

## A vibrant, multi-colored collage of diverse people smiling and laughing, representing various ages and ethnicities. The collage is set against a background of a brick wall and is framed by a thick, multi-colored border.

THE  
University of Vermont  
HEALTH NETWORK  
Elizabethtown Community Hospital

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# A Message From Leadership



**Bob Ortmyer**

President

Elizabethtown Community  
Hospital

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.

Elizabethtown Community Hospital's (ECH) [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,

*Bob Ortmyer*

# 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

Essex County Health Partners (ECHP) carried out several steps to prioritize the health needs of the community, as detailed within the Community Health Assessment 2022 and Community Health Improvement Plan 2022-2024. The prioritization matrix criteria included categories of need and feasibility. Guiding questions were related to scope and severity, the perceived ability to impact the problem, and community readiness to address identified health issues. An internal planning group of Essex County Health Partners reviewed and confirmed the data-informed priorities selected. Further prioritization input was requested, including from community members, to inform the corresponding 2022-2024 Community Health Improvement Plan/Community Service Plan. The following three priorities were selected from the 2019-2024 New York State Prevention Agenda:

### Prevent Chronic Diseases

#### Focus Areas:

- *Healthy Eating and Food Security*
- *Physical Activity*
- *Chronic Disease Preventive Care and Management*
- *Tobacco Prevention*

### Promotion of Healthy Women, Infants, and Children

#### Focus Areas:

- *Maternal and Women's Health*
- *Perinatal and Infant Health*
- *Child and Adolescent Health*
- *Cross Cutting Health Women, Infant, and Children*

## ABOUT US

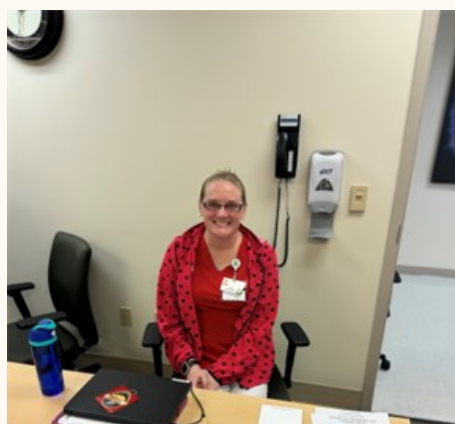
Elizabethtown Community Hospital is a not-for-profit critical access hospital which includes two campuses and six community-based primary care health centers.

In Essex County, Elizabethtown Community Hospital serves as the central source for the delivery of health care services to county residents and visitors to the Adirondack Park.

## Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders Focus Areas:

- *Promote Well-Being*
- *Prevent Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders*

*Access to care was identified as the top identified disparity to be addressed.*



# Summary of Accomplishments

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

## Highlights of 2024

- We have bolstered how we promote community health and wellness events. This has increased participation year over year
- Hosted **14 annual events**, detailed in the report.
- **235 families and 571 individuals** were served by the food pantry operated out of the Crown Point Health Center, welcoming any community members who live in Essex County and/or receive care from ECH.
- **8,522 lbs of food** were given out
- Wellness Rx supported **63 participants in 2024** with **72% total participants** reducing their A1c and/or BMI.

## Key Community Partnerships

- Essex County Health Department
- Essex County Mental Health
- Essex County Office for the Aging
- Alliance for Positive Health
- Healthy Heart Network
- Cancer Services Program of Northeastern NY
- Champlain Valley Family Center
- Adirondack Rural Health Network
- Adirondack Health Institute
- Substance Abuse Prevention Team
- Adirondack Community Action Program (ACAP)
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Mercy Care of the Adirondacks
- Local farms, farm stands, farmers markets and retailers
- Network partners
- Many more!

## Investments

### Adirondack Health Institute, \$5,000

Funds to support Collective Impact and Community Health Assessment Partner Planning Meeting

### Mental Health Association of Essex County \$5,000

Funding supports transportation solutions and access to care.

### Essex County Mental Health, \$17,000

Funding supports Mental Health Prevention Initiatives

### Regional Food Bank Grants, \$800

**GRAND TOTAL: \$27,800**

**ECH:** 3,756 hours of in-kind staff time for community benefit activities, including community outreach events.

## Work Underway/Anticipated for 2025

- 2024 marked the last year of the current Community Service Plan. ECH and key partners are currently carrying out the CHA for Essex County and preparing for the release of the 2025-2030 NYS Prevention Agenda.
- ECH continues to schedule our community outreach events to provide free screenings for our community. To date we have plans for our annual heart health events in February. Quarterly blood drives with the Regional Blood Bank are scheduled while we investigate options to partner with the American Red Cross on future events. We will be promoting the free Cancer Service Programs in our primary care clinics all throughout the year to increase the opportunities for our patients. Additional outreach will be scheduled for the Summer and Fall months as well.



# Calendar Year 2024: Work to Date



# Prevent Chronic Diseases



## IN ALIGNMENT WITH NYS PREVENTION AGENDA GOALS<sup>1</sup>:

- 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

### PREVENTATIVE CARE AND MANAGEMENT

**GOAL:** Increasing Access to Cancer Screening Services

#### Objectives:

- Reduce barriers related to cost and location of screening.
- Identify patients at risk for diabetes, high cholesterol or heart disease.

**Strategies:** offer free women's health screenings at accessible locations.

**Summary:** Breast Cancer screenings, mammograms, pap smears and A1c and lipid screening was provided free of cost to uninsured women at both the Elizabethtown and Ticonderoga hospitals.

#### Accomplishments to highlight:

Annual Women's Health event partnering with Cancer Services Program of Northeastern New York served 10 participants. These services are grant funded.

Populations of focus: individuals who are uninsured or under-insured community members. Within our service area (Essex County, NY as well as neighboring counties

**Key community partnerships:** Cancer Services Program of Northeastern NY



**GOAL:** Enhance use of technology and Electronic Health Record (EHR) to improve access to care

**Objectives:** Scheduling simplification in EPIC EHR.

**Strategies:** UVMHN implemented a system-wide initiative addressing scheduling simplification. EPIC Scheduling was enhanced to improve access.

**GOAL:** Reduce the risk of chronic disease

**Objectives:** Identify patients at risk for diabetes, high cholesterol or heart disease.

**Strategies:**

- Advertising through network partners, at our health centers and campuses as well on social media.

**Accomplishments to highlight:**

- Hosted two annual Fall Health Screening Events offering free A1c and lipid blood draws as well as a free EKG. We invited community partners to participate and offer educational material to participants.
- Hosted two free annual Heart Health events in February with 69 community member participants.
- Hosted quarterly blood drives rotating between our two campuses. Partnered with Adirondack Regional Blood Bank with 47 participants.
- Hosted annual Mental Wellness Fair in May to increase awareness and access to care for those suffering with mental health issues.
- Hosted annual Wellness Fair at one of Essex counties largest employers each year, Sylvamo. Offer free A1c and lipid blood draws and free EKG to participants. 35 participants in 2024.
- Hosted two annual Diabetes Fairs in November, one in Elizabethtown and one in Ticonderoga. Participants received free A1c testing. Community partners were invited to participate and offer educational material to participants. 35 participants were served.

**Populations of focus:** our service area (Essex County, NY as well as neighboring counties); Sylvamo employees' Wellness Fair.

**Key Community Partnerships:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| · Essex County Health Department             | · Adirondack Rural Health Network            |
| · Essex County Mental Health                 | · Adirondack Health Institute                |
| · Essex County Office for the Aging          | · Substance Abuse Prevention Team            |
| · Alliance for Positive Health               | · Adirondack Community Action Program (ACAP) |
| · Healthy Heart Network                      | · Cornell Cooperative Extension              |
| · Cancer Services Program of Northeastern NY | · Mercy Care of the Adirondacks              |
| · Champlain Valley Family Center             |  |

## GOAL: Healthy Eating and Food Security

**Objectives:** Elizabethtown Community Hospital strives to treat the whole person. Food insecurity is a challenge many in our community face. By providing access to a healthy variety of foods, we hope to ease this burden for those we serve.

### Strategies:

- Connected with local schools and other distribution centers to educate and advertise access to the pantry.
- Deliver food to any of our locations to increase access for those with transportation challenges.

### Accomplishments to highlight:

- **235 families and 571 individuals** were served by the food pantry operated out of the Crown Point Health Center.
- **8,522 lbs** of food were given out.



- Wellness Rx supported 63 participants in 2024 with **72% total participants** reducing their A1c and/or BMI.
  - Throughout the year, ECH coordinated conversations with NY partners to expand the program to other hospital sites. A team has been created to explore this possibility.
  - Regional food bank
  - Juniper hill farms
  - Keeseville pharmacy
  - Northen orchard
  - Pray's farmer's market
  - Ticonderoga natural foods co-op
  - Village meat market
  - Wild work farm
  - Drinkwine produce
  - Discussions with Agricultural Agencies to expand partnerships with local farms and farmers markets in 2025.
- Populations of focus:**  
The food pantry serves any community members who live in Essex County and/or receive care from ECH.

# Promotion of Healthy Women, Infants, and Children



## IN ALIGNMENT WITH NYS PREVENTION AGENDA GOALS:

- 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

### MATERNAL AND WOMEN'S HEALTH

**GOAL:** Increasing Access to Women's Health Services

#### Accomplishments to highlight:

- ECH partnered with Porter Medical Center to offer OB/GYN care at its Ticonderoga hospitals two days a month. We currently have two MDs and one NP working at the Ticonderoga Outpatient Clinic.

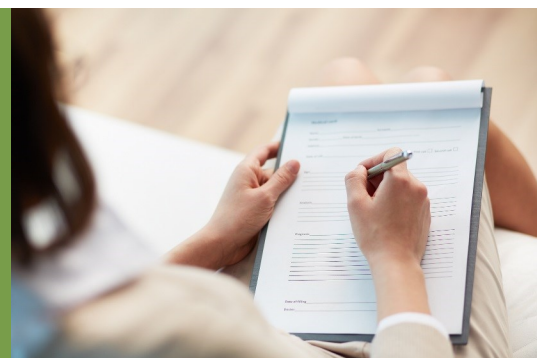
### PERINATAL AND INFANT HEALTH

**GOAL:** Increasing access to peer and professional breastfeeding support

- Partnered with Essex County Public Health to support their breastfeeding education initiative. Ensure a private, comfortable space for employees and visitors to breastfeed.



# Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders



## IN ALIGNMENT WITH NYS PREVENTION AGENDA GOALS:

- 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

### PROMOTE WELL-BEING

**GOAL:** Promotion of Well-being and Prevention of Mental and Substance Use Disorders

**Objectives:** Increase awareness and access to care for those suffering with mental health issues.

#### Accomplishments to highlight:

- Offered the second annual Mental Health Fair in partnership with key agency and community partners.

### PREVENT MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

- Narcan kits are available for distribution from ECH emergency departments in Elizabethtown and Ticonderoga, free of charge to patients and community members.
- Pharmacy staff hosted quarterly opioid stewardship meetings to promote and encourage prescriber education and familiarity with opioid prescribing
- Newly created position of Narcotics RN at our primary care health centers is working to ensure management of narcotics through policy and education.

**Populations of focus:** our service area (Essex County, NY as well as neighboring counties)

**Key Partnerships:** Essex County Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention Team, Essex County Mental Health

## CONTACT

### **Jodi Gibbs**

Quality and Population Health Assistant

(518) 585-3761

[jgibbs@ech.org](mailto:jgibbs@ech.org)

### **Amanda Whisher**

Director of Quality and Community Benefits Oversight

(518) 873-3125

[awhisher@ech.org](mailto:awhisher@ech.org)

The University of Vermont Health Network

Elizabethtown Community Hospital

2679 Main Street

Crown Point, NY 12928

[UVMHealth.org/ECH](http://UVMHealth.org/ECH)

