

Community Health Improvement Plan 2024 Annual Report



THE
University of Vermont
HEALTH NETWORK
Alice Hyde Medical Center

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A Message From Leadership



**Michelle LeBeau, RN, BS,
MHRM**

President

UVMHN-Alice Hyde Medical Center

The University of Vermont Health Network - Alice Hyde Medical Center is committed to improving the health and well-being of the people of our North Country communities. Every three years, UVM Health Network's six health care partners conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). The CHNA is built upon the foundation of New York State's Prevention Agenda — its health improvement plan and blueprint for state and local action to improve the overall health and well-being of all of our citizens. CHNAs help us reflect on our work to date as a critical healthcare partner in this region and consider the challenges and opportunities involved in creating healthier communities. This process informs how we respond to the changing needs of patients and community members across our region and how we work in collaboration with our diverse community partners. This will be the last annual report for this [Community Health Improvement Plan](#) cycle focused on addressing the priority areas of Promoting Well-Being, and Preventing Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders and Preventing Chronic Disease.

Alice Hyde's Calendar Year 2024 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) annual report serves as a year-over-year demonstration of our upstanding commitment, accountability and effectiveness strengthening the health of our region. This report highlights successes with our key partners as well as opportunities for carrying the work forward in the year ahead. We will continue to center the needs of those in our community most impacted by the social, economic and environmental factors influencing health outcomes. Work is ongoing to ensure that all individuals have fair access to the care and services that meet their needs.

I hope this report offers you a snapshot of how our dedicated, skilled and compassionate team members are taking action each day to improve the health and well-being of our community served. We look forward to building on this work and identifying new opportunities for collaborating with our patients, friends, families and neighbors on responsive local solutions.

Thank you for taking time to learn about our investment in community health.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle LeBeau". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Introduction

Annual Report Overview

Adopting an 'Implementation Strategy' and evaluating the impact of our Community Benefit programs is a requirement of our health system's tax-exempt status. This demonstrates our commitment, accountability and effectiveness in addressing our communities' identified health priorities. An annual progress report is best practice for Community Benefit. This report spotlights programmatic highlights, investments made, and collaboration with our key partners to improve the health of our community in 2024.

Prioritization

The subcommittee representing the public health department and hospitals convened on November 15, 2022 to finalize Priority Area and Focus Area selection.

The subcommittee observed that there was consistency in the findings across the methods that led to the selection of the following 2022-2024 Priority Areas and Goals:

Priority 1: Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

Focus Areas:

- Promote Well-Being
- Mental and Substance Use Disorders Prevention

Priority 2: Prevent Chronic Disease

Focus Areas:

- Healthy Eating and Food Security
- Physical Activity
- Tobacco Prevention
- Prevention and Care Management

Disparities Addressed: Access; Care Coordination; Poverty/Income level; Education; Disability; Health Equity; Built Environment

- Specific interventions related to each priority area were informed by:
 1. Population health-based initiatives occurring within the organization.
 2. Organizational ability to make a sustained impact with the intervention.
 3. Local collaboration, including: Franklin County Public Health's ongoing collaborations with the Franklin County Community Services Board, Federally Qualified Health Care Facility and the North Country Healthy Heart Network.

ABOUT US

For more than 100 years, Alice Hyde Medical Center has provided compassionate, community-focused health care for more than 50,000 residents in the North Country region of New York. Our mission is to always be here, not just as caregivers and staff, but as friends and neighbors, offering expertise and compassionate care in an environment that supports your health and healing.

Summary of Accomplishments

This annual report for calendar year 2024 details key actions taken to advance population health initiatives and community health priorities.

Highlights

- **Healthcare Access:** Expansion of Primary Care Services in Malone through partnership with HHHN.
- **Chronic Disease Care Coordination Enhancements** in partnership with local agencies.
- **Mental Health:** In conjunction with UVMHN, completed standardization and implementation of a behavioral health screening tool for all AHMC primary care patients annually, including depression, substance use, anxiety, and suicide.
- **Cancer Screening:** In conjunction with UVMHN's High Value Care Team, developed a "Clinical Pathway" for Colorectal Cancer Screening for AHMC patients.

Key Community Partnerships

- Adirondack Health Institute for Community Health Improvement Implementation services (ARHN CHA Committee)
- Community Connections of Franklin County
- ARC
- Malone Village Police and State Police
- Franklin County Social Services
- Citizen Advocates
- Franklin County Public Health and Office for the Aging
- North Country Healthy Heart Network
- Community Health Center of the North Country

Investments

- | | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Connections of Franklin County: \$10,000
Funding was provided to increase opportunities for navigation to social supportive services for community members with low financial means, and various social disadvantages in Franklin County, NY, including mental health, housing, food insecurity and more. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Health Center of the North Country: \$5,000
To support the elderly population in Franklin County, NY with vital services, unmet needs and to encourage equity in aging. The Friendship Volunteer Program efforts (CFVP) are unlike any other program found in the North Country region; it addresses very important unmet needs and is 100% non-income based. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● North Country Healthy Heart Network: \$10,000
AHMC is a partner with the Healthy Heart Network in its promotion of the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program. The goal of this program is to support chronic disease self-management to reduce disease burden in the community. <p style="text-align: right;">TOTAL: \$25,000</p> |
|--|--|---|

Investment in Community Benefit Activities in 2024

- 1,478 total AHMC staff hours donated toward Community Benefit Activities in 2024.
 - 123 students (high school/college) hosted by AHMC for their clinical rotations, education and shadowing in 2024.
 - 21 AHMC team members allocated 161 cumulative hours and \$5,296.55 to provide free educational resources at the Franklin County fair and to promote a healthy lifestyle.
 - Purchase of 1,000 Solar Eclipse Glasses/eye protection for community viewing event on 4/8/24.
 - The AHMC Education Coordinator provided general Safety and Fire Safety Education to 120 staff members of Brushton-Moira Central School District.
 - Tabled at a community health fair for the Akwesasne Mohawk Community at their Health Center.
 - Tabled at the Franklin County Fair: AHMC Departments including Cancer Center, Nutrition, Billing, Pediatrics and Dental Clinic, provided community members with free educational materials, health and safety tips, information about available hospital resources and other upcoming hospital events that support the community and our patients. A free walking pad, guardioarm blood pressure monitoring cuff and scales were given away as larger prizes to help promote a healthy lifestyle as well as pill boxes, first aid kits, band aids and other health related items on a daily basis to everyone that visited the booth.
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- Two Babysitting Safety courses were held for community members ranging from ages 12-16 to learn how to safely babysit. In the course the fire department, police department, pharmacy and a medical professional all presented important information on safely babysitting or how to safely stay home alone, for those who are age appropriate to do so.
 - CPR/AED awareness class held for community members.
 - Education and training offered to Community EMS on Obstetrical Emergencies (Emergency Delivery and Post Partum Hemorrhage).
 - 2024 Teddy Bear Clinic: This annual event is a wonderful way to introduce kindergarten students in the local communities to Alice Hyde Medical Center and provides safety and health tips.
 - AHMC supported the Citizen Advocates/Fieldstone Foundation's annual fundraiser in support of their "Backpack Program," with the goal of eliminating childhood hunger in the North Country.
 - AHMC provided charitable funding to the North Country's Wounded Warrior Outdoor Adventures Association in support of social, mental and physical health activities for our local wounded veterans.

Work Underway/Anticipated for 2025

- 2025-2030 NYS Prevention Agenda: AHMC will continue to collaborate with the Adirondack Rural Health Network of the Adirondack Health Institute (AHI-ARHN) and Franklin County Partners to implement the 2025-2027 Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan in alignment with the New York State Prevention Agenda, which is set to kick off March 1, 2025. A key stakeholder survey was sent to Franklin County leaders and key individuals to inform the implementation strategy for the 2025-2027 cycle. Our population's Social Determinants of Health will create the foundational basis for this implementation cycle.
- Mental Health Strategy: Enhancement of Mental Health Strategies in Northern NY:
 1. Addition of an AHMC Crisis Clinician within the Emergency Department to assist with patient mental health crisis intervention and support services.
 2. Mental Health First Aid training for all community benefit leads in all Network partner hospitals completed in early 2025.
 3. Leadership Training and Guidance for Employees in Crisis Interactions. Training is occurring for all organizational leaders at AHMC on signs/symptoms of distress, and risk for suicide or homicide in our employees and colleagues, and how to intervene and refer for help as indicated.
- Primary Care Access: AHMC continues to work toward the finalization of the goal to expand access to Primary Care Services in Northern NY through its partnership with Hudson Headwaters Health Network. Construction of the new, modern 15,000 sq ft. health center is underway on the AHMC campus and is expected to open in late 2025.
- Age Friendly Strategies: AHMC will determine how to align with NYS Age Friendly policies and practices organization-wide, upon release of the NYS Prevention Agenda goals and priorities in March 2025.
- Chronic Disease Prevention: AHMC will continue to partner with the Chronic Disease Care Coordination Network, and the Heart Network to enhance chronic disease prevention strategies for our patients and community. AHMC will work to meet and/or exceed benchmarks identified for cancer screening rates, annual wellness visits and A1C threshold rates of the patients in AHMC primary care panels in 2025.



Calendar Year 2024: Work to Date



Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders



IN ALIGNMENT WITH NYS PREVENTION AGENDA GOALS¹:

- A. Strengthen opportunities to build wellbeing and resilience across the lifespan.
- B. Facilitate supportive environments that promote respect and dignity for people of all ages.
- C. Prevent opioid and other substance misuse; reduce prevalence of major depressive disorders; reduce/support those living with serious mental illness in the general population.

Calendar Year 2024: Work to Date

INCREASE PRIMARY CARE ACCESS

- In 2024, through its partnership with AHMC, Hudson Headwaters Health Network is in the process of building a contemporary 15,000-square-foot primary care health center on the AHMC campus to accommodate 5-7 providers and 15 exam rooms.
- Services within the health center will include enhanced primary care, care management and integrated behavioral health to increase access to mental, behavioral and primary care to the nearly 10,000 residents designated as needing services in the AHMC service area.
- Targeted opening for this new modern facility is set for December 2025. The small HHHN primary care practice on the AHMC campus has served over 300 new patients in 2024.

ED PEER NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

- AHMC continued to work collaboratively with Community Connections of Franklin County to provide a vast array of social support services for patients who enter AHMC via the Emergency Department and identified as have social needs in addition to or instead of medical needs. The program aims to assist our patients to get connected to the critical services they need, such as transportation, food, housing, heat, mental and behavioral health services, and health insurance enrollment. The partnership with this agency has been positive for both the organization and our patients.

BY THE NUMBERS

10,000

individuals in Franklin County identified as having no primary care provider

300+

new primary care patients served in 2024 at the Hudson Headwaters Clinic on the AHMC Campus.



¹ Prevention Agenda 2019-2024: New York State's Health Improvement Plan (ny.gov)

GERIATRIC EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT STATUS

- AHMC achieved its GEDA in late 2022 achieving bronze status, the first hospital in the Network to do so. This work was undertaken to support the specific and specialized needs of the aging population in the AHMC service area.
- AHMC has implemented age-friendly measures, such as assessing and addressing nutrition, mobility, dementia and a various social determinant of health for our geriatric population upon presentation to the ED.
- AHMC staff have received specialized training and certifications, and AHMC will continue to implement avenues to achieve a higher level of accreditation in the year(s) ahead to expand emergency care services and standards for our geriatric patients.

SIMULATOR MANNEQUIN LAB

- The Simulation Lab at AHMC continues to be an incredible education resource for AHMC employees, students and community agencies.
- Trainings included ACLS, EKG training, patient rounding, imminent birth situation, mock code and EMS skills.



BY THE NUMBERS

28 Educational simulation trainings hosted by the Sim Lab in 2024

32 Participants trained in a variety of medical scenarios

20 Students participated in demonstrations on SIM people in our education lab. Students were all CPR certified and practiced hands-on skills.

615 Total participants trained 2023 - 2024

MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- AHMC continues to partner with OPWDD, Adirondack Arc, Franklin County Social Services, Mental Health agencies (Citizen Advocates), Community Connections of Franklin County (social/mental health needs) and local law enforcement to refine processes for patients arriving to the ED with a mental health crisis.



BY THE NUMBERS

17.7%

employees organization-wide
trained in Responding to Intense
Emotional Situations (RIES)

- In 2024, 123 employees organization wide (17.7%) were trained in a two-day Non-Violent and Violent Crisis Intervention and De-escalation training program (RIES - Responding to Intense Emotional Situations). RIES training was open to all leaders and all employees who may have patient encounters - both verbally or in person. The program will continue in 2025, with the goal of having all leaders and those providing direct patient care educated in this important training by the end of 2025.
- AHMC has seen a significant percentage decrease in violent episodes within the hospital within the last six months. Additionally, AHMC has established a fully trained security team onsite at AHMC in 2024 to assist with de-escalation and patient/employee safety measures.

CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITAL DESIGNATION AND SWING BED PROGRAM

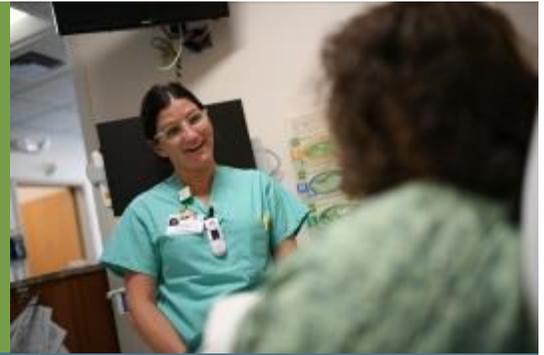
- AHMC Critical Access Hospital Designation and Swing Bed Program continue to provide positive benefits to AHMC and the patients we serve. The Swing Bed Program provides an avenue for patients to transition from acute inpatient care to skilled nursing and/or rehabilitative care without leaving the hospital.
- The program has been deemed very positive by our patients needing this level of care. AHMC was able to create an outdoor comfortable seating space for swing bed patients and families to gather in the warm weather months and is currently upgrading its inpatient rehabilitation room for additional space and services for our swing bed patients and care team.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- Building on the diligent groundwork laid, work continues to create an environment for openness, education and conversation with the AHMC community.
 - Three Community Town Hall Forums were held in 2024 to provide education in the areas of local access to primary and specialty care, provider recruitment, emergency services, safety and security, workforce development initiatives, and local EMS/Medical Transport Services.
 - AHMC created a Community Newsletter, “Alice Insights,” which continues to provide important updates and information about AHMC services, health education, and provider and staff spotlights.



Prevent Chronic Disease



IN ALIGNMENT WITH NYS PREVENTION AGENDA GOALS:

- A. Decrease the percentage of adults ages 18 years and older with obesity.
- B. Promote school, childcare and worksite environments that increase physical activity; increase access, for people of all ages and abilities, to indoor or outdoor places for physical activity.
- C. Expand access to evidence-based self-management interventions for individuals with chronic disease.

Calendar Year 2024: Work to Date

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

- AHMC successfully created an employee fitness center in 2023. The center is open 24/7/365. The Center offers a convenient, safe, secure space for employees to meet their health and wellness goals, free of charge.
- Total enrollment reached 404 employees at the end of December 2024. An increase year over year of +191, or 47% increase in membership from 2023. Total employee enrollment is now greater than 50%.

ED PEER NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

- AHMC continued to work collaboratively with Community Connections of Franklin County to provide a vast array of social support services for patients who enter AHMC via the Emergency Department and are identified as having social needs and/or medical needs.
- The program aims to assist our patients to get connected to the critical services they need, such as transportation, food, housing, heat, mental and behavioral health services, and health insurance enrollment. The partnership with this agency has been positive for both the organization and our patients.



BY THE NUMBERS

47%

Increase in employee membership of fitness center since 2023

CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION (Continued)

- All primary care patients are screened and tracked for tobacco use and referred for intervention services during annual physical appointment.
- Funding has been reestablished to ensure access to a tobacco cessation specialist at AHMC in 2025.
- AHMC will continue to partner with the North Country Healthy Heart Network in 2025 for available resources related to Chronic Disease and tobacco cessation.
- AHMC is part of the Chronic Disease Care Coordination Network and is developing strategies to address high tobacco usage rates in Franklin County, NY, and also chronic disease self-management tools.
- AHMC is currently implementing a number of high value care initiatives in the primary care practices. Tracking and trending of Diabetes HbA1C Poor Control, increasing Colorectal Screening Rates and Breast Cancer Screening Rates, Hypertension Blood Pressure Control, Depression Screening and Follow Up, and Medicare Annual Wellness Visits. Good progress is being made with these measures, and the goal is to identify care gaps and improve the health and well-being of our patients.

CONTACT



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