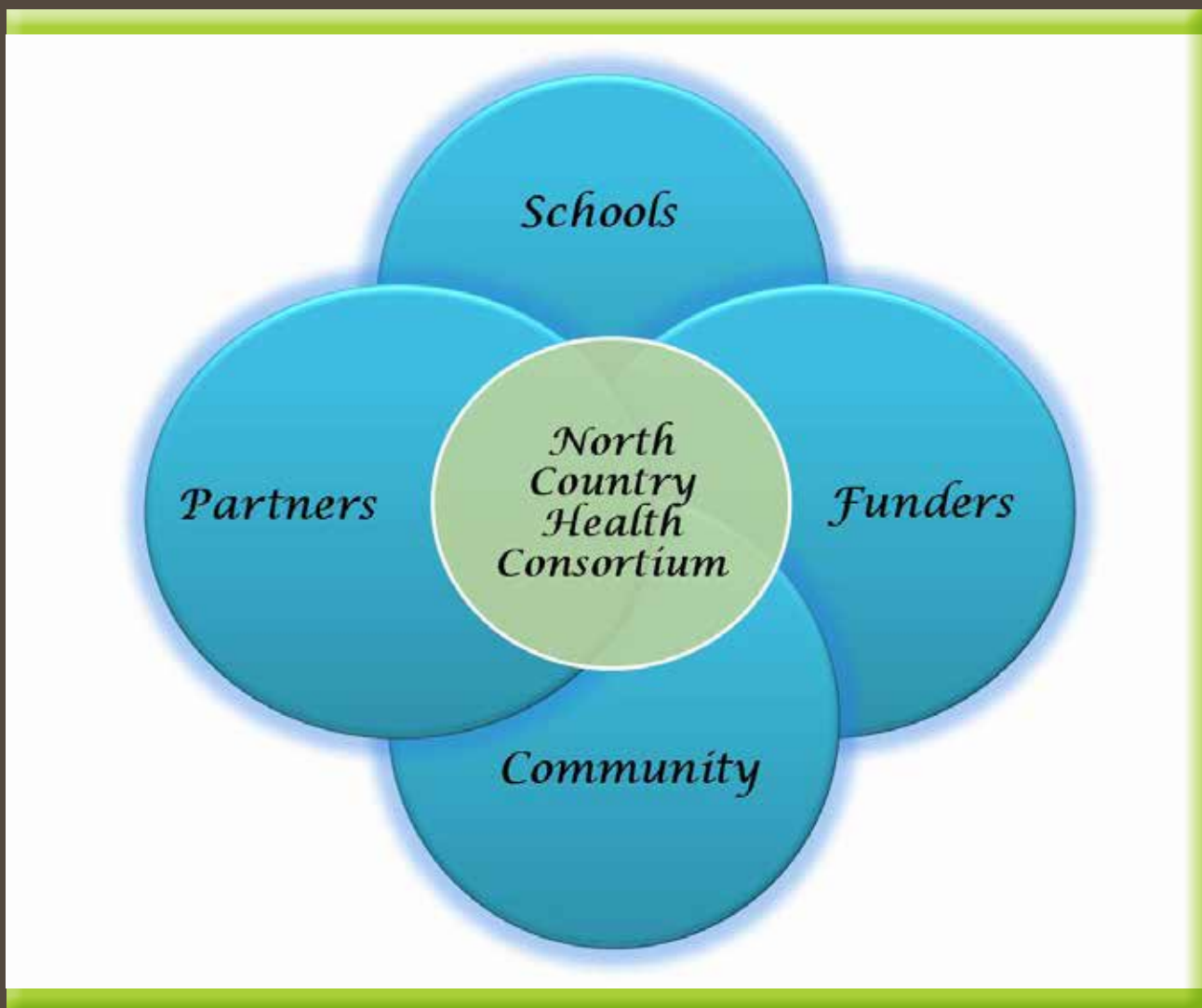




**NORTH COUNTRY
HEALTH CONSORTIUM**

2013 Annual Report



The Collaborative Impact

MESSAGE FROM THE NCHC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Nancy Frank

&



NCHC BOARD PRESIDENT

Roxie Severance

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We are pleased to bring you the North Country Health Consortium's 2013 Annual Report. It has been a year of challenges as well as opportunities. Although we felt the impact of federal sequestration and the end of several multi-year grant funds, we have secured new funding, strengthened many of our program areas, and taken on new initiatives.

The program highlights in this Annual Report portray an important quality of the Consortium: collaboration with partners, schools, the community, and our funders. At the center of the collaborative relationships is an understanding that we are much more than our individual programs and projects, and that the communities we serve are richer for our collective work.

NCHC staff and partners continuously pursue new ideas, strategies, and initiatives to improve the health status of the North Country. Over the past year, we held our second annual Health Improvement Summit, were awarded a three-year federal Small Rural Health Care Quality Improvement grant focused on reducing adult obesity, received funding from the NH Charitable Foundation to expand substance abuse prevention strategies with youth, and established an adult oral health pilot program to reduce emergency room visits.

As we look to the year ahead, we will continue to take an active role in improving health and increasing access to quality healthcare. As part of the Affordable Care Act we will provide Navigator and consumer assistance services to individuals seeking health insurance through the Marketplace. We will continue to respond to community needs and priorities, coordinate regional health improvement initiatives with our partners, and identify strategies to maximize our impact.

Many thanks to the NCHC staff, community partners, and the board of directors for your continued dedication to our mission.

Nancy Frank

Roxie Severance

COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES WITH... SCHOOLS

BETTER DENTAL HEALTH THROUGH TREATMENT, EDUCATION & INNOVATION

SCHOOL-BASED HYGIENE PROGRAM

Molar Express provides school-based oral health care to elementary, middle and high school children, ages 5-18, who are Medicaid recipients, uninsured, or underinsured and do not have a dental home. The program currently serves children in more than 20 schools in Grafton and Coös counties. The Molar Express is a mobile dental clinic that is equipped to provide services typically found in any general dental practice. Services include: Exams, Cleanings, Sealants, X-rays, Fillings, Extractions, Fluoride varnish treatments, and more. Over the past year, Molar Express transitioned from a mobile clinic traveling in a large box truck to a portable clinic transported in a mini-van.

INNOVATION:

- iPad minis used to capture evaluation data, offline, and offer a better “customer service” experience for young patients (they can play dental games, as appropriate)
- “Homework for parents” postcard evaluations
- Sealant initiative: identify sealant needs & track the “aging” of the sealant
- Using electronic medical records to track ongoing restorative needs & follow up on referrals

“It is amazing that some students would not go to the dentist without this.”

-2013 School Nurse Satisfaction Survey

MOLAR EXPRESS STATISTICS (2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR):

- Traveled to 23 schools, pre-K through 12th grade
- 1052 visits & 114 clinic days
- Patients from 30 towns, Pittsburg to Orford
- The Molar Express Hygienist sealed 503 teeth on 137 children & provided 443 fluoride varnish treatments
- The Molar Express Dentist provided 328 comprehensive exams & 151 restorative procedures

ORAL HEALTH EDUCATION:

- One-on-one consultation
- Wellness/Health fairs and event
- Class presentations
- Dental Simulator/Health Careers (such as STEM-Health Summer Camp)
- Dental Caries Management through Risk Assessment (CAMBRA)
- Using an education model to identify risk levels & adapt treatment plans



COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES WITH... SCHOOLS

NORTH COUNTRY PREVENTION NETWORK: PREVENTION YOUTH COUNCILS

With over 350 high school youth involved in the Prevention Youth Council Program (PYC), the ability to stress the importance of substance abuse prevention and provide leadership development opportunities continues to grow.

Kids In Prevention, a state-approved prevention program for elementary age school children, served 65 fifth grade students at the Profile, Gorham, and Whitefield schools. Twenty-five facilitators and chaperones were trained to implement this strategy during a two-day, overnight age-appropriate prevention retreat. This year, all North Country middle schools adopted a Project Venture prevention group, which culminated in a five-day Youth Leadership Through Adventure summer retreat that served 40 middle school leaders; most took those skills back to their high school level PYC.

The Prevention Network conducted a School Climate Prevention Project last year at Groveton, Profile, and Gorham high schools and Berlin Middle School. A total of 1,195 students were served, and 142 facilitators were trained to implement the strategy.

The North Country Prevention Network continues to support community-wide prevention efforts with Community Action Team Coordinators in the five sub-regional hubs: Colebrook, Berlin, Lancaster, Woodsville, and Littleton. The overall effect of these strategies is to connect North Country youth with a continuum of age-appropriate prevention programs and messaging throughout their formative years. This year, guidance and training are being provided to White Mountains Regional, Woodsville, and Groveton high schools to implement the Project SUCCESS Student Assistance Counselor Program through the Partnership for Success II Grant.

Leading the way for New Hampshire by emphasizing the power and effectiveness of youth-led, adult-guided prevention initiatives.



Prevention Strategies at each academic level:

High School Prevention Youth Councils

Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol

Environmental Prevention/
Youth Leadership Development

Middle School Prevention Youth Councils

Project Venture
(mentored by high school PYCs)

Environmental Prevention/
Youth Leadership Development

Kids In Prevention Retreat (Grades 4-5)

Mentoring from Middle School PYCs

Skills/Confidence Building

SCHOOLS

MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS: LEARNING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



The North Country's Public Health Network is home to the Northern New Hampshire Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) which organizes and trains volunteers in health related fields to respond to public health concerns in North Country communities.

Over the course of the past year, NCHC received funding from The National Association of County and City Health Officials to coordinate a "Train the Trainer" workshop for North Country MRC volunteers and other interested volunteers in Family Emergency Preparedness. Workshops were held throughout the region, including one given to the Allied Health Classes at the Hugh J. Gallen Center at Littleton High School.

The Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) group at Littleton High School participated in the workshop and then took it one step further. The HOSA students are trained MRC volunteers, and as part of this initiative produced a short Personal Preparedness video as part of their HOSA presentation at the state and national levels. The students won the statewide New Hampshire competition in March 2013 and participated at the national level in June 2013 in California.

THE VIDEO IS AVAILABLE AT:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olUat1GsAxM>



Recommended Items to Include in a Basic Emergency Supply Kit:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Metal towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps



COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES WITH... PARTNERS

SECOND ANNUAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT SUMMIT



As it did in its inaugural year, the 2nd Annual Health Improvement Summit focused on initiatives to improve the health and wellness of North Country residents at home, in school and in the workplace. Feedback from participants has led to a year-long action plan that will be coordinated by North Country Health Consortium (NCHC).

The June 18th summit at the Highland Center in Crawford Notch brought together community leaders, healthcare professionals, government officials, businesses, educators, policy makers and private citizens in a day-long conversation about improving the health of people living and working in Coös and northern Grafton counties. It built on the work of the 2012 summit attendees, who identified obesity as the health factor most affecting their communities and residents.

THE NORTH COUNTRY WELLNESS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE

NCHC, in collaboration with 3 community-based working groups established following the 2012 summit, created the North Country Wellness and Community Resource Guide. Download the guide by going to www.nchcnh.org and click on "wellness and preventive campaigns". The link is located in the middle of the page.

GET SHOES TO GET FIT INITIATIVE

Through the Get Shoes to Get Fit Initiative, NCHC has distributed more than five-dozen pairs of athletic shoes to individuals who wanted to walk but couldn't afford to purchase the right shoes. Footwear sponsors included Olympia Sports, Garnet Hill, and White Mountain Footwear.



SHOOT FOR THE MOON

North Country organizations will be challenged to try to walk to the moon — a distance of 238,000 miles — between now and the next Health Improvement Summit in June 2014. A blog or Facebook page where organizations can log their successes, along with prizes and incentives, are planned to encourage teams to begin the Shoot for the Moon program and stick with it.

As a result of the Summit, participants were enthusiastic about what they learned in the keynote address and work sessions, and set goals before they left of changes they intend to make in diet and exercise as a result of what they learned. The hope is that Summit participants will consider incorporating 'Shoot for the Moon' in their daily schedules.

Some of the individual goals noted by conference participants include encouraging workplace support of physical activity; healthier snacks in the work place; a community garden at school; starting an employee exercise group; scheduling exercise in a weekly planner; eating better; being an example to others at work; walking at lunch; and seeing how government can help make policy changes.

During the next 12 months the focus will be on: The "Shoot for the Moon" walking program • collecting success stories that will be shared at next year's summit • distributing regular Public Service Announcements • monthly working group meetings that will include data reporting, such as the North Country Health Status report and county health rankings • creating and sharing a "highlight of the month," tip that will encourage healthy eating, increased physical activity and stress reduction.



PARTNERS

2013 STEM-HEALTH SUMMER CAMPS

The STEM-Health Summer Camps engage middle school North Country students in hands-on, interactive activities. The activities are designed to expose students to a variety of health professions, offering a diverse view of the health professions that exist. Students are provided with exploration opportunities through workshops and field trips.

For the fourth consecutive year, the North Country Health Consortium partnered with White Mountains Community College to host 20 middle school students for the 2013 Berlin STEM-Health Summer Camp program running from June 24-28. Additionally, for the third year, NCHC partnered with the Hugh J. Gallen Career and Technical Center to offer a STEM-Health Summer Camp to 16 North Country middle school students. The menu of summer camp activities included Wilderness First Aid scenarios using orienteering fundamentals; health career posters and exploration opportunities; hands-on veterinary procedures; CPR; Lego robotics; discovering the engineering of a computer in which the student dismantles and reconstructs a tower returning it to an operational state; a comprehensive tour of the Littleton Regional Healthcare facility; hands-on dental operatory experience with a state of the art dental simulator; using the state of the art simulators in the most advanced career and technical program training facility in the country.

Some of the summer camp participants had attended in prior years and they enjoyed the experience so much, that participating in future years was a must.

“It was awesome and very fun. I am definitely coming back [next] year.”
-2013 Summer Camp Participant

STUDENTS CONVEYED THEIR EXCITEMENT AND INTEREST IN THEIR EVALUATION COMMENTS:

- “It was awesome and very fun. I am definitely coming back [next] year.”
- “It was amazing!”
- “It was fun here! I learned A LOT!”
- “I loved this camp.”

STUDENTS ALSO SHARED SOME OF THEIR FAVORITE ACTIVITIES FROM SUMMER CAMP AND WHY THEY LIKED THEM:

- “Dentistry. Because we got to fill and drill cavities.”
- “Working with a sim doll. It’s close to working with real people.”
- “Situations. It was fun to have things happen like in real life.”
- “Drawing blood. Exciting and fun.”
- “Dentistry stuff. Because I think I would like to pursue a dental career.”
- “Setting up a camp in the woods. I liked playing survival.”
- “Building bridges. Because I was able to use my imagination.”



COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES WITH... PARTNERS

THE MOLAR EXPRESS ORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

NCHC has partnered with Ammonoosuc Community Health Services and Coös County Family Health Services to provide Public Health Dental Days at their clinics.

The Oral Health Initiative of The Molar Express provides dental clinics for adults in Coös and Grafton counties who are on Medicaid or who are uninsured/underinsured, and who have urgent dental health needs.

The clinics intend to help alleviate Emergency Department use for oral health issues at local hospitals. This initiative is a collaborative effort to address a public health issue and provide a stop gap measure for oral health Emergency Department presentations.

CLINIC VISITS INCLUDE AN ARRAY OF SERVICES:

- Comprehensive exam by dentist
- Digital bitewing x-rays
- Development of Treatment Plan
- Simple extractions
- Routine restoration of caries
- Referral of patient for complex care needs, if necessary
- Dental Hygiene services
- Dental sealants, if necessary

Procedures for each patient are performed based on the Treatment Plan created on-site, prioritized by pain, risk of infection, and scope of service. During a clinic, the dentist may be able to see between 5 and 10 patients depending on the severity of their dental needs. Appointments are scheduled in collaboration with the partnering organization.



“I can’t believe I get to keep those four teeth.” “This is the best day of my life.”

Oral health patients have been enthusiastic about the clinics and the care they have received. One patient noted, “I can’t believe I get to keep those four teeth.” Previously, the only option this adult had was the extraction of any teeth with cavities. Another patient noted that, “This is the best day of my life,” following extraction of a tooth that had been infected in the past.

Over the course of the upcoming year, NCHC and Molar Express will continue to explore opportunities with other organizations in the region to provide much needed oral health services for adults. Additionally, NCHC remains actively involved in the development of a fixed-site, hub-and-spoke model of oral health care delivery in the Littleton and Plymouth areas.





**NORTH COUNTRY
HEALTH CONSORTIUM**



**THE
Molar
Express**

a North Country Health Consortium program

 Annette Cole, RDH Hygienist	 Kathleen Kennedy Admin.—Billing	 Jeff Williams, DMD Dentist
 Kayla Ramsay Dental Assistant	 Francine Morgan, MBA Program Manager	

COMMUNITY

LIVE, LEARN & Play

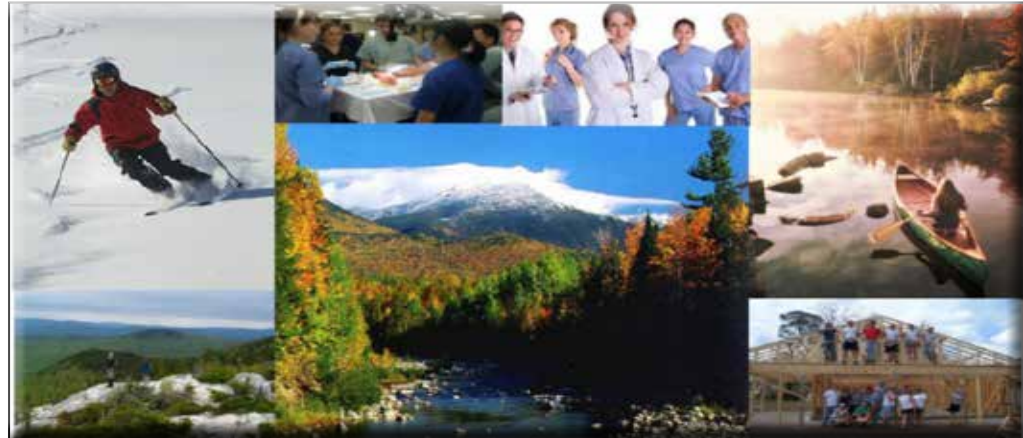
IN NORTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE

LIVE, LEARN, & PLAY IN NORTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE

The Live, Learn, & Play in Northern NH (LLP) program is a multi-faceted, interdisciplinary student training program. It was developed to provide health professions students and preceptors with a value-added rotation experience that would encourage students to seek employment in the North Country.

COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM INCLUDED:

- Thorough application and interview process to ensure students had an interest in rural health care.
- Two-part orientation program including an online section focused on the history and culture of North Country communities, and an in-person training focused on the culture of poverty.
- Students matched with clinical sites for rotation.
- Completion of a community service project designed to allow students to pursue their own professional and clinical interests in the community.



Over a two-year period 33 health profession students completed the Live, Learn, & Play in Northern NH program. Twenty-two students participated over the past year. Five of the students who completed the program were hired by three clinical sites as a result of the LLP program. Providing students with stipends allowed NCHC to attract students to the area for clinical rotations who otherwise may not have been able to come.

Although federal funding for this program ended in FY 2013, NCHC will continue to: support the program orientation for students and recruits to the region; collaborate with academic institutions and preceptor sites to help determine the right student match; assist with connection of students and community service projects; and work to secure resources to expand and enhance the Live, Learn, & Play in Northern NH program.

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Worked with the Substance Abuse Prevention Program at North Country Health Consortium to produce a document containing marijuana information for North Country students and parents.
- Created and held workshops regarding smoking cessation.
- Taught CPR to a group of Girl Scouts.
- Participated in "Heart Truth", a campaign to raise heart disease awareness for women, through presenting signs and symptoms at events.

- Presented on pediatric asthma to providers at the Coös Family Health Services in Gorham.
- Offered information and awareness on the issues of childhood obesity and overtraining syndrome in youth sports.

STUDENTS WERE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY THE CLINICAL ROTATION PROGRAM, AS EVIDENCED BY THESE COMMENTS:

"I really enjoyed teaching the students about physician assistants, their training, role in healthcare and specifically the opportunities they may have by working in rural areas such as the North Country." — Alys D. Ludwig, PA student

"Being involved in the Live, Learn, and Play in Northern NH program...provided insight into the kind of provider that I would like to be in order to provide the best care to my patients." — Khaivchandra Ramjeawan, PA

"I originally thought rural medicine was defined by areas of medical isolation and lack of resources. What I realized from my scope of care was medicine is medicine, regardless of area. If more physician candidates came to that understanding and realized the benefits of such a community, we might not have any difficulties recruiting and fewer physician shortages." — Patrick Fadden, Primary Care, Internal Medicine student

"I had the opportunity to work with several other specialties at the hospital. I was able to scrub in for orthopedic surgeries, observe several ENT procedures and care for ICU patients. I truly got a very comprehensive learning experience in a very unique, welcoming, small community." — Lauren Rich, PA student

COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES WITH...

COMMUNITY

NORTH COUNTRY ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATION (ACO)

In 2012, four North Country Community Health Centers joined together to form the North Country Accountable Care Organization (ACO), a wholly owned NCHC subsidiary. This new entity became one of the first ACO's in the country to participate in Medicare's Advanced Payment Shared Savings Program.

ACO's are groups of doctors and other health care providers working together to provide high quality service and care for their patients. They were created as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and represent an important component of a multi-part strategy designed to improve the nation's health care system.

The North Country ACO is comprised of the following community health centers: Ammonoosuc Community Health Services, Coös County Family Health Services, Indian Stream Health Center and Mid-State Health Center.

In 2013, the North Country ACO received high marks during its first year of operation. According to Medicare, when compared to similar organizations across the country, North Country ACO rated above average on 26 of the 33 performance measures for which data was collected.

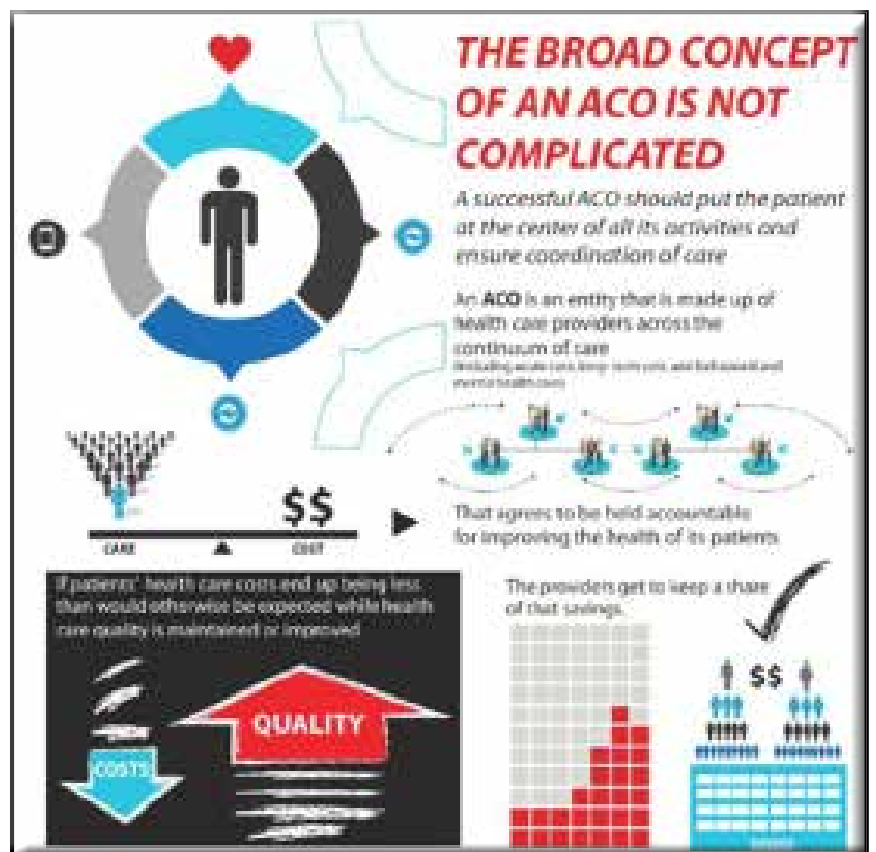
Performance measures included the experience of patients and family caregivers, care coordination, patient safety, preventative health, and special efforts for those diagnosed with diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease.

According to Medicare, North Country ACO rated above average on 26 of the 33 performance measures for which data was collected.

The ACO would not be possible without the good will and collaboration that exists among Consortium members, and reflects extraordinary levels of trust, communication and teamwork — hallmarks of how North Country providers work together to serve their communities.

Sharon Beaty, President of the North Country ACO Board, said, "We are extremely pleased with the first year results. Each of our member organizations worked hard to enhance the care we offer our patients. We look forward to working with individuals, families and other health care organizations as we continue our work to improve the health and well-being of area residents."

"We are dedicated to promoting better care coordination, improving health and creating a collaborative environment across healthcare systems in rural northern New Hampshire," said Ken Gordon, ACO Program Administrator. The organization works to provide Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries with high quality service and care, while reducing the growth in Medicare expenditures through enhanced care coordination.



COMMUNITY

Thirty-five staff from the participating health agencies and 10 patient volunteers from The Explorers Club and The Key Club participated.

COLEBROOK POINT OF DISPENSING (POD) WALK THROUGH

Key partners from the Colebrook Point of Dispensing group area public health emergency preparedness community tested the ability of area agencies to respond to a public health threat with a large-scale dispensation of immunizations or medications during a September 21 exercise at the Colebrook Elementary School.

The exercise tested the ability of local health officials to set-up and operate a 'point of dispensing' mechanism designed to get large quantities of medication or immunization dosages to the community in the case of a public health emergency.

Four months of planning, with participants meeting every two weeks, culminated in the September 21 exercise, which was designed to determine whether "5,196 doses of medication or immunization can be delivered at the Colebrook Elementary School — which has been designated as a local emergency response center — within a 48-hour time period during an emergency situation," said Amy Holmes, North Country Public Health Coordinator.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS PARTICIPATING IN THE EXERCISE:

- Town of Colebrook
- Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital
- Indian Stream Health Center
- NH Department of Safety HSEM
- 45th Parallel EMS
- NH Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team
- The Explorers Club
- The Key Club
- Colebrook Fire and Police Departments
- First Colebrook Bank
- Northern NH MRC
- Coös County Nursing Home



The exercise put in motion "a written plan to dispense medications in a continuous flow as effectively and efficiently as possible."

Thirty-five staff from the participating health agencies were involved, along with 10 patient volunteers from The Explorers Club and The Key Club.

Exercises such as this one provide training in advance of a public health emergency to ensure that local public health officials understand their role and can carry out their duties in a calm and efficient manner.



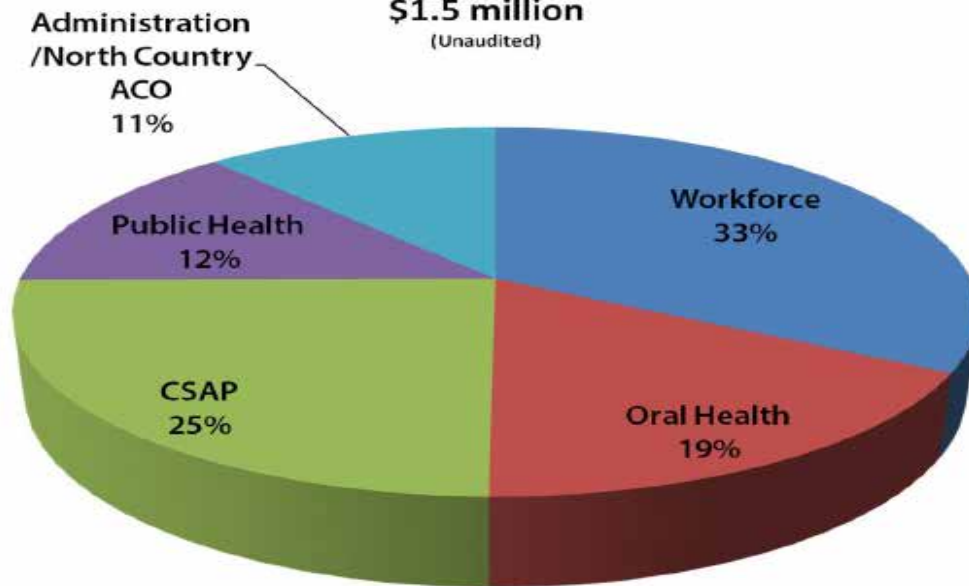
Photos of the Colebrook POD Walk Through Exercise Courtesy of The Colebrook News and Sentinel.

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

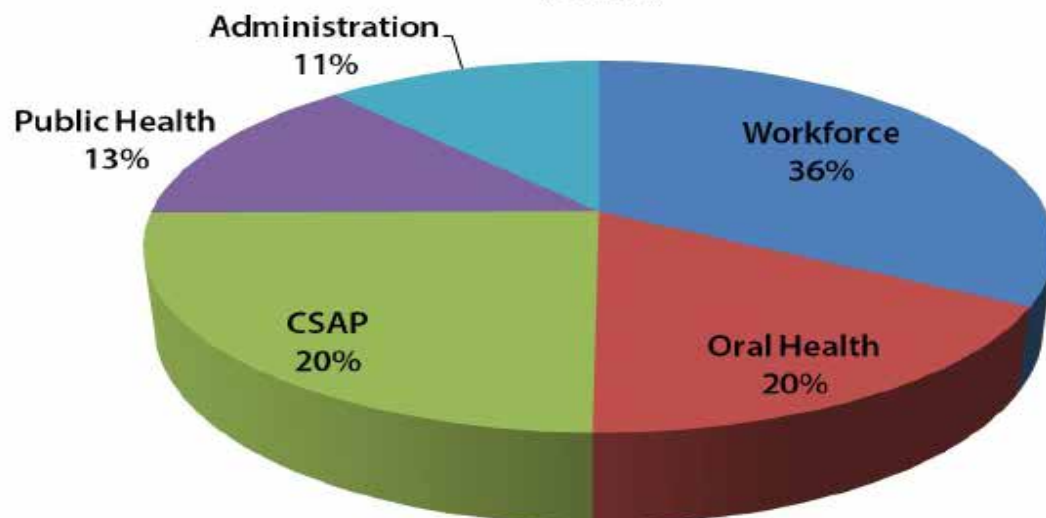
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**FY 2013 Revenue Sources:****\$1.5 million**

(Unaudited)

**FY 2013 Program Expenses****\$1.5 million**

(Unaudited)



2012-2013 BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NORTH COUNTRY HEALTH CONSORTIUM

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Adele Woods, Cöos County Family Health Services

Scott Howe, Weeks Medical Center

Warren West, Littleton Regional Healthcare

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Molar Express Program Manager

Sean O'Brien
Youth Prevention Programs Coordinator

Kayla Ramsay
Dental Assistant

Bob Thompson, B.Sc., CPS
Prevention Programs Manager

MEMBERS OF NORTH COUNTRY HEALTH CONSORTIUM

45th Parallel EMS
Adaptive Sports Partners of the North Country
American Cancer Society
Ammonoosuc Community Health Services
Androscoggin Valley Home Care
Androscoggin Valley Hospital
Center for New Beginnings
City of Berlin Public Health and Home Health Nursing
Coös County Family Health Services
Cottage Hospital
Dartmouth Medical School
Family Resource Center at Gorham
Franklin Pierce Physician Assistant Program
Grafton County Human Services
Grafton County Senior Citizens Council
Granite United Way-Northern Region
Indian Stream Health Center
Jane MacKay
Littleton Regional Healthcare
LRGHealthcare
Mid-State Health Center
Morrison Nursing Home
NH AHEC Program
NH Catholic Charities
North Country Home Health & Hospice
Northern Human Services
Personal Touch Home Care
Plymouth State University Center for Rural Partnership
ServiceLink
Speare Memorial Hospital
Tri-County Community Action Program
Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital
Weeks Medical Center
White Mountains Community College

FUNDERS OF NORTH COUNTRY HEALTH CONSORTIUM

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Community Health Access Network

Dartmouth Medical School

The Dartmouth Institute

Endowment for Health

Foundation for the National Institutes of Health

HNHfoundation

National Association of County and City Health Officials

Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

New Hampshire Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services

New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

United States Department of Health and Human Services,
Health Resources and Services Administration, Office of Rural Health Policy

United States Department of Health and Human Services,
Office on Women's Health

United States Department of Health and Human Services,
Substance Abuse/Mental Health Services Administration

In-Kind Donation:

Ammonoosuc Community Health Services-Molar Express Mini-Van



"North Country Health Consortium leads innovative collaboration to improve the health status of the region."

The North Country Health Consortium (NCHC) is a rural health network, created in 1997, as a vehicle for addressing common issues through collaboration among health and human service providers serving Northern New Hampshire.

NCHC is engaged in activities for:

- *Solving common problems and facilitating regional solutions;*
 - *Creating and facilitating services and programs to improve population health status;*
- *Health professional training, continuing education and management services to encourage sustainability of the health care infrastructure;*
- *Increasing capacity for local public health essential services; and*
 - *Increasing access to health care for underserved and uninsured residents of Northern New Hampshire.*



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