



Penobscot Community Health Care



2024 Annual Report
pchc.com



Table of Contents

4 | Life at PCHC

8 | Reflections from our CEO & Board Chair

10 | Meeting our Mission

22 | PCHC: The Next Generation

26 | Quality, Safety, and Patient Experience

30 | Stewarding Financial Resources

36 | Locations and Services

38 | Exec Team | Clinical and Operations Leadership | Board of Directors

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”

—Margaret Mead

Life at PCHC

Our people are the heart of PCHC. Every day, we show up for our mission—and for each other. It's not always easy, but in the highs and the hard moments, we stay connected, grounded in purpose, and full of heart. Here's a glimpse into life at PCHC



Employee of the Year – Celebrating the People Who Make PCHC Shine

At PCHC, we believe that a strong organizational culture—rooted in kindness, respect, curiosity, and connection—is the foundation of everything we do. Our greatest strength has always been our people: mission-driven, compassionate, collaborative, and deeply committed to the communities we serve.

Each year, through a thoughtful, peer-led nomination process, we recognize three exceptional team members as Employees of the Year. These individuals embody the heart of our mission— from expanding access to care and uplifting colleagues, to building trust with patients and shaping the future of our work.

This year’s honorees reflect the very best of PCHC. Their dedication, creativity, and leadership are a powerful reminder of the impact one person can have— and the extraordinary things we can accomplish together.



**LISA BERGMARK, PA-C
PROVIDER OF THE YEAR**

As Clinical Lead for our School-Based Health Centers, Lisa Bergmark, PA-C, has been a cornerstone of this essential program. Her commitment to patient-centered care, collaboration, and compassion reflects the best of PCHC’s mission. Lisa’s leadership, both clinical and administrative, has strengthened relationships with students, families, and schools alike. Her belief that healthy students learn better guides her work every day, helping young people thrive in both health and academics.



**KELLY KNOWLES, RN
CLINICAL EMPLOYEE OF
THE YEAR**

As Lead Primary Care RN at Helen Hunt Health Center, Kelly Knowles, RN, exemplifies dedication to patient care and team collaboration. She supports providers and medical assistants with kindness and professionalism, while also training RNs across our sites to extend quality care throughout PCHC. A tireless advocate for patients, Kelly brings creativity, compassion, and excellence to everything she does— embodying our mission and values in every interaction.



**JESSICA GILBERT
NON-CLINICAL EMPLOYEE
OF THE YEAR**

Jessica Gilbert serves as our Mental Health Access Coordinator at our Mental Health Access Center. Since the launch of the Mental Health Access Center, Jessica has brought empathy, determination, and problem-solving expertise to her work. A trusted resource across the organization, she continues to grow as a leader and remains deeply rooted in our mission to deliver care with dignity and respect.

By The Numbers

PATIENT VISITS
238,000

*

TELEHEALTH VISITS
34,767

*

PATIENTS SAVED
\$7.3 MILLION
VIA PRESCRIPTION
DRUG & SLIDING FEE
PROGRAMS

*

52,520
PATIENTS

*

BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH VISITS
50,982

*

DENTAL VISITS
19,460

*

MEDICAL VISITS
167,851

Belonging in Action

At PCHC, belonging is more than a value—it’s a practice. In 2024, our Diversity, Equity, Belonging, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEBI) efforts continued to grow, enriching our culture and our care. Through education, community connection, and policy review, we worked to ensure every patient and employee is seen, respected, and supported.

We reignited the *Humans of PCHC* interview series and amplified voices through monthly cultural awareness campaigns and DEBI-focused PENPoints articles. Our team proudly represented PCHC at Pride celebrations, enhanced website inclusivity, and advanced policy audits to ensure gender-affirming language and affirming practices throughout the organization.

In the care space, we launched a new process to identify provider expertise in caring for specific communities— like LGBTQ+ patients, neurodivergent individuals, and refugees—strengthening our ability to match patients with the care they deserve. We also celebrated Trans Awareness Week, expanded inclusive leadership training, and introduced LGBTQ+ children’s books into our School-Based Health Centers.

By the Numbers (2024)

DEBI TRAINING ADDED TO
ONBOARDING AND ANNUAL
COMPLIANCE

*

**2 PRIDE EVENTS ATTENDED
(BANGOR & BELFAST)**

*

DEBI CONTENT SHARED MONTHLY
IN PENPOINTS AND INTERNAL
CALENDARS

*

**LGBTQ+ BOOKS INTRODUCED
AT 8+ SBHC LOCATIONS**

Looking Back, Moving Forward



2024 tested us once again — and once again, we emerged stronger. Our mission proved resilient, and our shared vision of a primary care system that supports health and strengthens communities kept us grounded.

This past year, we rebuilt our workforce, launched a new same-day care model in walk-in services, worked hard to reduce administrative burdens on our dedicated care teams, opened a welcoming new practice space in Belfast, and invested further in our staff.

Both as an organization and as individuals, we continued our post-pandemic recovery — always here for our patients, our communities, and for each other.

When Penobscot County faced its first HIV outbreak in decades, we quickly partnered with healthcare and social service organizations across the region to respond. We are deeply grateful to the many partners who brought their expertise and compassion to this urgent work.

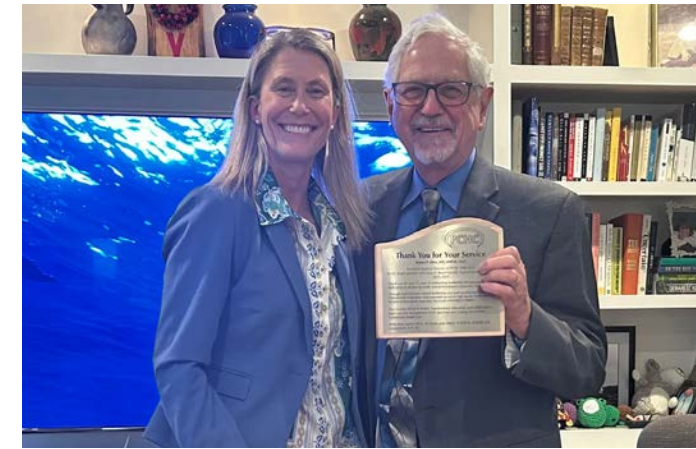
Financial challenges also tested us. In response, we doubled down on supporting staff and providers, listening closely to their needs and working to reduce burnout. Though the work is ongoing, we've made important progress in creating a more sustainable environment for care.

We also raised our collective voice at the local, state, and federal levels, advocating for greater investment in primary care, universal access to high-quality care, and the recognition of healthcare as a human right. Our commitment to speaking out for vulnerable and marginalized communities remains unwavering.

This Annual Report shares just a glimpse of the past year's journey. Thank you for walking alongside us — your support and trust make this work possible.

Warmly,
Lori Dwyer, Esq
President & CEO

Shelly Okere, Esq
Board Chair



Honoring Dr. Robert P. Allen

Dr. Robert P. Allen served as PCHC's Executive Medical Director from 2006–2014, guiding us through a time of tremendous growth and transformation. He championed quality programs, led PCHC's early adoption of the patient-centered medical home model, expanded patient-centered care, and laid the groundwork for training the next generation of providers through our Teaching Health Center and Continuing Medical Education Program.

In recognition of his leadership, PCHC created the Dr. Robert P. Allen Quality Award, celebrating innovation, excellence in care, and commitment to improvement. Demonstrating his humility and generosity, Dr. Allen later asked that the award be renamed to honor the late Theresa Knowles, FNP, former Chief Quality Officer for PCHC, advocate for healthcare and health equity, and friend.

Even after his tenure as Executive Medical Director, Dr. Allen's commitment never wavered. Since 2016, he has served on our Board of Directors, chaired the Quality Management Committee, supported programs close to his heart, and gave his time to those most in need.

Before joining PCHC, Dr. Allen cared for patients for three decades as a cardiologist, while also holding leadership roles across Maine's healthcare community. His list of accomplishments is long, but it is his compassion, humility, and unwavering dedication to patient-centered care that have left the deepest mark on our organization.

We are profoundly grateful for Dr. Allen's nearly 20 years of service to PCHC and our communities. Who we are today has been shaped in no small part by his vision, generosity, and belief in healthcare for all.



2024 Doty-Woodward Community Service Award presented to **RSU 34, Bangor, and Brewer School Districts** for their commitment to expanding healthcare access and promoting health equity through school-based health centers, in partnership with PCHC.



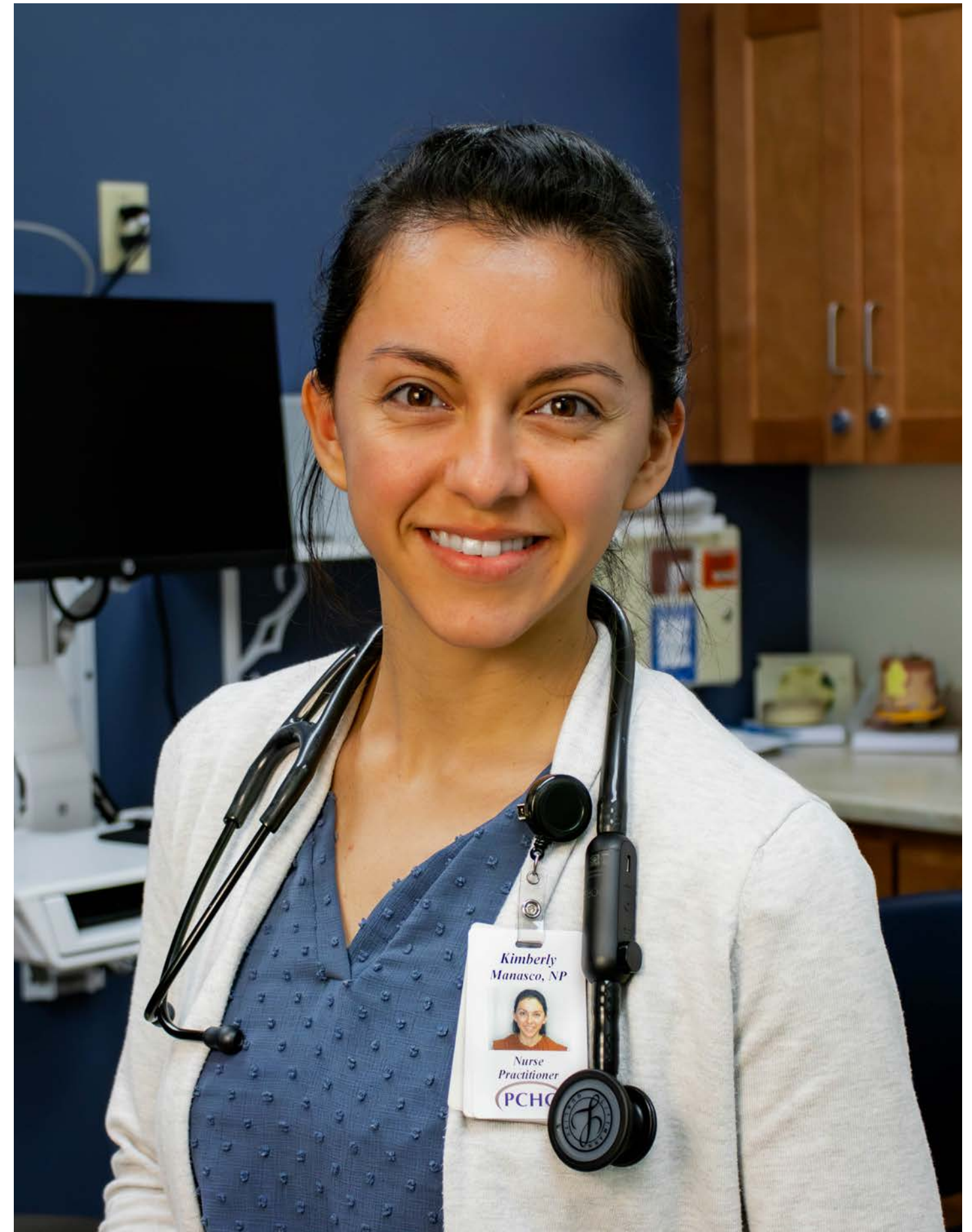
2024 Theresa Bray Knowles Award for Quality presented to **Benjamin Stepp, MD**, honoring his exceptional patient-centered care, outstanding quality outcomes, and dedication to improving the lives of all he serves.

Meeting Our Mission in a Time of Strain and Strength

In 2024, the need for high-quality, accessible care across our communities only grew—and so did the pressures facing those who provide it. Like many healthcare organizations nationwide, PCHC faced another year of workforce shortages, reduced access, and extraordinary demand. Our providers, medical assistants, therapists, and dental teams worked tirelessly, even as staffing gaps limited the number of patients we could reach.

Patient visits declined by about 5% from projections, but our mission did not waver. Instead, we sharpened our focus: investing in our people, strengthening primary care, and redesigning systems to sustain our work long into the future. In a time when the healthcare system continues to ask more of those with the fewest resources, PCHC chose to meet the moment with honesty, innovation, and heart.

This section of our Annual Report reflects that commitment—showcasing the ways we continued to show up for our patients, even when capacity was stretched thin. It also offers a snapshot of where we go from here: **forward, together, grounded in mission and guided by the belief that everyone deserves care.**



Building the Future of Value-Based Care

In 2024, PCHC launched a major transition to a new Accountable Care Organization (ACO), marking a significant step forward in our commitment to improving patient outcomes, care coordination, and health equity. For much of the year, we continued participating in Community Care Partnership of Maine (CCPM)—the ACO we helped to found—while also preparing for and beginning our transition to Aledade. Formal termination with CCPM will occur in early 2025.

This move reflects years of groundwork in value-based care and positions PCHC for long-term sustainability. Through our new partnership with Aledade, we can take full advantage of enhanced technology, real-time data insights, and population health tools.

The transition is much more than a change in networks—it’s a systemwide evolution that touches how we engage patients, support providers, and measure success. From Annual Wellness Visits to Transitional Care Management, the work is centered on strengthening our care delivery model while ensuring smoother, more proactive support for patients at every step.

While this initiative continues to unfold, the early progress is promising—and we’re energized by the opportunities ahead to build a stronger, more responsive care system for the people we serve.

Seaport Moves Into Its Future

In April 2024, PCHC’s Seaport Community Health Center opened its doors at a brand-new, beautifully renovated home in Belfast—more than doubling its previous footprint to 32,500 square feet. After years of planning and a fast-paced move, the expanded clinic now offers a modern, welcoming space for patients and staff alike, with room to grow services and welcome new providers.

This milestone not only marks a physical move, but a bold investment in the future of healthcare in the MidCoast region. With expanded access to primary care, mental health, substance use treatment, pharmacy, and lab services—and a new dental clinic on the horizon—Seaport’s new home stands as a symbol of PCHC’s deep commitment to meeting community needs, now and in the years to come.



Enhanced Access Through Integration and Expansion of the Care Team

In November 2024, PCHC transitioned away from Walk-In Care (WIC), integrating several former WIC providers into new roles embedded within primary care teams. This shift was designed to improve access and continuity of care by better aligning resources with patient needs, ensuring same day access while creating resilience on the primary care team. The change also addressed long-standing challenges, including provider shortages, long wait times, unpaneled patients, and turnover. Lastly, the change was also aimed at improving provider retention by reducing the strain caused by the ongoing variability and disruptions that turnover creates in healthcare operations.

As part of this evolving model, we continue to refine our approach to desktop coverage—ensuring timely, efficient support for care teams and patients alike. We're actively exploring ways to strengthen this support, including the potential to bring Medical Assistants into the fold. While this work continues to grow and adapt, it's already making a measurable impact: strengthening patient-provider relationships, improving quality, and reducing access concerns—thanks to the flexibility, collaboration, and heart of our teams.

Meeting the Moment: Expanding Access to Compassionate SUD Care

At PCHC, we believe that timely, respectful, and person-centered substance use care can be life-changing—and life-saving. In 2024, our Substance Use Disorders Services (SUDS) team continued to break down barriers to care, offering same-day access (in-person or virtual) for anyone seeking support, whether they're new to PCHC or already established with us.

Our clinical model expanded as well. We now provide comprehensive, evidence-based care for alcohol use disorder—including outpatient withdrawal management and tailored behavioral health support—and have grown our use of extended-release buprenorphine, offering more choice and flexibility to meet patient needs. Our team's innovative work will be featured at the 2025 Governor's Opioid Summit and is also contributing to a nationwide clinical trial through NIDA, focused on improving care in rural communities.

As Rachel Solotaroff, Executive Clinical Director of Substance Use Disorder Services, reflects:

“Our team is proving that high-quality, evidence-based SUD care can be both immediate and deeply respectful of patients’ needs. By expanding same-day access, building new treatment pathways, and contributing to national research, we are shaping the future of substance use care here in Maine and beyond.”

Through collaboration, research, and an unwavering commitment to low-barrier access, PCHC is reimagining what's possible in SUD care—and ensuring that help is available when people need it most.

Expanding Access, Advancing Hope: Rural OUD Treatment Trial in Motion

In partnership with UCLA and the Northeast Node led by Dartmouth College, PCHC launched a promising clinical trial in 2024 to improve treatment options for opioid use disorder in rural communities. This pilot study compares the feasibility and effectiveness of extended-release injectable buprenorphine (Brixadi) to traditional daily sublingual treatment (Suboxone). With strong early momentum—our site received IRB approval and began enrolling patients by early 2025—we're on track to meet our full enrollment goal. This work reflects our commitment to expanding access to compassionate, evidence-based care for those impacted by substance use, and to shaping solutions that work for the communities we serve.



“It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”
—Charles Darwin

Transitioning Hope House Shelter Operations: Strengthening Care Through Partnership

In November 2024, PCHC announced plans to transfer Hope House Emergency Shelter operations to Preble Street, a trusted Portland-based social service provider. Financial challenges threatened the shelter’s future, but new state funding supporting low-barrier shelters will allow Preble Street to assume operations in February 2025—ensuring this vital resource remains open for Bangor’s most vulnerable.

Hope House, the only low-barrier adult shelter north of Waterville, serves over 300 people annually, many facing complex mental health and substance use challenges. Preble Street’s expertise in shelter operations, improving food security, and housing first models makes them an ideal partner to PCHC as PCHC continues operating the onsite clinic and transitional housing, focusing on integrated healthcare delivery.

This partnership protects critical emergency housing amid ongoing funding challenges, supports vulnerable Mainers, and lets PCHC focus on expanding healthcare access—advancing our mission of health, dignity, and community wellbeing. Here is a look at our Hope House numbers from 2024!

268
INDIVIDUALS UTILIZED
SHELTER SERVICES

*

298
INDIVIDUALS UTILIZED
HOUSING NAVIGATION
SERVICES

*

113,880
(312 DAILY) MEALS
WERE SERVED

*

62
SHELTER GUESTS (23.1%)
EXITED TO STABLE
PERMANENT OR
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

*

10
TRANSITIONAL
HOUSING TENANTS
EXITED TO STABLE
PERMANENT HOUSING

*

1509
SUD VISITS AT HOPE
HOUSE

Toward Suicide Safer Care: Strengthening Support, Saving Lives

Research shows that nearly 45% of individuals who die by suicide have seen their primary care provider within the month prior to their death. This reality underscores the critical role primary care must play in suicide prevention. At PCHC, we recognize this responsibility and are committed to doing better. In 2024, we strengthened our ability to connect patients with the help they need, when they need it—implementing evidence-based, rapid intervention and response protocols to reduce suicide risk.

In 2024, we revised and strengthened our suicide care policy, creating clearer pathways for intervention, follow-up, and referral. Alongside this work, more than 300 staff were trained in suicide prevention best practices—from new employee onboarding to specialized clinical models such as CAMS. These efforts reflect our deep commitment to safe, healing-centered care for every patient we serve.

By the Numbers (2024)

304
STAFF TRAINED IN SUICIDE PREVENTION

*

130
NEW HIRES RECEIVED SUICIDE
SAFE TRAINING

*

111
ATTENDEES PARTICIPATED IN
NAMI-LED TRAININGS

*

8
THERAPISTS TRAINED IN THE
COLLABORATIVE ASSESSMENT &
MANAGEMENT OF SUICIDALITY (CAMS)

SUICIDE CARE POLICY FULLY REVISED
AND SCHEDULED FOR PUBLICATION
IN EARLY 2025

Together, we are building a fail-safe system for our patients where hope is an essential part of every care plan.





School-Based Health Center Growth: *Expanding Access, Right Where Students Are*

In 2024, PCHC deepened its commitment to care that meets patients where they are—by expanding our School-Based Health Center (SBHC) program. Thanks to a \$700,000 grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and support from our local partners, we launched five new SBHC sites across RSU 34 and the Bangor School Department.

SBHCs are a vital part of PCHC’s mission to remove barriers to care—especially for children and adolescents. These centers deliver timely access to mental health services, routine medical care, and wellness support, all within the school environment. By bringing care directly into schools, we help students thrive academically and personally, while supporting caregivers and school communities.

We’re proud to see our school-based model embraced by more communities and grateful to the many providers, school leaders, and families who make this work possible.



Unlimited Solutions Clubhouse: *Unlimited Potential. Unstoppable Progress*

Unlimited Solutions Clubhouse is proud to reflect on a year marked by connection, recovery, and meaningful impact. In 2024, Clubhouse served 268 members—each contributing to a vibrant, supportive space where people living with mental illness pursue their goals and build community. As the auspice agency, PCHC has supported Clubhouse for 13 years, during which time it has become an integral part of PCHC’s work and mission.

Empowerment Through Work & Education

With the support of Transitional and Supported Employment programs, 96 members found success in competitive employment and 16 returned to school. These milestones reflect the strength of members and the power of partnership.

Moments That Matter

From Spirit Week to advocacy days, and the first-ever softball and golf tournaments, 2024 was filled with moments of joy, visibility, and connection. The signature fundraiser, Melodies for the Mind, raised over \$16,000 and drew record attendance.

Voices That Lead

Clubhouse members engaged in local and national advocacy, shaping conversations about recovery and mental health. Though Hurricane Helene postponed the World Seminar presentation, the team proudly represented in 2025.



A Space for Learning

The Clubhouse welcomed student interns throughout the year—from nursing to occupational therapy—strengthening future healthcare professionals’ understanding of recovery-focused care.

Looking ahead to 2025, the team remains grounded in purpose and inspired by our members. Recovery is not only possible—it’s happening every day at Unlimited Solutions Clubhouse.

Here’s to another year of hope, purpose, and unlimited possibilities!



Welcoming New Mainers with Compassionate Care

In partnership with Catholic Charities of Maine’s Office of Maine Refugee Services, PCHC has proudly supported the health and resettlement of refugees and asylum seekers since late 2022. From initial intake exams and screenings to ongoing primary and specialty care—including dental, OB/GYN, mental health, and school-based services—we ensure every patient receives high-quality, culturally respectful care. With interpretation support in languages such as Spanish, Arabic, and Haitian Creole, we currently serve more than 200 New Mainers, living our mission to care for all—no matter their journey.

Innovating Pharmacy Access for Our Patients

To make accessing prescriptions easier and more convenient, PCHC Pharmacy launched a new texting service in 2024. Patients now receive automated text alerts when their prescriptions are ready, along with friendly reminders at 3 and 5 days—helping more patients stay on track with their medications and reducing delays in pickup.

We’re also preparing to pilot curbside pickup at our Seaport location, offering an added layer of convenience for those with mobility challenges or busy schedules. With the help of secure technology through our PioneerRx system, patients will be able to complete transactions from their vehicle—another step forward in making care more accessible to all.



Nurse Practitioner Residency Program: *Strengthening Rural Health, One Provider at a Time.*

PCHC brought back its Nurse Practitioner Residency Program in 2021. In 2024, PCHC completed the first year of a four-year, \$543,330-per-year HRSA grant to support our Nurse Practitioner Residency Program—an important investment in the future of primary care. Four residents completed the program this year, with two choosing to continue their careers at PCHC.

Mid-year, we launched a refreshed program model, adding stronger clinical leadership, expanded organizational support, and a more structured framework for training and evaluation. Highlights include a new elbow-to-elbow preceptor model, a comprehensive policy manual, enhanced wellness and resilience training, and new tools for progress tracking. A new two-person cohort began in July, and we resumed our accreditation self-study with an eye toward long-term sustainability and growth.

This program reflects our commitment to training and retaining skilled, mission-driven providers who are ready to serve our communities with excellence and compassion.

PCHC: The Next Generation



Pharmacy Residency Program: *Building Expertise to Serve Community Needs*

In 2024, PCHC was proud to host two exceptional pharmacy residents: Jeremy Vuong, PGY-1 Community Pharmacy Resident, and Randy Bosquet, PGY-2 in Pharmacy Administration. Each brought valuable focus to projects that directly support the health needs of our patients.

Randy’s research explored strategies to increase access to HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)—a critical and timely effort amid the HIV outbreak in Penobscot County. Jeremy’s project aimed to improve inhaler technique and patient outcomes through the implementation of In-Check Dial devices across PCHC clinics. Both residents had the opportunity to share their work on the national stage, presenting posters at the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting.

Audiology Residency Program: *Training Tomorrow’s Audiologists—Today*

At the award-winning Warren Center for Speech and Audiology, investing in the next generation is a proud tradition. Since 2015, the team has welcomed audiology residents and externs in the final stages of their education, offering hands-on experience in a collaborative, patient-centered environment. In early 2024, we hosted another talented audiology resident—continuing our commitment to education and excellence. These learning opportunities not only shape future providers, but also strengthen our own team: four former residents have chosen to stay and build their careers with us right here in Maine.



Investing in People: Our Workforce, Our Foundation

At PCHC, we know that delivering exceptional care begins with supporting the people who make it possible. In 2024, we deepened our investment in current and future team members—celebrating talent, expanding support, and creating pathways for growth. From compensation enhancements to leadership development and new recognition programs, PCHC is shaping a workplace where every employee feels valued and empowered to thrive.

We welcomed 187 new hires—including 29 “boomerang” team members returning to PCHC—and celebrated 42 internal promotions across the organization. More than 470 staff members received compensation increases, and we invested approximately \$1.7 million in market-based salary adjustments for primary care providers and psychotherapists. In addition, new recognition plans were introduced to reward high-quality, high-access care.

We doubled down on investments in employee wellbeing with the launch of Spring Health, our new Employee Assistance Program. In just the first year, 467 appointments were completed—an encouraging sign that team members are engaging with the support they need.

In June 2024, we proudly held our inaugural New Provider Connect Event, a collaboration between our recruitment team and the Diversity, Equity, Belonging, and Inclusion (DEBI) committee. Designed to welcome providers within their first two years—as well as incoming providers and their families—this gathering offered community resources, great food, raffle prizes, and meaningful opportunities to connect with peers and senior leaders. With approximately 45 attendees, the event was a resounding success and will return in 2025 and beyond as part of our ongoing commitment to belonging and connection.

By the Numbers 2024

187 NEW HIRES, INCLUDING
29 RETURNING STAFF

*

470+ EMPLOYEES
RECEIVED COMPENSATION
INCREASES

*

467 SPRING HEALTH
APPOINTMENTS
COMPLETED

*

42 EMPLOYEES PROMOTED

*

184 SUCCESSFUL STUDENT
PLACEMENTS ACROSS
DEPARTMENTS

*

3 EMPLOYEES OF THE
YEAR RECOGNIZED:
JESSICA GILBERT, LISA
BERGMARK, PA, AND KELLY
KNOWLES, RN



Quality, Safety, & Patient Experience

Advancing a Culture of Safety and Readiness

At PCHC, safety is foundational to our mission of delivering compassionate, high-quality care. In 2024, our Patient Safety Committee took bold steps to strengthen our culture of reporting and real-time responsiveness. Weekly incident reviews and a newly implemented tracking system allowed us to identify trends quickly and respond with transparency and intention. Targeted quality improvement efforts focused on key areas such as vaccination safety, colorectal cancer screening, and lab specimen handling—ensuring we continue to learn, adapt, and improve.

Preparedness was another major focus this year. Our Active Shooter/Workplace Violence Prevention Workgroup led numerous exercises with departments across the organization, helping staff build situational awareness and confidence. This important work extended beyond PCHC, culminating in a presentation at the Maine Primary Care Association fall conference—demonstrating our commitment to supporting safety statewide.

Through thoughtful collaboration and continuous learning, we are building a stronger, safer care environment for everyone we serve.



Patient Safety: By the Numbers (2024)

52+
WEEKLY INCIDENT
REVIEW SESSIONS
HELD

4
QUARTERLY RISK
ASSESSMENTS
COMPLETED FOR
FTCA COVERAGE



Elevating Voices: Council on Patient and Family Experience

PCHC’s ongoing work to elevate patient and family perspectives took an important step forward in December 2024 with the launch of our Council on Patient and Family Experience. While this effort formalized work already underway, it marked a renewed and intentional focus on listening to those we serve. Each bi-monthly session features guest speakers who present on key topics and engage in dialogue with Council members, followed by a powerful closing discussion: “What do you wish your care team understood?” These insights help inform improvements across the organization and lay the groundwork for deeper collaboration, better communication, and more compassionate care.



Advancing Technology to Support Exceptional Care

Technology plays a critical role in delivering high-quality, accessible care—especially across Maine’s rural communities. In the past year, PCHC’s Information Systems team has made significant strides to support patients and staff, reduce administrative burden, and strengthen care team communication.

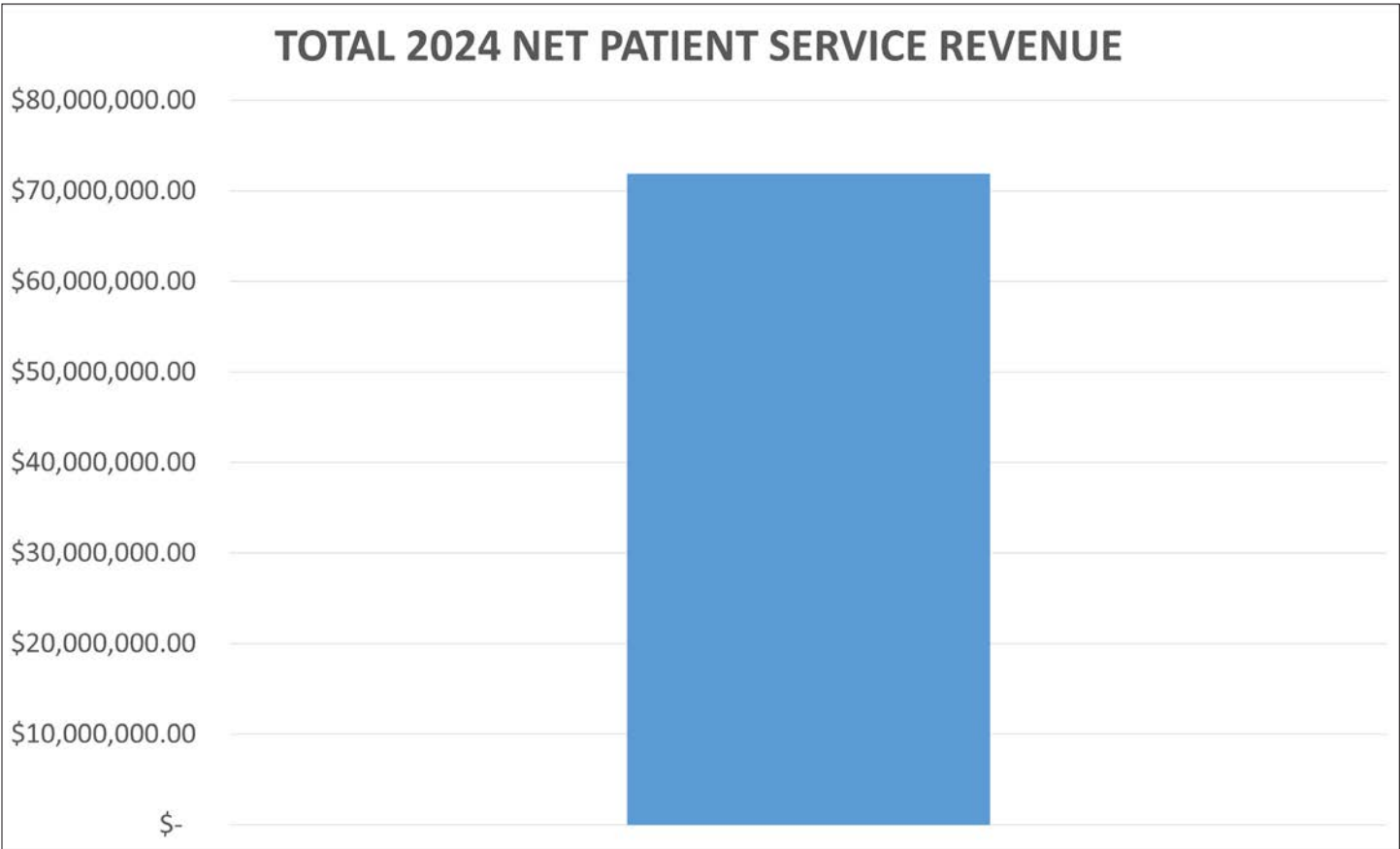
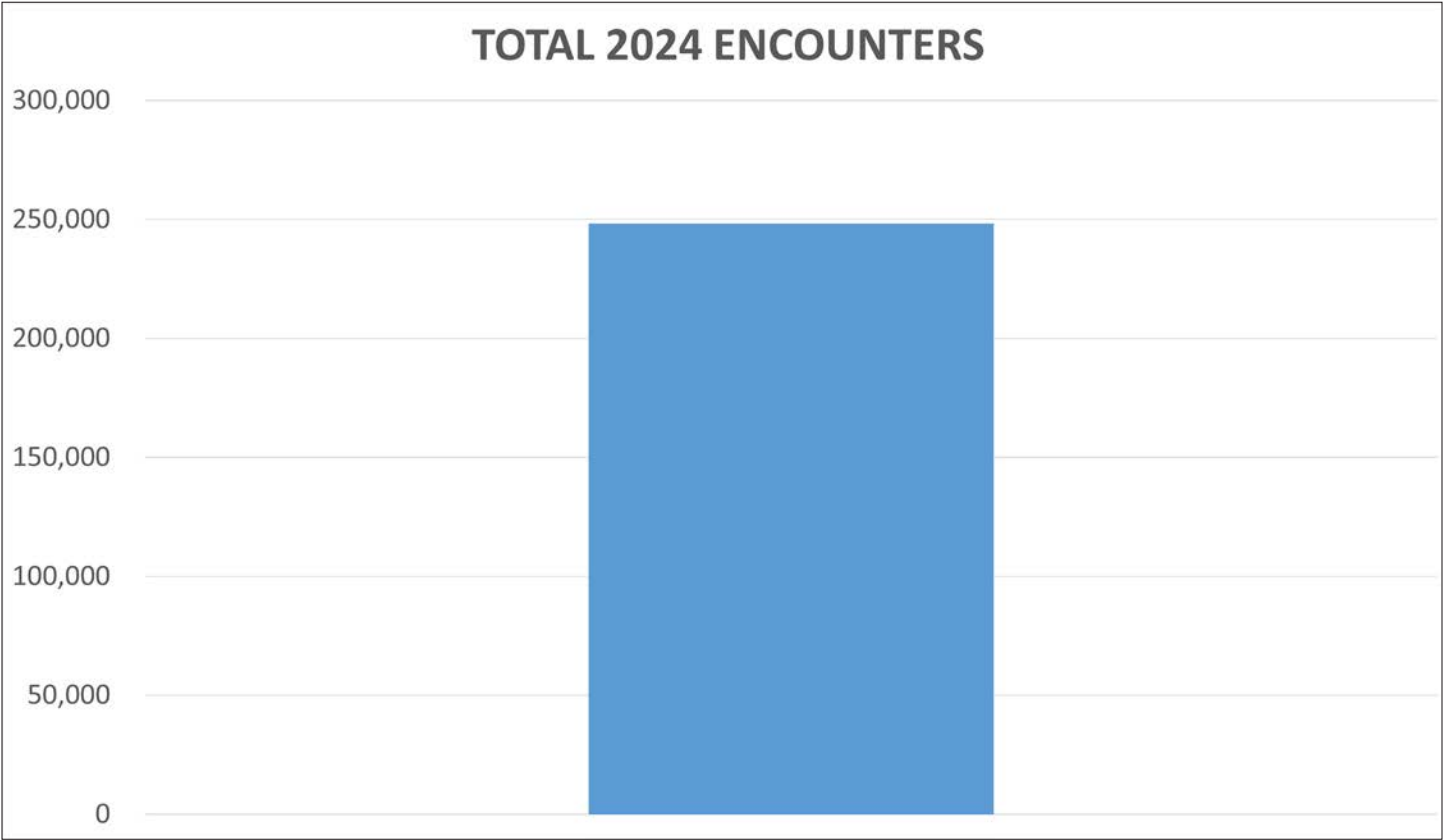
Highlights include upgrading our AI-powered clinical documentation tool, launching advanced call center software with callback options, and enhancing patient self-scheduling and portal messaging tools. We also expanded document automation, improved provider onboarding support, and equipped new school-based health centers and our state-of-the-art Belfast facility with the tech needed to thrive. These improvements reflect our commitment to using innovation to better serve our mission—and the people who count on us.



Stewarding Financial Resources

Stewarding Financial Resources – Weathering the Storms and Forging Ahead

In 2024, as in 2023, financial headwinds were strong. PCHC continued its post-pandemic financial recovery, adjusted to workforce shortages, navigated the nationwide Change Healthcare breach, and tackled provider burnout in an under-resourced healthcare system that asks primary care to take on more and more as the population ages. Challenges recruiting and retaining medical assistants, dental assistants, and most types of providers carried over from 2023, which meant staffing levels could not, in 2024, meet the overwhelming need in our communities. Visits and revenue were down significantly as a result, and were down by about 5% from projections. In response, PCHC maintained its intense focus on both right-sizing and long-term sustainability, investing in workforce and improving systems within our limited means. We reduced operating costs through targeted attrition and cost savings, narrowed our focus while continuing to diversify revenue, entered agreements to sell some of our real estate, and built back toward broader patient access. We made hard decisions, and we made sure to focus on the resilience and emotional well-being of staff in the process. We also realized a long-term goal to launch the PCHC Foundation, a related foundation that will support the organization’s mission in perpetuity by building an endowment that reduces dependency on poor reimbursement and unreliable public funding. This will allow PCHC to meaningfully invest in great primary care to support the communities we serve now and into the future.



Notable Funding Awards: Fueling Our Mission, Together

Each year, approximately 50 grant-funded projects help power PCHC’s work across our communities. In 2024, we were honored to receive support from generous partners who share our commitment to accessible, compassionate care for all.

1. Doree Taylor Charitable Foundation | Supporting Shelter Operations

In 2024, we were deeply grateful to receive a \$75,000 general operations grant from the Doree Taylor Charitable Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee, in support of the Hope House Health & Living Center. These flexible, low-barrier funds were instrumental in sustaining shelter operations during a period of transition. Grants like this are rare—and powerful—helping us continue to provide safe, supportive shelter and essential health services to our most vulnerable community members.

2. Capital Development Support | A New Home for Seaport Dental*

Thanks to the generous support of our Senators King and Collins and their willingness to advocate for this project, we successfully secured the funding needed to bring dental care to Waldo County. With support from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), our long-envisioned Seaport Dental Center came closer to reality in 2024. The finalized capital development award will enable us to expand access to high-quality oral health care for patients in the Belfast region.

3. Northeast Delta Dental | Equipping the Future of Care

In a generous investment in the future of oral health, Northeast Delta Dental awarded \$325,000 to help us equip the new Seaport Dental Center. This substantial support from a longstanding partner will ensure that the space opens fully furnished with modern, efficient dental technology—ready to serve patients from day one. We’re proud to collaborate on expanding access and improving outcomes in the communities we serve.

4. Maine Cancer Foundation | Advancing Prevention & Early Detection

With continued support from the Maine Cancer Foundation, our team advanced efforts in 2024 to increase colorectal cancer screening rates across our service area. This vital work builds on a years-long partnership aimed at eliminating preventable cancer deaths through early detection and equitable access. We are honored to stand with MCF in this lifesaving mission.

5. NIDA Clinical Trial | Expanding Access to Opioid Use Disorder Treatment

In 2024, our Seaport Community Health Center joined a groundbreaking clinical trial led by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) focused on expanding rural access to extended-release buprenorphine for the treatment of opioid use disorder. Our participation in this pilot reflects our commitment to innovation and equity in substance use disorder treatment—and our belief that every patient deserves access to evidence-based treatment, regardless of where they live.

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Advocacy in Action

At PCHC, caring for our community means more than delivering high-quality healthcare — it means standing up for the systems that make that care possible. In 2024, we continued to advocate for legislation that strengthens the healthcare safety net, supports our workforce, and protects access for underserved communities across Maine.

From defending the 340B drug pricing program to supporting innovative workforce solutions like the adjunct dentist license, we are proud to lend our voice in Augusta to ensure that every Mainer — no matter where they live or what they earn — can get the care they deserve. These are just two examples of that work.

Advocating for Access: Protecting Patient Care

In 2024, PCHC joined health centers across Maine to support LD 1018, a bill to protect the 340B Drug Pricing Program—an essential tool for expanding care in rural and underserved communities. As drug manufacturers imposed

harmful restrictions, we advocated to ensure 340B savings could continue to support behavioral health, substance use treatment, diabetes care, and affordable medications. This bill helps preserve care for those who need it most—without costing taxpayers a dime.

Expanding Access to Dental Care Across Maine

In 2024, PCHC proudly supported legislation to expand Maine’s dental workforce through a new Adjunct Dentist License. This bill addresses urgent provider shortages—especially in rural and underserved areas—by allowing qualified, foreign-trained dentists to practice under supervision in safety-net settings like ours.

The model strengthens access to preventive and urgent care, reduces wait times, and supports health equity for vulnerable populations, including children and those without insurance. It also offers a pathway to full licensure, helping Maine retain skilled professionals and build a sustainable, diverse dental workforce for the future.

Investing in a Healthier Future: The Work of the PCHC Foundation

At PCHC, our mission is to provide high-quality, integrated primary care for all—regardless of income, background, or insurance status. Initiated in 2024, the PCHC Foundation aims to play a vital role in making that mission sustainable. As the philanthropic arm of our organization, the Foundation exists to support the infrastructure, workforce, and innovation that make excellent care possible—not just for today’s patients, but for generations to come.

This year, that meant laying the groundwork for lasting change. From advancing workforce development and health equity, to preparing for new facilities and future services, the Foundation has focused on building the kind of healthcare system Maine deserves: strong, community-based, and ready for tomorrow’s challenges.

In a time when healthcare is more complex—and more critical—than ever, the Foundation offers something we all need: hope. Hope that no one will go without care. Hope that we can grow the next generation of healthcare leaders. Hope that together, we can shape a future where wellness, dignity, and access are within reach for everyone.

With every gift and every partnership, we’re moving closer to that future—one patient, one provider, one community at a time.

PCHC Foundation Mission: The foundation will advance the charitable mission of Penobscot Community Health Care by supporting the infrastructure, workforce, and innovation that make excellent primary healthcare possible and available to all.

PCHC Foundation Vision: The PCHC foundation exists to build a Maine where the primary healthcare system is strong and high functioning, and where primary care works on behalf of all Mainers to support economic and social prosperity, disease prevention, wellness, and our quality of life.

PCHC Foundation Board Members



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Locations & Services

As Maine’s largest Federally Qualified Health Center, we operate in 5 towns across 3 counties, providing comprehensive, integrated health services for all. Guided by our values—respect, collaboration, quality, patient-centered care, and passion—we foster a culture of excellence and compassion in a physical environment that reflects those values. Most importantly, PCHC’s facilities team and staff work tirelessly to ensure each space communicates to our patients and communities that everyone matters and deserves the very best care and healing environment.

Expanding Access in 2024

This year, PCHC brought to life four new locations:

**RSU 34 (OLD TOWN)
SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CLINIC**

**DOUGHTY MIDDLE
SCHOOL (BANGOR)**

**COHEN MIDDLE SCHOOL
(BANGOR)**

**SEAPORT COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTER**

at its beautiful new home at 21 Schoodic Drive

Each new space reflects our ongoing commitment to accessible, patient-centered care—meeting people where they are and ensuring care is always within reach.

LOCATIONS

Bangor

- Adult Wellness Center
- Bangor High School-SBHC
- Capehart Mental Health Center
- Central Lab
- Community Care & Geriatrics
- Dental Center
- Downeast School-Dental
- Hope House Health & Living Center
- Infusion Center
- Penobscot Community Health Center
- Penobscot Pediatrics
- Unlimited Solutions Clubhouse
- Warren Center for Speech and Audiology

Belfast

- Seaport Community Health Center

Brewer

- Brewer Community School-Dental
- Brewer Community School-SBHC
- Brewer High School-SBHC
- Brewer Medical Center

Jackman

- Jackman Community Health Center

Old Town

- Helen Hunt Health Center
- RSU 34-SBHC

OUR INTEGRATED CARE MODEL

Primary Care

- Acute Care
- Care Management
- Care for Seniors
- Clinical Pharmacy
- Family Medicine
- Mental Health
- Pediatrics
- Recovery Services
- Reproductive Health
- Social Work
- School Based Health

Specialist Care

- Chiropractic Care
- Dental Care
- Osteopathic Manipulation Therapy
- Nutrition Services
- Physical Therapy
- Warren Center for Speech and Audiology

Ancillary Care

- Outreach & Enrollment
- Infusion Services
- Lab
- Pharmacy
- Unlimited Solutions Clubhouse
- Hope House Health & Living Center



Executive Leadership



LORI DWYER, ESQ
President & Chief Executive Officer

“What’s one change you’ve seen at PCHC that gives you energy or optimism?”

The very intentional linking of financial performance to employee wellbeing, and our more disciplined focus on the employee experience – through better communication, responding to more inputs and feedback from staff, and embracing transparency. One example of this is the newly formed Provider Task Force (PTC). The PTC focused on what matters to providers – what’s getting in their way, what would they like to see, and how PCHC can better support and make it easier for them to provide the highest quality care to patients. Input from the PTC inspired adaptations and new approaches that nurture wellbeing, helping us get that much closer to our goal that 100% of our workforce is engaged and resilient in the face of change and challenges.

“When you think about the people of PCHC, what words come to mind?”

Creative, determined, loving, playful, kind, and resourceful.



DAWN COOK
Vice President & Chief Operations Officer

“What’s one change you’ve seen at PCHC that gives you energy or optimism?”

I’m incredibly optimistic and energized by our investments in the additions and changes in the care team members and roles. These changes have developed through an iterative process informed by collaboration and dyad leadership. We have stepped into the space of truly changing our delivery of care to include redundancy and resilience. The world around us is changing and so must we.

“When you think about the people of PCHC, what words come to mind?”

The people of PCHC are adaptive and tenacious. They show up even in the most difficult of times. They understand the challenges in healthcare and desire to be part of creating a better solution. When I think about the changes, transformations, and innovations we’ve worked through in multiple areas, systems, and specialties at PCHC, it gives me energy and fills me with hope for our future.



MEGAN SANDERS, ESQ
Chief Human Resources Officer, Chief Legal Officer, Compliance Officer

“What’s one change you’ve seen at PCHC that gives you energy or optimism?”

PCHC is remarkable -- not necessarily in how it has changed, but how through remarkable change it stays constant and steadfast in its commitment to mission. Ensuring access to care for all regardless of ability to pay reflects back who we are. We believe health care is a fundamental human right, that there’s beauty and dignity in each and every single person, and that together we can do hard and beautiful things. Through great social, cultural, technological, legal, regulatory, environmental, and political change, that we stay constant in our focus on the health of our communities gives me great energy, gratitude, and optimism for the future.

“When you think about the people of PCHC, what words come to mind?”

Marvelous, connected, smart people who care deeply about community and do hard work with enthusiasm, with the kind of stick-to-itiveness that underscores what it means to live, work and learn in and love the state of Maine.



SUSAN CHEFF, MD
Chief Medical Officer

“What’s one change you’ve seen at PCHC that gives you energy or optimism?”

What energizes me is seeing the growth of our care teams where folks are leading with compassion, a can-do mindset, and a commitment to each other and our patients. This gives me hope for the future of healthcare.

“When you think about the people of PCHC, what words come to mind?”

When I think of the people of PCHC, I see integrity, heart, quiet excellence, and a deep commitment to our mission -which is humbling and inspiring!



CHRISTINE FINN-MCLAUGHLIN, MBA
Chief Finance Officer

“What’s one change you’ve seen at PCHC that gives you energy or optimism?”

One change I’ve seen at PCHC that gives me energy and optimism is the increased focus on financial transparency and collaboration across departments. There’s been a real shift toward using data more strategically—not just to track performance, but to drive decision-making in a way that supports both sustainability and patient care. Seeing clinical and operational teams engage more with financial insights and partner on budget planning makes me feel optimistic because it shows we’re building a stronger, more aligned foundation for long-term impact.

“When you think about the people of PCHC, what words come to mind?”

Compassionate, driven, thoughtful, adaptable, deeply committed, authentic, mission-focused, resilient, inspiring. Across every role—from frontline staff to leadership—there’s a deep commitment to serving our community, especially those who face the greatest barriers to care.



SHARYL WHITE
Chief Information Officer

“What’s one change you’ve seen at PCHC that gives you energy or optimism?”

Our sustained focus on financial performance and workforce retention has resulted a positive trajectory for the future.

“When you think about the people of PCHC, what words come to mind?”

Our people are genuinely friendly, helpful and welcoming.



Clinical & Operations Leadership



ANGELA CHASE
Executive Division Director



ANN MARIE POWER
Executive Division Director



SHELLEY SNOW
Executive Division Director



KATHY BRAGDON
Associate Chief Operations Officer



ISRAEL ADELOYE
DMD, MPH
Dental Clinical Director



AMY BARRETT, MD
Medical Director,
Penobscot Pediatrics



HANNAH BILLINGS, PA-C
PA-C Interim Medical Director,
Penobscot Community Health Center



PATRICIA DOYLE, MD
Clinical Lead,
Jackman Community Health Center



NICOLE DUNCAN, AUD
Medical Director,
Warren Center for Speech & Hearing



SAMANTHA GILLIGAN, FNP
Medical Director,
Seaport Community Health Center



LAURA HEAD, PA-C
Medical Director,
Community Care and Geriatrics



NIAMH HOLOHAN
Medical Director,
Hope House Health and Living Center



MEGHAN MAMULA, DO
Medical Director,
Brewer Medical Center



FRANK MCGRADY,
PHARMD, BCPS
Executive Clinical Director of
Pharmacy



MEISHA NICKERSON,
MSW, LCSW
Executive Clinical Director of
Behavioral Health



CHRISTINE PAYNE, MD
Co-Medical Director,
Seaport Community Health Center



CHARLES ROBERTS, PA-C
Medical Director Helen Hunt Health
Center, Interim Medical Director
Adult Wellness Center



RACHEL SOLOTAROFF
MD, MCR
Executive Clinical Director of
Substance Use Disorder Services

Looking Ahead

As we look ahead, PCHC will keep moving forward with focus, resilience, and a deep belief in the power of primary care to change lives. Thank you to our staff, partners, and community members who walk with us in this work. **Your trust and support fuel our mission, every day.**

“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing you think you cannot do.”
—Eleanor Roosevelt

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Looking Ahead

As this report reflects, 2024 was a year of both challenge and determination. Across our organization, we made difficult decisions, stood firm in our values, and continued to prioritize the well-being of our patients and our people. Though the system around us remains fragmented and under-resourced, our purpose remains clear: to provide high-quality, compassionate care to all who need it.

We are proud of what we’ve built—and even prouder of how we continue to grow. PCHC will keep moving forward with focus, resilience, and a deep belief in the power of primary care to change lives. Thank you to our staff, partners, and community members who walk with us in this work. **Your trust and support fuel our mission, every day.**



