light Community Health participated in a food security resource collaborative convened by the Maine CDC Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Program that included staff from findhelp, 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:

Ethnic based community organizations  
Food resource organizations  
Good Shephard Food Bank  
Housing developers  
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project\*  
New Mainers

Northern Light Mercy Hospital\*  
Portland Adult Education\*  
Salvation Army of Portland\*  
Social service providers  
YMCA of Southern Maine\*

- Five community partners\* added six programs to the findhelp directory:
  - Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project: Immigration Legal Clinic
  - Northern Light Mercy Hospital: McAuley Residence and Gary's House
  - Portland Adult Education: Adult education
  - Salvation Army of Portland: Sallie's Choice Food Pantry
  - YMCA of Southern Maine: Men's dormitory
- Partnered with multiple ethnic based community organizations, housing developers, food resource organizations, and social service providers.
- Continued work with Good Shepherd Food Bank for food insecurity needs.

## Fiscal Year 2024 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Congolese Community of Maine\*  
Good Helper Foundation\*

Quality Housing Coalition\*

- Three community partners\* added three programs to the findhelp directory:
  - Congolese Community of Maine (COCOMAINE): Administrative Support Program
  - Good Helper Foundation: Temporary Shelter
  - Quality Housing Coalition: Project HOME Tenant Services

## 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 7,263 searches by Cumberland County residents compared to 3,146 searches in 2023. Search data trends show that food assistance remains the dominant need in Cumberland County.

Northern Light Mercy Hospital created the following findhelp resource folders:

- Cumberland County Food Resources (outside Portland)
- New Mainer Resources (Cumberland County)
- Cumberland County Utility Assistance
- Portland Food Pantries

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

## Fiscal Year 2023 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Contingency Management pilot  
Greater Portland Addiction Collaborative (GPAC)

Local public schools in Yarmouth

- 63 state-sponsored naloxone kits distributed.
- GPAC includes multiple stakeholders such as City of Portland, social service providers, treatment providers, housing developers, and state leaders.
- Contingency Management pilot developed to measure the impact on this proven tactic for persons experiencing polysubstance use disorder and stimulant use disorder.
- Meetings to expand Naloxone distribution in local public schools in Yarmouth.
- Primary care staff trained in Trauma Informed Care.

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

## Fiscal Year 2024 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNER ENGAGED:

University of Maine Law School

- 62 state-sponsored naloxone kits distributed.

## Fiscal Year 2025 Partners and Community Impact

### PARTNERS ENGAGED:

Milestone

Southern Maine Community College

Spurwink

The Opportunity Alliance

- 58 state-sponsored naloxone kits distributed. Expanded distribution to all McAuley Residences (including residents) and McAuley events.
- Expanded McAuley Residence to include a fourth location offering comprehensive transitional housing program for families affected by substance use disorder. This program now collectively serves 42 families of women and children, and partners with the above organizations to provide comprehensive services to disrupt generational poverty and substance use disorder. The program works closely with state agencies as necessary, including the Child Protective Services within the Office of Child & Family Services.
- Northern Light Mercy Hospital continues to employ a full-time recovery coach who engages with vulnerable persons with substance use disorder, which may include outpatient integrated behavioral health services focused on their substance use disorder.
- Mercy Hospital's six primary care offices provide medication assisted treatment for individuals affected by substance use disorder.