

# Community Health Improvement Plan 2024 Annual Report

## Porter Medical Center



THE  
University of Vermont  
HEALTH NETWORK

Porter Medical Center

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# A Message From Leadership

## University of Vermont Health Network- Porter Medical Center



**Bob Ortmyer**

President

Porter Medical Center

At Porter Medical Center, we celebrate the opportunity to lead Addison County's 2025 Community Health Improvement Project (CHIP), along with its predecessor, the 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). Both initiatives are essential to our understanding of community health needs and will help guide our work to improve the health and well-being of every individual in this region.

Of course this work extends beyond the walls of our hospital, nursing home and clinics. Porter stands with the many community organizations dedicated to health and well-being in Addison County. Together, we create a framework of essential services, advocate for health equity and offer support to those in need. We are proud to collaborate on our common goal of helping everyone achieve their best possible health.

This CHIP is designed to address the most pressing health challenges we face locally in 2025. In summary, we want to improve access to health care services, address gaps in mental health services and help improve local housing options – all of which will improve the health of our community.

One of the core components of the CHIP is its emphasis on preventive care. By providing access to screenings, vaccinations, and early intervention services, we can detect and address health issues before they become more serious. This proactive approach not only improves individual health outcomes but also reduces the overall burden on Vermont's health care system. Porter is actively doing this work by reprioritizing how we see patients in our primary care offices, opening up appointment slots and being more proactive with patients with chronic illnesses.

The success of our work relies on the active participation and support of our community members. We invite you to join us in this important endeavor by participating in our programs, volunteering your time, and spreading the word about this work. Your involvement is crucial to the success of this project and the health of our community.

Thank you for your continued trust and support. Together, we can make a lasting difference in the health and well-being of Addison County.

Sincerely,

Bob Ortmyer  
President  
Porter Medical Center

# 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

In 2021, a community meeting convened 32 leaders and CHNA collaborators: UVMHN Porter Medical Center (PMC), Addison County Home Health and Hospice, Five-Town Health Alliance, and additional key community partners. A set of criteria was established to select the top priorities to be addressed in the CHIP: scope of work, severity of issue, ability to impact, community readiness, and health equity. Informed by the findings from the 2021 CHNA, break out room discussion, and weighing the criteria, the top priorities addressed by PMC are:

- *Access to Healthcare Services*
- *Mental Health and Well-being*
- *Housing*

Priorities identified in the CHNA that were not selected by the prioritization process were:

- *Community Connection*
- *Workforce*
- *Food Access*
- *Racism*
- *LGBTQ*
- *Schools*

The 2022-2024 CHIP details resources allocated and many on-going collaborative projects between community partners. Additionally, the CHNA collaborators determined that the selected top three priorities integrate many components, including addressing the social determinants of health and referral to community resources.

## ABOUT US

Since 1925, Porter Medical Center (PMC) has been providing high-quality health care to the residents of Addison County, Vermont and its surrounding communities. Our mission is to improve the health of our community, one person at a time. PMC is comprised of a 25-bed acute care facility, a 105 bed skilled nursing facility which includes a memory care unit, short-term rehabilitation unit, and a long-term care unit. Porter operates a network of primary care and specialty medical practices throughout the region, as well as an infusion center and "Porter ExpressCare."

# Summary of Accomplishments

In 2024, PMC strengthened internal efforts to improve equitable access to health care and collaborated with external community partners on projects to improve other social determinants of health. PMC looks forward to building on these efforts throughout 2025.

## Highlights of 2024

- Completed 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)
  - ◆ The CHNA process was inclusive and robust, with an intentional focus on equity. We reviewed secondary data available for the region in addition to collecting new data through surveys and focus groups of community members. The CHNA and subsequent CHIP process was also a great way to strengthen collaborative relationships with community partners throughout Addison County.
- Increased Access to Mental Health Services
  - ◆ Mental Health providers are now embedded in all Porter Primary Care offices and Pediatrics.
- Supported Health at Community Events
  - ◆ PMC staff walked at the head of the Middlebury Pride Parade, and for the second year in row hosted the first aid tent.
  - ◆ PMC staff hosted a health tent at the Middlebury Car Show where they provided free vegetables, recipes and nutrition advice.

## Investments

- **Addison County Home Health and Hospice (ACHHH):** \$25,000  
ACHHH was awarded a grant to expand access to free health services such as: footcare, blood draws and vaccinations for homebound, vulnerable, and underserved older adults. Expanding access to healthcare services was a priority area of the 2022-2024 CHIP and will be a priority area of the 2025-2027 CHIP as well.

**TOTAL:** \$25,000

## Key Community Partnerships

- Addison County Home Health and Hospice
- Addison County Relocalization Network
- Charter House Coalition
- Counseling Services of Addison County
- Elderly Services Inc.
- HOPE
- John Graham Housing & Services
- Open Door Clinic
- Turning Point Center of Addison County
- Tri-Valley Transit
- United Way of Addison County
- VDH– Middlebury District Office
- Veggie Van Go
- Hannaford Career Center

## Work in Progress/Anticipated for 2025

- Finalizing the 2025-2027 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) and beginning to implement the plan. The top community health priorities addressed in the CHIP are:
  - ◆ Healthcare Access
  - ◆ Housing
  - ◆ Mental Health and Substance Use
- Strengthening and growing external community partnerships
- Celebrating Porter Medical Center's Centennial Anniversary



# Calendar Year 2024: Work to Date



# Access to Health Care Services



## GOALS:

- Enhance use of technology and Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems to improve access, effectiveness, outreach, and overall quality of care.
- Expand workforce recruitment and retention efforts to increase capacity.
- Reimagine health care to increase access to services.
- Improve equity in the health care system by developing a collective approach and coordinated impact within the community.
- Cultivate resilient communities to support mental and social wellbeing

## OBJECTIVES:

- Improve utilizations and functions of VITL and the EHR systems to better communicate between/among healthcare delivery organizations and thereby enhance both integration and access opportunities.
- Reduce number of vacant positions and turnover rate through recruitment efforts and improved employee experience.
- Redesign the health care delivery system to be patient-centered using a team based approach with wrap-around services.
- Increase number of patients receiving care coordination and wrap-around services.
- The steering committee will develop key indicators to measure health equity

POPULATIONS OF FOCUS: Addison County Residents, Health Care Employees

## Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

- Continued expansion of My Chart capabilities that support easier patient access by **simplifying scheduling process and enabling patient self-scheduling**.
- **Career pathways** have been set up for Respiratory Therapist, LPN and LNA.
- **35 Leaders** at PMC have completed **Everyday Inclusion Training**.
- PMC staff hosted a health tent at the Middlebury Car Show where they provided **free vegetables, recipes and nutrition advice**.

- ACHHH was awarded a **\$25,000** Community Health Investment Grant to expand access to free health services such as: **footcare, blood draws and vaccinations for homebound, vulnerable, and underserved older adults.**
- Porter Medical Center donated **\$20,000** to ACORN's Pharmacy Program. **Farmacy provided access to healthy local food and nutrition education for 65 Porter families.**
- The CHNA process was inclusive and robust, with an intentional focus on equity. **Healthcare Access was identified as a priority area to continue work on in the 2025-2027 Community Health Improvement Plan.**
  - ◆ The CHNA community member survey was offered in **6 languages** (English, Spanish, Arabic, Burmese, Vietnamese, French) and resulted in **1,063 survey responses**- a significant increase from last cycle's response rate.
  - ◆ The 2024 CHNA was guided by a steering committee— representing community partners including community-based organizations, social service providers and healthcare institutions. The following organizations were part of the steering committee and **played an integral role in creating the 2024 CHNA:**
    - ⇒ **Addison Allies, Addison County Home Health and Hospice, Charter House Coalition, Counseling Service of Addison County, United Way of Addison County, Vermont Department of Health- Middlebury District Office, and Vermont Department of Health- Division of Substance Use and Prevention.**

## BY THE NUMBERS

Granted

**\$25,000**

to **Addison County Home Health and Hospice** in support of health services for people who are homebound

Donated

**\$20,000**

to **Addison County Relocalization Network** in support of healthy food access

Received feedback from

**1,063**

community members via the **CHNA Community Member Survey** on the top health needs in Addison County



# Housing



## GOALS:

- Reduce displacement and homelessness in Addison County.
- Promote a safe environment for youth, families, and older Vermonters in the home setting.

## OBJECTIVES:

- Develop cross-sector collaboration and expand conversations to identify solutions around affordable housing in Addison County.
- Increase number of affordable housing units by 5%.
- Identify needs for housing and other environmental factors.
- Increase collaboration with service organizations to understand services and need for individuals at various age levels.
- Increase number of safety assessments conducted in the community by 10% and provide appropriate supports.

**POPULATIONS OF FOCUS:** Addison County Residents, High Risk Patients in Addison Count

## Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

- The CHNA process was inclusive and robust, with an intentional focus on equity. **Housing was identified as a priority area to continue work on in the new 2025-2027 Community Health Improvement Plan.** The updated 2025-2027 CHIP was developed in partnership with Addison County Housing Coalition leadership to **build on existing efforts and strengthen collaboration with housing service providers.**
- To support CHNA engagement with marginalized and underserved populations, \$20 gift cards were offered to priority populations to incentivize taking the community survey and honor their time. The gift cards were made available through Addison County Regional Planning Commission's health equity grant. A total of 30 gift cards were distributed through Open Door Clinic, Charter House Coalition, and through a community champion who did individual outreach to the migrant community. These **gift cards helped increase CHNA community survey responses among people who are migrant workers, have low income, or have experienced housing insecurity.**

# Mental Health and Well-being



## GOALS:

- Advance mental wellness through equitable access to timely, responsive, and integrated system.
- Strong cross-organization commitment and engagement to increase access to mental health care.

## OBJECTIVES:

- Increase provider training, patient mental health screen and referral to community resources by 5%.
- Develop mental health work plan to address access to care and care coordination.
- Increase number of non-traditional settings in which individuals can access behavioral health services and resources.
- Increase number of patients receiving treatment for Substance Use Disorder/Alcohol Use Disorder by 2%.
- Engage 10% of health and human services in advocacy work to support the community mental health agency.
- Identify resources and supports to promote resiliency and protective factors for individuals.
- Reduce death by suicide by 2% based on VT statistics.

## POPULATION OF FOCUS: Addison County Residents

### Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

- The CHNA process was inclusive and robust, with an intentional focus on equity. **Mental Health and Substance Use was identified as a priority area to continue work on in the new 2025-2027 Community Health Improvement Plan.**
- **Mental health providers are now embedded in all Porter Primary Care offices and Porter Pediatrics.**
  - ◆ CSAC also worked on similar efforts for the wider community. **CSAC embedded a mental health clinician with VSP, and CSAC staff were regularly present at Charter House.**

## Calendar Year 2024 Progress Made

- PMC staff participated in the **2024 Burlington Pride Parade**- and PMC won **best float!** There were about 10 people walking with the PMC float.
- PMC staff also participated in the **2024 Middlebury Pride Parade** by both walking in the parade and hosting the first aid tent. There were about 10 people walking with PMC. At the first aid tent, PMC was asked by the Teen Center to **provide resources about parents supporting medical independence in teens and safer sex practices**. This was PMC's second year supporting Pride – last year we also ran a first aid tent.
  - ◆ PMC was at the front of the parade this year, leading the procession with a PMC truck that was decorated in handmade, colorful posters with supportive messages.
  - ◆ PMC also had pride themed items to share with other parade participants- like flags and leis. Handing out these items was a great way to connect with other community members who were walking in the parade. They were especially a big hit with the youth participants!
- In 2023, CSAC was awarded \$25,000 from PMC via the Community Health Investment Grant. In 2024, CSAC provided an **Emotional CPR training** to community partners and members of the public. **12 people were trained** in this initial session and CSAC **plans to offer further e-CPR trainings in spring and summer 2025**.
  - ◆ E-CPR helps community members understand how to effectively respond to people experiencing mental health distress. The training was created by people with lived experience, which CSAC believes makes it especially effective.
- The Building Resilient Communities Initiative, led by CSAC, held a community wide event in July with an expert on relational healing and trauma informed communities- the topic was **community resilience and 50 people came**.
- With the continued roll out of **CSAC's new Mobile Crisis services** in 2024, CSAC connected with multiple community groups and primary care providers to highlight this new modality.
- CSAC and Porter pediatric practices collaborated to evaluate and improve **workflows related to suicide prevention** to ensure clear communication and protocols for people experiencing suicidal thoughts.



## CONTACT

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