

Community Health Improvement Plan 2023 Annual Report

Porter Medical Center



THE
University of Vermont
HEALTH NETWORK

Porter Medical Center

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Leadership Message	3
Introduction	4
Summary of Accomplishments	5
Calendar Year 2023: Work to Date	7
Access to Health Care Services	8
Housing.....	10
Mental Health and Well-being.....	12
Contact	13



A Message From Leadership



Erin Armstrong, LICSW
Director, Community Health
Improvement, UVM Health Network

The University of Vermont Health Network is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of people in the communities we serve. Every three years, UVM Health Network's six health care partners conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). CHNAs help us to reflect on our work to date and consider the challenges and opportunities involved in creating healthier communities. This process informs how priority health needs will be addressed by each health care partner alongside our diverse community partners.

Porter Medical Center's [Calendar Year 2023 Community Health Improvement Plan \(CHIP\)](#) annual report serves as a demonstration of the organization's accountability and effectiveness working together to strengthen community health. We are thrilled to celebrate and share stories of impact and collaboration, and the initiatives that are addressing the underlying drivers of health and advancing health equity in our region.

Our organization is committed to becoming an anti-racist organization and promoting greater access and inclusivity. Our priority is ensuring that the voices of those most impacted are centered in the conversation and development of strategies. While we are making good progress, our work will never be done in this area.

As you read through this report, I hope it's clear that people are at the heart of this work and what motivates us to make progress with these initiatives. This is just a snapshot of all the good work happening across our region as a result of strong partnerships within our communities. As we move forward together, we look forward to sharing our progress. Thank you for taking time to learn about this important work.

In partnership,

Erin Armstrong

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 2023.

Prioritization

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 2022-24 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 2023, 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 2024.

Highlights of 2023

- Enhanced use of technology and EHR to improve access to care.
 - ◆ Started work that will provide easier patient access by simplifying scheduling process, enabling patient self-scheduling, and adding tele site consults for psychiatry in Porter ED with UVMMC along with other behavioral health services at Porter.
- Increased access to mental healthcare through strong cross-organization commitment and engagement.
 - ◆ There is increased support for mental health services through a clinical psychologist who provides care in Primary Care offices and added tele site consults for psychiatry with UVMMC.
- Screened for displacement and homelessness in Addison County.
 - ◆ Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) screening standardized and conducted at every Wellness visit. SDOH screener includes housing insecurity questions; screening positive triggers an automatic referral to Care Management.

Investments

- **Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC):** \$25,000
Providing support for the “Living Room Model” as well as to help expand community-based training in Emotional CPR to help address the mental health crisis in a community framework.

TOTAL: \$25,000

Key Community Partnerships

- Counseling Services of Addison County
- Veggie Van Go
- Hannaford Career Center
- Vermont State University

Work in Progress/Anticipated for 2024

- Conducting the 2024 CHNA.
- Collaborating with community partners to address health priorities identified in the 2024 CHNA.
- Strengthening and growing external community partnerships.



Calendar Year 2023: 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 2023 Progress Made

- Started work that will provide easier patient access by **simplifying scheduling process and enabling patient self-scheduling**.
- **Working to expand online screening**, including Medicare Wellness questionnaires.
- Collaborating with Hannaford Career Center and Vermont State University on **workforce training programs**.
- **Implemented Nursing and Respiratory Therapy career pathways** for interested staff.

- Led UVM Health Network’s participation in **nursing workforce grant initiative** in partnership with Governor Scott and AHS.
- Held quarterly **manager training**.
- **Actively expanding and updating HR policies through lens of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.**
- Organized and participated in **Middlebury and Burlington Pride events**, which included opportunities for staff.
- **Helped 245 families in 2023 as a Veggie Van Go program leader.** Included distributing 25 bags of food to families monthly via primary care and pediatric clinics.
- **Care Management** in all Primary Care offices.
- **Case management** connected with mental health and through UVM Health Network Population Health Service Organization.
- Embedded **Mental Health team**.
- Ambulatory **Pharmacist, Dietitian**.
- **Increased after hours** for telemedicine visits.
- **Collaborating with Hannaford Career Center** and Vermont State University on LNA and RN programs.
- Developing **nursing and respiratory therapist career pathways**.
- **Explored offering MA training program** at Hannaford Career Center.
- Participation and sponsorship of **CSAC Interlude Room project** in support of mental health (donated \$25,000).
- Started work that will provide easier patient access by adding **tele-site consults for psychiatry in Porter ED with UVMHC along with other behavioral health services** at Porter.

BY THE NUMBERS

245

families as a **Veggie Van Go** program leader

Donated

\$25,000

to the **CSAC Interlude Room project** in support of mental health



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 County

Calendar Year 2023 Progress Made

- **SDOH screening standardized and conducted at every Wellness visit.** Includes: housing insecurity questions; screening positive triggers an automatic referral to Care Management.
- **Expanded Palliative Care Support Volunteers** offering bereavement groups and 1:1 support for grief.

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 2023 Progress Made

- Multiple **collaborative meetings between Porter and Counseling Service of Addison County** (CSAC) to improve clinical and operational workflows. CSAC regularly sends relevant notes for shared patients.
- **SDOH screening**, which includes alcohol screening, is now done at every wellness exam.
- **Clinical psychologist providing care** in primary care offices.
- **Active recruitment for adult psychiatrist.**

- **Two Social Work Care Managers shared among the three primary care sites** and active recruitment for another. CSAC has an embedded mental health clinician with law enforcement.
- **Child/Adolescent Psychiatrist joined PMC Pediatrics** staff in fall 2023.
- **No longer licensing restriction for medication-assisted treatment (MAT)**; partnering with Dr. Sanjit Maruti and his team to better support our clinicians who are or are interested in delivering MAT.



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