FDRHPO
Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

NorthCountry Initiative

FDRHPO and NCI would like to extend our deep gratitude and appreciation to all who helped make 2024 an incredibly successful year. The following achievements do not just belong to FDRHPO and NCI; they belong to all of us … our partners, providers, and patients. And most importantly, they benefit the people who call the North Country region home. There are numerous reasons to celebrate the impact that we — together — are making in our community, building a patient-focused system for health in our region.

Thank you for your efforts to make these achievements and our shared success possible.

- 50 pulse oximeters donated to Jefferson County Public Health to assist with Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) initiative.

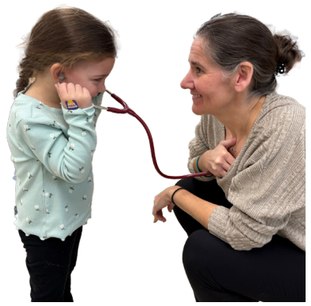
- Launched a new EMS-to-Hospital communication tool, Pulsara, a HIPAA-compliant, secure, easy-to-use application that replaces multiple phone calls, radio reports, faxes, and pagers with one unified patient channel.

- Held the first EMS Education Day in Saranac Lake at the North Country Community College for regional EMS providers.

- Collaborated with Fort Drum MSTC to hold two Fort Drum EMS Education Day events. The spring event focused on cold weather emergencies and the fall event focused on pediatric scenarios and a simulated mass casualty incident.

- Partnered with North Country REMSCO to host the 23nd annual Spring Fling EMS Conference where where the North Country EMS Awards were presented to **ALS Provider of the Year** – Nathan Peters, *Thousand Islands Emergency Rescue Services;* **BLS Provider of the Year** – Mark Leroux, *Cranberry Lake Volunteer Fire Department;* **Youth Provider of the Year** – Michael Gately, *Indian River EMS Club and Indian River Ambulance Service;* **Agency of the Year** – *Cranberry Lake Volunteer Fire Department and Star Lake Volunteer Fire Department;* **Educator of the Year** – Matthew Yelton, *MERCY Flight Central and Constableville Ambulance;* **Physician of the Year** – Dr. Sarah Delaney-Rowland, *REMAC Medical Director;* **Leadership Award** – Christopher Singleton, *Jefferson County EMS and South Jefferson Rescue Squad;* **Richard Beebe Award** – *Jefferson County EMS.*

- Launched the first SCRUBS CLUB at Knickerbocker Elementary School. Three more classes have been added in the Watertown School District for the 2024-25 year.
- The Army Medic to LPN curriculum was created and submitted for approval.
- Winter and Summer MASH camps had the highest number of applicants to date with over 200 students completing the program.
- Engaged over 1200 students through school presentations, events and MASH Camps.



- Lanched a new Facebook Alumni Group page to promote the pipeline programs and remain engaged with students who have previously participated. The platform is being used to highlight upcoming Health Workforce opportunities, provide relevant information, and re-engage past participants.

- Co-hosted with Adirondack Health Institute the North Country Telehealth Partnership Leadership Summit, themed ***"Leveraging Partnerships to Enhance the Regional Health and Social Care Landscape"***

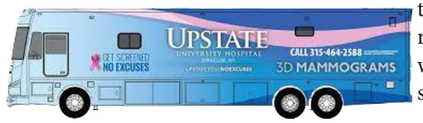
- Diagnostic imaging in the region was streamlined with a new image-sharing collaborative PowerShare. FDRHPO & NCI worked with its Clinically Integrated Network of healthcare providers, to create an agreement that allows participating North Country healthcare entities to directly query and retrieve imaging. To date, over 10,000 images have been shared between the collaborative.

- Regional telemedicine patient encounters from 2014-2024 is reported at over 643,000.
- Implemented new data infrastructure to provide partners with enhanced, actionable reports for their Managed Medicaid and Medicare patients inclusive of historical claims data and data on patient admissions, discharges, and transfers. In addition, these new capabilities will allow the team to analyze outcome data on the various initiatives being deployed at our partner sites.

- In observation of National Rural Health Day, hosted a luncheon to recognize the North Country's 2024 Community Health Heroes for their efforts to improve community health and wellness. Recipients were Monica Behan Purcell (Jefferson County), Krisha Greene (Lewis County), and Martha Pickard Palmer (St. Lawrence County).

- Conducted the 9th annual adult community health survey in Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties to understand current health-related behaviors and perceptions and identify community healthcare needs. FDRHPO identified:
  - **o** While most North Country adult residents (82%) report having one person or medical office they think of as their primary care provider, only half (52%) reported "always" feeling that they and their values are respected at the doctors.
  - **o** The percentage of North Country residents reporting having visited a dentist or dental clinic within the past year for a routine cleaning is continuing to recover from low of 55% in 2020, to 63% in 2024.
  - **o** A large majority (78%) of North Country residents ages 45-75 reported having had a colonoscopy or colorectal cancer screening in the past 10 years. This is at an all-time high since first measured in 2022.

- Excellus Blue Cross Blue Shield awarded FDRHPO with Health and Wellness Award to support the Increased Breast Cancer Screening Through Mobile Mammography Program. The program was created to provide mobile mammography services to the underserved population in Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties. 42 women received mammograms & healthy food distributions through the events, including 2 who identified as homeless, and 16 individuals who had not received a breast cancer screening in more than 3 years.



- Awarded a HRSA Northern Border Regional Commission sub-award to support the provision of economic diversity, health literacy and cultural competency trainings, as well as to support standardized social determinants of health screenings, documentation, and related referrals.

MATTERS®
Medication for Addiction Treatment & Electronic Referrals

- FDRHPO has worked in partnership with the MATTERS team to grow the North Country network. This program aims to efficiently link individuals to appropriate treatment for opioid use disorder. 33 new network partners were added to include peer organizations, pharmacies, hospital systems, treatment sites, EMS agencies, behavioral health clinics, and other referring partners. This initiative also promotes harm reduction strategies to include Leave Behind Kits inclusive of information on a low-barrier, free way to receive initial treatment through telemedicine.

- Leading the Behavioral Health Collaborative on a Hospital and Discharge Planning Initiative to improve hospital discharge planning for high-risk individuals with mental health and/or addiction needs.

- Mental Health Awareness Training continued to increase with several instructors trained in QPR (Question. Persuade. Refer.), Adult Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid, as well as Teen Mental Health First Aid.

Mental Health FIRST AID
from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

- OMH has been working with the regional Community Services in addition to FDRPHO's Behavioral Health Committee (BHC) on their Hospital & Community Connections initiative. A subcommittee was developed and implemented a workplan including 9 focus areas to improve transfers from community BH and non-939 hospitals to 939 hospitals to include when 939 hospitals on diversion and discharge planning.

- Over the last year, 1,200 patients in the region received a Medicaid Transitional Care Management (mTCM) service. These patients were shown to have a 40% reduction in their 90-day post-discharge healthcare costs (vs. a 16% increase for patients who did not participate in mTCM); only 4% with mTCM experienced a hospital readmission within 90 days (vs. 18% for those without mTCM); and, those with mTCM had better documentation of their social needs.

- Funded by NCI's 2023-24 round of "Promising Practices" awards, an initiative developed to support best healthcare practices and test innovative pilots to fill physical, social, and behavioral healthcare needs, NCI strategically invested in three priority areas: preventing and/or managing chronic disease, increasing preventive/primary care, and behavioral health and/or substance use prevention and management. The seven healthcare-related organizations and their projects included: **ARC Jefferson-St. Lawrence** - *Reducing Fall Risk of Intellectually/Developmentally Disabled Residents;* **Bolton's Pharmacy** - *Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) & Support Program;* **THRIVE Wellness and Recovery Inc.** - *Targeted Case Management for High-Risk Individuals;* **Pediatric Associates of Watertown** - *Improving Quality of Care in the Pediatric Population;* **Pediatric Wellness of NNY** - *New Home for Pediatric Wellness of NNY;* **South Jefferson Rescue Squad** - *Fall Prevention Program;* **Watertown Urban Mission** - *Addressing Social Determinants of Health through the CARE Center.*

- Approximately 1,300 thermometers were distributed to six local pediatric health centers as an on-going effort to promote remote patient monitoring as part of the "Call Us First" campaign which aims at limiting avoidable emergency department visits by encouraging patients to contact their primary care team first for minor acute concerns.

- An Exact Sciences grant promoted colorectal cancer screenings among marginalized elderly, low-income, and disabled populations throughout New York's rural Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties by supporting the region's primary care practices in identifying and reaching eligible patients and promoting awareness of colorectal cancer screening through a multimedia campaign.

- The North Country Independent Practice Association (IPA) earned shared savings in one of the Medicaid value-based payment arrangements.

- The Accountable Care Organization (ACO) earned shared savings.

- Through its "Casual for a Cause" initiative, FDRHPO staff collected for the Salvation Army Warming Center and the Compassionate Cancer Care Foundation.

- Participated in Fort Drum Day in Albany to showcase Fort Drum's importance in and impact on the North Country Region.

- FDRHPO Communication Committee developed campaigns, shared across social media with multiple groups and organizations, focused on Mental Health Awareness, Colorectal Cancer Screenings, Vaccinations.

- Developed and launched both the FDRHPO and NCI websites to a new platform that includes interactive downloadable content for other agencies to use in their health campaigns.

- Met with mulitple State and Fort Drum Leaders to include the Federal Reserve Bank of NY President, U.S. Army Medical Readiness Command and Defense Health Network East, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Military Personnel and Quality of Life, and the NYS Department of Health Commissioner.

Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization would like to thank all of our dedicated partners and providers for helping to make these successes possible through 2024. Without you, we wouldn't be able to have the reach and impact we work toward providing to the patients and residents of Northern New York. ~FDRHPO Staff