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The Lake Sunapee Region Wellness Initiative Strategic Plan was developed by a Strategic Planning Committee (Committee) composed of New London Hospital (New Hampshire) senior managers and area leaders representing education, government, business, public health, health care and the general public. We wish to thank each of the committee members for dedicating their time and expertise to this effort. This strategic plan lays the groundwork for realizing a vision for future health and well-being for all residents of the Lake Sunapee Region.

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*Catherine Bardier, a former member of the New London Hospital Leadership Team with Bruce King, New London Hospital CEO, and Susan Reeves, Chair Department of Nursing Colby-Sawyer College and member of the New London Hospital Board of Directors. This plan is a response to their call to action to the community to develop a regional plan to promote wellness for all area residents.

We acknowledge Dr. Dorothy Bazos, the Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice, and Jonathan Stewart, Community Health Institute/JSI, Inc. for their assistance in the development of this plan.
The Lake Sunapee Region Wellness Initiative (Initiative) is supported by a generous gift from an anonymous donor to the New London Hospital. This gift created an opportunity for the community, in partnership with the hospital, to develop the infrastructure for large-scale social change and broad cross-sector coordination around a common agenda for wellness. As its first priority, the Initiative will bring diverse sectors of the region together to develop, implement, and align strategies to promote healthy eating, active living, and health promoting behaviors including preventive screenings. Poor eating habits and sedentary lifestyles are risk factors for many chronic conditions experienced by area residents including heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

Success of the Initiative will depend on the ability of Lake Sunapee Region organizations to put aside their individual agendas and work together to enhance their collective impact on these risk factors.

History

Residents of the Lake Sunapee Region have a long history of caring for each other and building local infrastructure to meet the health care needs of the community. In 1918 local women opened a six-bed hospital in the old “Morgan House.” In 1923, Fred Pressey of New London provided a site for a new twelve-bed hospital on Main Street. The hospital continued to grow in services and support from the neighboring towns.

In 1946, discussions to expand and modernize the building began once again. Expansion was made possible when Harold Allen, a summer resident, gave a generous gift of 50 acres of land to support the construction of a new building on County Road. This larger hospital was dedicated in 1958 and remains the location of New London Hospital today. New London Hospital continues to be supported generously by neighboring towns, the state of New Hampshire, and local champions in its efforts to provide high quality primary care along with emergency and specialized clinical services to the regional population.

The recent gift to the hospital reflects again the long history of caring for each other that has been demonstrated by people in this region. This gift will be used by New London Hospital to expand its reach into the community with a focus on health promotion and prevention of disease and illness. The following strategic plan summarizes the goals and objectives of this unique effort to build a community of “wellness” within the Lake Sunapee Region.
This document, “The Lake Sunapee Region Wellness Initiative,” represents the work of the Lake Sunapee Region Strategic Planning Committee: a group of diverse local leaders with a shared vision for a healthier community. The Initiative outlined in this plan identifies opportunities for the hospital, community, and residents to work together over the next five years (2014-2018) to create a culture of health and wellness for all who reside in the Lake Sunapee Region.

Why Is This Plan Important?
This strategic plan is intended to provide guidance to a steering committee and New London Hospital Core Wellness Staff as they work to further the goals of the community regarding health and wellness. This plan is meant to serve as a road map to identify paths for getting from the current state of community health to a future state of health with improved outcomes.

How Will This Plan Be Used?
This plan is meant to: (a) invite the public and local partners into the planning and action process, (b) communicate a vision and steps for achieving this vision, (c) share values and principles, (d) serve as a baseline to track progress over time, and (d) reflect a commitment to working collaboratively to achieve community goals.
Call to Action

In 2013 the Strategic Planning Committee agreed to work together to develop a community wellness initiative based on a shared vision of health and wellness. This committee was composed of 15 community leaders who are decision makers in their own organizations. Members represented local businesses, education, health and health care, government, youth, adults, seniors, public health, and residents of the Lake Sunapee Region. These individuals were identified through a process of informal discussion and key leader interviews.

The Committee was charged with the task of developing a framework to guide the design, development and implementation of a health improvement initiative for the Lake Sunapee Region population focused on wellness. Specific tasks assigned to the committee were to:

- Adopt a framework for the wellness initiative based on population needs;
- Draft a strategic plan with short- and long-term goals and objectives;
- Build on the successful employer wellness program of New London Hospital;
- Obtain community input on, and engagement with, the strategic plan; and
- Adopt and implement the plan with community partners.
The steps taken by the Committee to complete this plan are illustrated in the figure below. The Committee started working together in the spring of 2013. In June the Committee defined the vision, mission, and value statements that would guide the Initiative. They adopted an approach to wellness that was informed by the health priorities identified by community residents and leaders through the 2012 New London Hospital Needs Assessment. Over the course of several months, committee members worked to define and clarify the specific goals and objectives for initial interventions proposed in the plan.

**Strategic Planning Steps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan-Feb 2013</td>
<td><strong>Assess Assets &amp; Needs</strong></td>
<td>To understand the assets and needs of the area, project staff analyzed both state and local data and gathered information from community members through interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March-April 2013</td>
<td><strong>Convene Leadership</strong></td>
<td>The Committee represents a diverse group of regional leaders and is supported by New London Hospital Leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-June 2013</td>
<td><strong>Define Vision, Mission &amp; Values</strong></td>
<td>The Committee defined a shared vision, mission, and values that describe a future for the region and the means by which the team will work to achieve this in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June-August 2013</td>
<td><strong>Establish Priorities</strong></td>
<td>Based on the assets, needs and culture of the local region the Committee prioritized healthy eating and active living as a priority focal areas for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August-November 2013</td>
<td><strong>Develop Goals &amp; Objectives</strong></td>
<td>The Committee defined specific goals and objectives that captured how the priorities of the plan will be operationalized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2013 and ongoing</td>
<td><strong>Identify Specific Strategies</strong></td>
<td>Committee members and New London Hospital Wellness staff will work with area residents and leaders to identify specific strategies to achieve the goals and objectives within a specified time frame of the plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td><strong>Engage Community Partners</strong></td>
<td>Community partners will be engaged at all steps of planning, implementation, and monitoring of the Initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td><strong>Take Action &amp; Monitor Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>A model of improvement will frame the ongoing evaluation of the Initiatives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Lake Sunapee Region and Map

For the purpose of this strategic plan, we defined the Lake Sunapee Region as the towns in both the Kearsarge and Newport School Districts as well as the towns served by New London Hospital. Thus the towns of interest to the Initiative are: Andover, Bradford, Croydon, Danbury, Goshen, Grantham, Lempster, Newbury, New London, Newport, Springfield, Sunapee, Sutton, Warner, Washington, and Wilmot.

The Lake Sunapee Region Towns
Through implementation of this strategic plan, the Committee will strive to create a culture of wellness in the Lake Sunapee Region, focusing first on the dimensions of physical activity and healthy eating. During the next three years the Initiative will aim to develop, promote and improve programs and environments that support healthy eating and active living among youth, adults and seniors who live in the Lake Sunapee Region. Poor eating habits and sedentary lifestyles are associated with higher rates of overweight and obesity, which in turn are risk factors for high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic conditions.

**Definition of Wellness**

The term wellness refers to more than just physical health. It is an active, ongoing process of becoming aware of choices and making decisions toward a more balanced and fulfilling life. (http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/health/wellness/definition.html). There are many dimensions of wellness, including: physical, occupational, social, environmental, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual factors. Key elements to consider when working to enhance wellness include sociodemographics, general health, health care utilization, life situation, social network, lifestyle, diet & nutrition, physical well-being, stress & energy levels, emotional/mental state, and life enjoyment (http://www.iomwellness.com/news/5/IOM_Wellness_launches_new_website).

New London Hospital will take the lead on the Initiative by hiring core staff to spearhead this community-wide work. The CEO of New London Hospital will oversee the program. The Wellness Program Director will manage its goals and objectives and track progress over time. The Wellness Outreach Coordinator will build relationships and tailor interventions to meet the needs of the most vulnerable populations living in the Lake Sunapee Region. Key leaders from various sectors of the community including health, education, business, schools, Colby-Sawyer College, social services, town administration, and town recreation departments will be asked to commit to a common agenda to improve access to and consumption of nutritious foods, and to increase levels of physical activity among the area's population.

Even though many community, social, and health care organizations are working within the region on projects to improve the health of the local population, rates of obesity and overweight within the Lake Sunapee Region (along with the state of New Hampshire and the United States as a whole) have continued to rise over the past decade. These behaviors put the entire population at risk for poor health outcomes, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and premature death. We propose that individuals, organizations, and systems work together in a more coordinated fashion to address these poor health outcomes through the implementation of a regional plan to promote wellness. As a first step, we challenge every individual to improve their healthy eating and active living behaviors and at the same time enhance work, school and play environments to support this behavioral change.
The Initiative relies on a multi-sector approach to make the healthy choice the easy choice for everyone. Success of such a large-scale social change will be dependent on the creation of supportive, health promoting environments in all of our communities, specifically in the places where we live, work and play. In some cases this may require local policy changes. In all cases, success of the Initiative will require that organizations, leadership, and residents work together to align their resources toward a shared vision, goals and measures. New London Hospital Core Wellness Staff and community organizations will create opportunities to share and maximize resources, address redundancies of efforts, develop a collective approach to problem solving, and coordinate improvements to impact all aspects of the issues of healthy eating and active living. By focusing on a single set of goals while tracking trends and outcomes over time, the Initiative hopes to build a sustainable infrastructure for collaboration throughout the community.

### Creating a Culture of Wellness in the Lake Sunapee Region

The following section summarizes in outline form the approach that the Initiative will take to improve wellness of the regional population.

The Initiative intends to develop a collective impact strategy to improve healthy eating and active living among area residents. The key elements of a collective impact strategy are: (a) centralized infrastructure and dedicated staff, (b) structured process, (c) common agenda, and (d) mutually reinforcing activities. These key elements as applied to the strategic plan for the Initiative are described on the following page.
A. Infrastructure and Staff  

(Organizational Home)

- New London Hospital

Steering Committee  
(idea generators, driving force behind social change)

- Multi-sector representation from leaders in their respective fields;
- Share/promote best practices and cross-sector communication; and
- Make connections with key individuals in their sector.

New London Hospital Core Wellness Staff (program coordination and development)

- Bruce King, CEO New London Hospital (in-kind)
- Wellness Program Director 1 FTE
- Community Wellness Coordinator 0.5 FTE
- Physician Champion (in-kind)

Wellness Champions (knowledge and expertise of area communities and culture)

- Represent the diversity of populations, organizations and communities in the Lake Sunapee Region;
- Are natural leaders within their communities;
- Have a passion for health; and
- Are willing to partner with the Initiative to develop and implement action plans.

Technical Experts (just in time learning for specific focused issues)

Technical expertise will be needed to support the Initiative as it matures. Local experts (college professors, business leaders, doctors, etc.) will be invited to partner with the Initiative to enhance work in the following technical areas: social marketing and communication, health promotion education, data analyses, grant writing, quality improvement, employer health, nutrition, physical activity, and behavioral change.

To augment these efforts, NLH will provide in-kind support to the Initiative in the technical areas of marketing, public relations and grant writing. Technical expertise and mentorship to the Initiative is available and has been offered from the Healthy Monadnock 2020 Project, the New Hampshire State Healthy Eating Active Living Project (HEAL), and the Dartmouth Employee Health Initiative.

“Our goal is to use this gift as the foundation for a significant, innovative and sustainable wellness initiative that will address the most pressing health concerns of our community. We already have a clear and current understanding of the emerging health care needs of the community from the 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment, and we intend to build our new project around those needs.”

G. William Helm, Jr., Chair of the Board of Trustees.
B. Structured Process: Vision, Mission, Values

A common vision, mission and values have been developed to guide the Initiative through its early years of development and into the future. Twenty-three community leaders (through key leader interviews) and the fifteen members of the Committee worked to develop these guiding principles.

Vision - By 2017, the Lake Sunapee Region Wellness Initiative will have developed and implemented targeted interventions and strategies capable of achieving measurable goals to improve the health and well-being of the people who live in Lake Sunapee Region communities.

Mission - To provide the Lake Sunapee Region communities with a sustainable and collaborative long-term plan for measurably improving health and wellness.

Values - The Lake Sunapee Region Wellness Initiative is guided by the following values:

- Focus on wellness for all subsets of the population, taking diverse needs and lifespan issues into account.
- Take a multi-community approach.
- Maximize all community resources and inputs.
- Collaborate with communities and partners including business and non-health care organizations.
- Be guided by a defined strategic plan and budget for improving community wellness, including action items and measurable outcomes.
- Start small, and then scale up successful initiatives.
- Align activities with national best practices when possible.
- Strive for measurable outcomes and sustained and effective quality results.
- Align goals and objectives with state health policy goals and priorities when possible.

The principles and practice of quality improvement will be used to establish clear aims and an evaluation plan. Evidence-based practices such as those reported in the Community Guide (http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html) shall be the gold standard for interventions.
The Lake Sunapee Region Wellness Initiative will focus on three major priority areas over the next five years (2014-2018).

**The Initiative will strive to:**

**a)** Create a culture of wellness in the region.

**b)** Improve healthy behaviors - especially those associated with healthy eating and active living.

**c)** Promote environments that make healthy choices the “easychoices” for individuals and communities. These priorities will be met through the following three goals and associated activities.
Goal 1

Increase public awareness of, knowledge about, and participation in healthy behaviors through wellness initiatives that improve health outcomes.

Objective 1: By May 15, 2014, develop and launch a communication strategy to: (a) inform the public about the Lake Sunapee Wellness Initiative and (b) obtain input on how the public might engage in this community-wide wellness effort.

Objective 2: By July 30, 2018, develop and host at least fifteen educational sessions (including three annual wellness forums) to inform the public about the association between lifestyle choices and health, and about how to engage in wellness initiatives in their local communities.

Goal 1: Measures of Success

- There is increased awareness of the Initiative within the region as measured by survey.
- Educational forums are held quarterly.
- Education sessions have increasing attendance and become more participatory in nature.
- Wellness forums are held annually.
- Number of participants attending annual wellness forums increases each year (Baseline 2014).
- The number of organizations attending the annual wellness forums increases each year (Baseline 2014).
- 100% of Executive Committee members attend and participate in every annual wellness forum (Baseline 2014).
- Community input from the annual wellness forums is used to identify gaps, barriers and opportunities for future wellness education programs and initiatives.
- Community input is used to improve the strategic plan and assure that it reflects the needs and priorities of the regional population.
Increase effectiveness of regional employer wellness programs by creating a network of local businesses who work together to maximize expertise and resources toward a common goal of developing a healthy workforce.

**Objective 1:** By December 31, 2014, area businesses develop an employee network, assess gaps in their employee wellness programs, and with technical assistance (TA) and facilitative support from Initiative staff and local experts, implement initiatives within their organizations to address these gaps.

**Objective 2:** By July 30, 2015, the business network has implemented at least one region-wide initiative focused on healthy eating and active living for all area employees.

**Objective 3:** By July 30, 2018, business network members are sharing resources and technical expertise to maximize efforts to improve the health and well-being of all area employees.

**Objective 4:** By July 30, 2018, the employer network members have adopted a process of continuous quality improvement to move their collaborative efforts forward and to tie them back to the strategic plan.

**Goal 2: Measures of Success**

- A selected sample of area businesses with 50 or more employees have completed the CDC Worksite Health Scorecard of their employer health programs.
- An increased number of regional businesses meet the Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) Benchmarks for success. (Baseline 2014)
- An increased number of businesses agree to work together in the network each year. (Baseline 2014)
- Concrete evidence of business helping business and using community TA and resources (for example TA and support from local recreation departments and colleges) to improve their wellness initiatives has been collected. (Baseline 2014)
- Employer network members report increased employee uptake of health risk assessments. (Baseline 2014)
- Employer network members report increased employer use of health risk assessments and other data to inform programming and community strategies for wellness specifically in relation to healthy eating and active living and preventive screening. (Baseline 2014)
- Employer network members report increased physical activity by employees. (Baseline 2014)
- Employer network members report having increased access to nutritious foods for employees. (Baseline 2014)
Goal 3: Increase, align, and enhance efforts of organizations, community leaders, and individuals living in the Lake Sunapee Region who are working to improve healthy eating and active living behaviors.

Objective 1: By January 2015, create at least one multi-sector wellness coalition that has developed an action plan and is ready to implement at least one initiative focused on improving healthy eating or active living within a defined geographic area of the region. The coalition will target these initial efforts in communities in which they will have the most measurable impact.

Objective 2: Through 2017, Initiative staff provides ongoing facilitation and support to the Wellness Coalition in areas of education, leadership development, strategic planning, project development, strategy implementation and evaluation.

Objective 3: Through 2017, by engaging local organizations and individuals as Champions for Wellness, develop and implement community-wide healthy eating, active living initiatives that encourage cross-sector collaboration and impact multiple populations at the individual, organizational, community and policy levels.

Goal 3: Measures of Success

- At least one wellness coalition is created to implement healthy eating, active living interventions.
- Wellness coalition meets monthly.
- Wellness coalition develops an action plan with at least one healthy eating and one active living priority.
- Wellness coalition implements the action plan.
- Physical activity is increased in the wellness coalition's service area.
- Access to healthy foods is increased in the wellness coalition's service area.
- The developmental process for creating the initial wellness coalition is replicated in the Lake Sunapee Region as appropriate.
- By 2018, a regional Champions for Wellness program is thriving and active.
- By 2018, 25% of businesses and 25% of the population are Wellness Champions.
- By 2018, area Wellness Champions are addressing key policy issues associated with healthy eating and active living.
### Measures

We envision that this wellness initiative will, over time, impact the following population health measures. The Wellness Staff will develop a partnership with the NH State Public Health Department to support our interest in collecting and using these indicators to benchmark our progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Anticipated Impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Adults reporting at least good health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mortality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heart Disease/100,000 population</td>
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<td>Cancer/100,000 population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morbidity</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Adults reporting Diabetes</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Adults with high blood pressure</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Adults with high cholesterol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preventive Screening</td>
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<td>Adults 65+ with flu shot</td>
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<td>Adults 65+ with pneumonia vaccine</td>
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<td>Women 40+ with mammogram</td>
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<td>Women who had pap test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fully immunized children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Behaviors</td>
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<td>% Adults at healthy weight</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Children at healthy weight</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Adults reporting five fruits/veg/daily</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average hours of TV viewing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minutes of daily physical activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Healthy Environments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bike paths as % of roads</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public land as % of all land</td>
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</table>
The Initiative will start small, learn from its work and scale up efforts as they gain momentum and are proven effective. An ongoing communication and education strategy will be implemented to create awareness and engage the general public in efforts to “create a culture of wellness” in the Lake Sunapee Region. Over time the education strategy will address gaps in knowledge and awareness among community members. The underlying process of quality improvement will be to plan each intervention, do the intervention, study the intervention and then scale it up if it is working, tweak the intervention if it needs adjustment, or stop the intervention if it is found to be ineffective.