

Strategic Plan

FY2024 - FY2026



Northern Counties

HEALTH CARE

Compassionate Care in Our Home or Yours

About NCHC

Northern Counties Health Care, Inc

was established in 1976 by community residents concerned about their poor access to health care. NCHC provides health care services in the medically-underserved, three-county region of northeastern Vermont known as the Northeast Kingdom. It does so through a rural network of seven community health centers - including five NCQA recognized patient-centered medical homes & two walk-in primary care locations, three dental centers, and a Medicare-certified home care and hospice division. Partnerships with three critical access hospitals and several human services organizations are also an important part of our work.



Our Mission

To provide high quality, accessible, patient-centered health care.

Our Vision

NCHC is a key partner in building healthy families and thriving communities.

Our Values

We pursue quality in all that we do and are committed to:

- **Mutual Respect and Trust** – working together and providing care that respects every individual’s dignity, privacy, and culture.
- **Excellence** – investing in our most valuable asset, our employees, is crucial to delivering high quality care.
- **Teamwork and Collaboration** – working within NCHC and with community partners to provide a continuum of health care and social support.
- **Stewardship and Spirit of Service** – serving our communities with integrity and intention in all our interactions.
- **Resilience** – approaching every challenge as an opportunity to pursue creative solutions, achieve financial sustainability, and deepen our resolve.

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Rural health care and rural communities are facing unprecedented challenges. Recovery from COVID-19 has shined a light on workforce shortages, health inequities, and changes in the desires and needs of our patients and communities. Also, the economics of rural care is increasingly unsustainable. Yet, there is also unprecedented opportunity. American Rescue Plan Act funding allowed for stability and needed investments. Our community is engaged. Our partners are ready to collaborate, knowing that we are stronger together. Everyone seems ready and willing to redefine health care beyond traditional healthcare services. We are ready to be big hearted in how we care for patients and our communities while being clear eyed about the challenges ahead.

The Strategic Plan is based on the voices of our community, data about our community's health and well-being, and the calm deliberations of our Board of Directors and management team. This includes a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) that featured the input of 1,328 community members, including leaders from more than 30 organizations. The focus areas, strategic goals, and strategies are designed to allow management the flexibility to create initiatives that move us toward a more integrated system of care.

Focus Areas represent where the organization should concentrate its efforts. They position us to remain, for the next three years and for long after, as an organization that CARES.

5 Focus Areas

Mental Health
Primary Care
Recruiting and Retention
Financial Health
Inclusion

We believe that Northern Counties Health Care (NCHC) will be the leader in preventative care and wellness in the Northeast Kingdom, providing community members with opportunities for good health and great care when and where they need it. That statement summarizes our goal for this Strategic Plan, and it also connects with our proud tradition of leadership and service to our patients and communities.

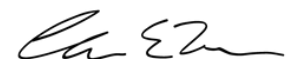
We invite you to go on this journey with us.



Justin Barton-Caplin
NCHC Board President



Michael Costa
Chief Executive Officer



Christopher Towne
Chief Strategy Officer

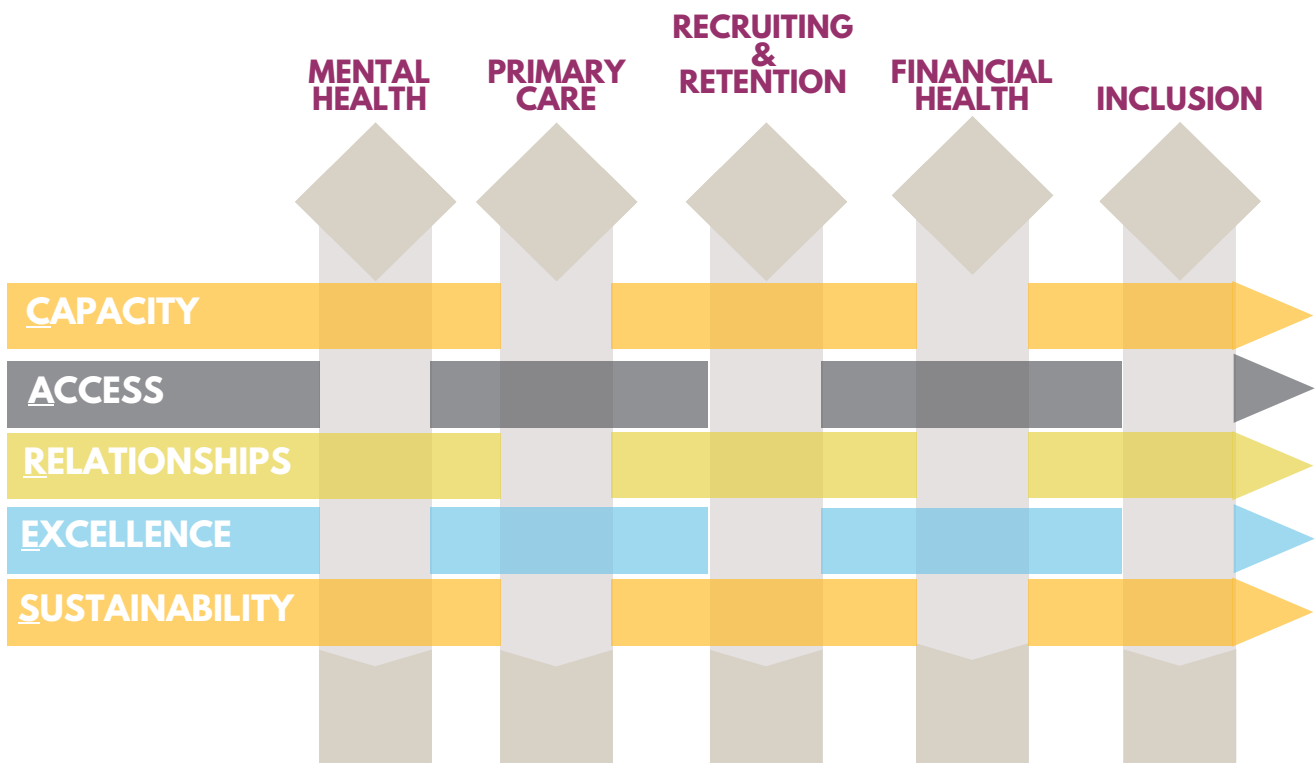
Strategic Goals

Northern Counties Health Care's Strategic Plan sets forth five strategic goals—considered the CARES framework—that will guide our work to help build healthy families and thriving communities. With input and direction from NCHC's Board of Directors, the framework includes an ambitious set of goals:

5 Strategic Goals

- Expand* **Capacity**
- Increase* **Access**
- Leverage* **Relationships**
- Promote* **Excellence**
- Advance* **Sustainability**

Central to these goals are our focus areas. The relationship between the CARES framework and the focus areas shape our strategies. NCHC's operational goals will be shaped by all of these and will guide our work over the coming years.



Strategies for Success

Expand **CAPACITY**

Build the capacity to understand the health and wellness needs and goals of our patients and communities.

- ▶ Expand our understanding of community health challenges and goals.
- ▶ Assess the health risks and opportunities of each patient and patient panel.

Increase **ACCESS**

Expand our services and access to them, focusing on how to reduce barriers to health and wellness.

- ▶ Grow beyond our traditional clinics and our current communities.
- ▶ Elevate the importance of mental health and wellness services.

Leverage **RELATIONSHIPS**

Be an employer of choice for team members and a partner of choice for other organizations, both traditional and non-traditional partners.

- ▶ Develop our leadership culture.
- ▶ Design a shared future that avoids duplication of services.

Promote **EXCELLENCE**

Strive for top tier performance in quality measures and teach our skills to others.

- ▶ Improve performance compared to peer organizations (FQHC's, HH).
- ▶ Measure patient and employee experience.

Advance **SUSTAINABILITY**

Live good stewardship of our environment, culture, and financial resources

- ▶ Improve financial efficiency of our patient care.
- ▶ Reduce our environmental footprint.



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