



Greater Sullivan County
Public Health Network

2021-22

ANNUAL

REPORT

About the Region

The Greater Sullivan County Public Health Network is one of 13 New Hampshire public health regions. This region includes the following 15 rural towns and one city with a combined population of approximately 47,000 people: Acworth, Charlestown, Claremont, Cornish, Croydon, Goshen, Langdon, Lempster, Newport, Springfield, Sunapee, and Unity in Sullivan County and Newbury, New London, Sutton, and Wilmot in Merrimack County. There are two community hospitals located in the region: Valley Regional Hospital on the western edge of the region in Claremont and New London Hospital in the eastern part of the region. The priority updates in this report include initiatives led by the Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC) and community partners.



JULY 2022

Prepared by
Taralyn Bielaski, MPH

2021-22 Public Health Priority Updates

Many other projects, programs, and initiatives were launched that are not listed in this report. Contact us to learn more!

Public Health Advisory Council

Chair: Lindsey Boisvert, New London Hospital, PHAC Chair

The Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC) consists of community leaders representing multiple sectors and towns/cities throughout the Public Health Region. Lindsey Boisvert, the PHAC chair, continues to review our regional priorities based on the most recent Community Health Needs Assessments and newly available data for our region. We always welcome new partners to the table. We meet on the first Wednesday of each even month from 9:00-11:00 AM virtually to respect the COVID-19 pandemic.



GSC Public Health Advisory Council Vision:

To foster a community that supports healthy lives, health equity, and wellbeing for people of all ages.

Community Partners Meeting

Contact: gscphn@hitchcock.org

The Community Partners Meeting (CPM) is hosted in partnership with the Greater Sullivan County Public Health Network, Southwestern Community Services, and ServiceLink. The CPM aims to connect community-based organizations in a roundtable discussion and resource sharing. The Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC) utilizes the CPM to disseminate information throughout the community on topics that include: COVID-19 vaccination clinics, housing and homelessness, transportation, behavioral health, and healthy eating. The CPM is best equipped to take information shared at the meeting and provide the populations that the organization serves with the most up-to-date information about emerging trends and topics regarding all types of health and wellness. The group meets on a monthly basis on the 1st Wednesday of each month from 12:00-1:30 PM virtually via Zoom.

Substance Misuse Prevention, Intervention, Harm Reduction, Treatment, & Recovery

Contacts: Deryn Smith & Lauren Chambers - gscphn@hitchcock.org

In fiscal year 2022, Greater Sullivan County 360 (GSC360), the substance misuse workgroup for the PHAC, held numerous information sessions/trainings for the community to learn about relevant topics around substance misuse prevention and mental health. These trainings included: Vaping Unveiled with Breathe New Hampshire, to teach participants about vaping, current trends, and tips to decrease vaping use; Keeping Your Teens Safe During Prom and Graduation Season, featuring data about youth substance misuse, drunk and distracted driving and information on how to talk to teens about how they can make safer choices; How Building Strong Relationships with Youth Can Prevent Youth Substance Misuse, with The Partnership for a Drug Free NH; Youth Mental Health First Aid; and National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Connect Suicide Prevention.

GSC360 supported several important initiatives in the region. With grant writer support from GSCPHN, the Youth CAN (Claremont & Newport) coalition was successfully awarded the Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant. The Youth CAN Coalition focuses on substance misuse prevention in youth and supports local initiatives such as the Newport 4H afterschool program with funding and resources to promote alternate activities for youth, while teaching students useful life skills like cooking, sewing, mental health tips, and more. The Coalition has assisted with transportation needs, supported alternative activities within Claremont and Newport, and attended numerous community events to share the mission of the Coalition, provide resources, and disseminate parent handbooks. The Coalition has also partnered with school staff to evaluate potential updates to the student substance use related suspension policy, as well as provide school staff and other community partners with the Mental Health First Aid and NAMI Connect Suicide Prevention trainings. GSC360 also supported bringing the Windsor County Mentors program to the region by connecting the program to funding sources making it possible to expand their reach, and connections to community organizations for resources and mentor/mentee referrals. This program has a school-based mentorship track where mentors come into the school to meet with their mentee, and also a community-based track where mentors and mentees meet out in the community to participate in different activities together. RPHN staff also secured funding from Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center for the Oasis Teen Center to implement one year of Thrive Youth Recovery Resources in partnership with Turning Point Recovery Center of Springfield, VT. GSC360 also regularly collaborates with and supports the TLC Family Resource Center's SHINE program, Finding Our Stride, and more.

Through the work of GSC360, information from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), the Community Survey, and other relevant data has been shared throughout the community. The Continuum of Care Facilitator (CoC) worked with community partners to map where public overdoses occurred throughout the region, conducted outreach with those establishments, and developed resources to provide businesses with appropriate tools to utilize if an overdose were to occur, including offering Naloxone to have on-site. GSC360 disseminated roughly 1,000 Detera medication disposal bags throughout the community, held Narcan trainings and distributed kits at community events. The Substance Misuse Prevention Coordinator (SMPC) conducted stakeholder interviews with community partners to better understand the substance misuse and mental health trends in the community from the perspective of our key stakeholders. This informs how RPHN staff and coalition members can better support the community around prevention efforts going forward. GSC360 also provided support, information, PSA's, and materials for the bi-annual Prescription Drug Takeback Days, where over 600 lbs of sharps and over 650 lbs of unused or expired medication was collected.

Vaping Unveiled with Breathe New Hampshire

2 sessions **50** participants

Keeping Your Teens Safe During Prom and Graduation Season

50 participants

How Building Strong Relationships with Youth Can Prevent Youth Substance Misuse, and The Partnership for a Drug Free NH

14 participants

Health & Wellness

Contact: To Be Named* - gscphn@hitchcock.org

The Wellness Connection serves as the PHAC's Health & Wellness partner workgroup. New London Hospital is the backbone organization. The Wellness Connection acts as a convener for partner organizations with a focus on healthy eating, active living and general well-being of the community. The group did not meet in person in 2021-2022 due to COVID-19. Many of the partners were involved in the Greater Sullivan Strong work on food access, isolation concerns, etc. The group communicated via email and virtual meetings with an exchange of requests, information and general support. A few highlights for the period was the continuation of a Mobile Farm Stand for food insecure patients in collaboration with Farmsteads and the FEED Kearsarge Garden in a Tray program. In addition, the Kearsarge Community Network (KCN) continued focused on community resiliency, including reduced isolation and connectedness.

*Early 2022 saw Catherine Bardier depart New London Hospital. The Health & Wellness partner workgroup will be restructured in FY2023

Emergency Preparedness

Contact: Stephen Belmont - gscphn@hitchcock.org

The public health emergency preparedness (PHEP) workgroup has continued to provide mitigation measures to protect Greater Sullivan County from the COVID-19 Pandemic as it has gripped the country, state and region. From July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, GSCPHN in partnership with Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, has provided 15 community COVID-19 vaccination clinics. In that time, we provided 1,064 doses (mostly boosters) of the COVID-19 vaccine to community members. Additionally, we have helped support that Upper Valley Public Health Region with their Booster Blitz efforts and their established fixed vaccine site. The RPHN relied heavily on our Medical Reserve Corp (MRC), a group of dedicated volunteers who have helped us in all facets of our mitigation efforts. The RPHN has distributed over 300 rapid COVID tests and PPE supplies to community partners and members including day care centers, local nurses, and fire departments. In addition to COVID, we are closely monitoring the Monkeypox/Orthopox outbreak and continue to hold quarterly meetings with community partners so that we can share the most up to date information. We are grateful for all of our community partners and the common goal we share of keeping our communities safe.

Community COVID-19 Clinics

15

COVID-19 Vaccinations Administered

1,064

Rapid COVID tests & PPE Distributed

>300

COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact our region. The Greater Sullivan Strong (GSS) Coalition and GSS Community COVID-19 Relief Fund, established by Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, was available until the spring of 2022 to help with the financial and resource struggles of our partners and their clients faced.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the GSS Community COVID-19 Relief Fund has distributed over \$202,000 to 30 individual organizations, including Southwestern Community Services HUB Funding. HUB funding provided direct relief to community members in Greater Sullivan County. More details on funding distribution can be found on the following two pages.

GSS and the GSS Community COVID-19 Relief Fund have been put on the shelf, ready to activate for the next emergency in our region. Please visit the website: www.GreaterSullivanStrong.org for the full impact reports.

Thank you, Greater Sullivan Strong.



Greater Sullivan
STRONG

By The Numbers

	\$202,000 distributed to local non-profit partners	Over \$202,000 was granted to non-profits in Greater Sullivan County to support families and individuals experiencing difficulties during the pandemic through the Relief Fund
	\$31,710 distributed to support our senior community	More than \$31,000 was granted to non-profits in Greater Sullivan County supporting our senior population.
	\$76,000 distributed for nutrition related services	More than \$76,000 was granted to non-profits in Greater Sullivan County supporting nutrition programs for our community.
	\$39,000 distributed to support recovery/mental health services	More than \$39,000 was granted to non-profits in Greater Sullivan County supporting mental health and recovery services



Southwestern Community Services HUB Funding for COVID-19 Hardships July 1, 2020 - February 1, 2022



Housing

- More than \$14,000 was distributed to provide housing stabilization in Greater Sullivan County
- Support included rental assistance, emergency housing, groceries & utilities



Electric & Fuel Assistance

- More than \$14,100 was distributed to provide electric & fuel assistance for residents of Greater Sullivan County



Childcare

- More than \$1,700 was distributed to support childcare in Greater Sullivan County
- Families partnered with TLC Family Resource Center for childcare



Transportation

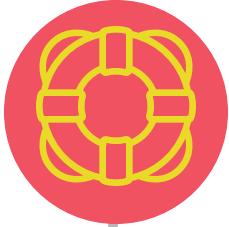
- More than \$7,500 was distributed to support transportation in Greater Sullivan County
- This included bus passes and last mile taxi services

Greater Sullivan County Public Health Region



Substance Misuse Prevention and Reduction

Contact: Deryn Smith & Lauren Chambers - gscphn@hitchcock.org



Emergency Preparedness

Contact: Steve Belmont - gscphn@hitchcock.org



Strengthening Families

Contact: Stephanie Slayton - stephanie@tlcfamilyrc.org



Transportation

Contact: Beth Daniels - bdaniels@scshelps.org



Health and Wellness

Contact: Michele Kroll - michele.kroll@unh.edu



Housing

Contact: Beth Daniels - bdaniels@scshelps.org



Acknowledgements



We would like to thank the members of the GSC Public Health Advisory Council and all of our community partners that dedicate their time and effort to improving public health in our region.

The Public Health Advisory Council member agencies include, but are not limited to: Valley Regional Hospital, New London Hospital, the City of Claremont, Community Dental Care of Claremont, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Claremont Lead Action Task Force, Lake Sunapee Region VNA and Hospice, SAU 43, SAU 6, Summercrest Senior Living Community, Southwestern Community Services, Sullivan County, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission, West Central Behavioral Health, TLC Family Resource Center, the Center for Recovery Resources, Newport Fire Department, River Valley Community College, Groups Recover Together, Better Life Partners, HIV/HCV Resource Center, Keady Family Practice, Region I Integrated Delivery Network, Service Link, Turning Points Network, New Futures, Newport Police Department, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center, Upper Valley Public Health Council, Larry Flint-Senior Advocate and others.

"The Greater Sullivan County Public Health Advisory Council members and leadership team continue to rally around the critical health needs impacting the communities we serve. COVID-19 has only amplified these health needs and the associated social drivers of health for our most vulnerable populations. There continues to be an impressive commitment and collaboration that happens within the Council. I am honored to be a member of such a dedicated group of professionals."

Catherine Bardier, M.S.

Former Program Director, Community Health and Wellness, New London Hospital
Former Chair, Greater Sullivan County Public Health Advisory Council



Greater Sullivan County
Public Health Network

in partnership with



Dartmouth
Health



Learn more about the Public Health Advisory Council
and our partners by visiting
www.GSCPHN.org

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