



35
Years

MISSION

To assist people affected by mental illness,
developmental disabilities and related disorders
in living meaningful lives.

ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2014

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Employee Scholarship Award

This year, the Board of Directors and management team established an Employee Scholarship Award to encourage and support employee's pursuit of educational goals which will lead them to advancement opportunities within NHS. The Board received an outstanding group of applicants for the award. Applications were reviewed and voted on by a committee.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I am pleased to announce that Keri Riley has been chosen as the first employee to receive the NHS Employee Scholarship Award. Keri is the Director of the Community Supports Program in the Littleton area.

Keri plans to pursue an MBA degree with a concentration in Leadership. "Continuing my education has always been something I have wanted to do and receiving these funds takes me one step closer to affirming my dreams and becoming a more valuable employee," said Keri in a thank you letter to the Board.

The Board of Directors extends its sincere thanks to each employee who applied this year and wants them to know that their work for the agency is greatly appreciated. It is planned that the application process will be re-opened in the Spring of next year.

Marge McClellan, *President*

Message from the President



My involvement with NHS pre-dates the time that the original independent agencies came together to form the original Northern NH Mental Health Center. I was employed with Northern for about 10 years before becoming the Executive Director of Androscoggin Valley Home Care Services. During my time at AVHCS, our agency worked closely with NHS to provide services to mutual clients. When I retired in 2001, I joined Northern's Board of Directors.

Over the many years I have been involved with the agency, I've seen the difference Northern's services have made to many people, supporting them in becoming more independent and self-sufficient. Many employees have been with Northern for 10, 20, 30 and 40 plus years. I believe these long term staff have added to the value of our services, while the newer employees add energy and innovative ideas.

We are fortunate to have Administrative staff that are always looking to the future with the goal to make things better. Many members of our Board of Directors have served diligently for many years, and our newer members have added so much in these difficult times as we go forward. I know Northern is in a strong position, and I feel we are prepared to deal with the changes coming into healthcare. We must continue to work as hard as we have in the past to provide the kind of care and specialized services our families, friends and neighbors need.

As I leave the President's position this year, I want to thank everyone for their past support. I plan to stay on as a Board member and look forward to working with all of you in the coming year.

Marge McClellan, *President*

Falling Off A Cliff...

This is how many parents describe the way they feel after learning their child has an autism diagnosis. Often, they do not know where to go or who to turn to. I was fortunate to have a parachute for my family: Northern Human Services (NHS). Our family consists of me, my nine year old son Logan, my daughter, Madison (MJ), who is five, and Tyco (Logan's Service Dog).

We were referred to NHS via its Early Supports and Services program (ESS) eight years ago when Logan was not hitting certain developmental milestones, such as talking. As new parents, this was a stressful time for our family as we were filled with questions and concerns. Was something wrong? Did we do something wrong? How do we figure this out? The ESS employees were focused not only on Logan's needs but also on our needs as a family. We had numerous appointments with doctors and other specialists trying to solve the mystery. We would eventually receive a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) for Logan, and I was thankful that our ESS staff were with us to receive the diagnosis. It was a relief to finally have an answer and receive guidance.

As we transitioned out of ESS, our relationship with Northern continued



through the Family Support Program. Shanon is our Family Support Coordinator. She, along with the ESS staff, made the transition to elementary school a seamless process. She has continued to be a support to me and my family. This process was repeated again when MJ received an autism diagnosis in 2011.

"Assisting people affected by mental illness, developmental disabilities and related disorders in living meaningful lives." As a Family Support Council member, a NHS board member and a family member, I can attest to the fact that this is not just a tag line: it is the mission of all those involved with NHS.

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Message from the CEO: 35 Years of Building Multi-Service Capacity

This year marked an important milestone in the history of NHS as we celebrate our 35th anniversary serving the North Country. Like many organizations that have been around for several decades, much in the business has progressed over the years but our unwavering commitment to providing services and supports to people is stronger than ever.



Looking back, we draw inspiration for the future as we chart a new path to help the organization navigate through this period of uncertainty. The agency's founding was rooted in bringing together the individual strengths and skills of leaders who had a vision to face the challenges of the times. The future is focused on leveraging all of our current expertise to drive innovation, thoughtful leadership and creative new solutions to continue to support the individuals we serve.

Northern's legacy began with the consolidation of several private non-profit community agencies that provided mental health services and developmental services. These were located in Berlin, Colebrook, Littleton, and Conway. In April of 1979, Northern New Hampshire Mental Health Center was first formed as a single non-profit corporation. In 1982, the agency was designated by the State as an Area Agency for Developmental Services. The name was then changed to Northern New Hampshire Mental Health & Developmental Services. Over the course of the next three decades, community based services expanded, which reshaped the landscape for service delivery. In 2006, the state required that the former Center of Hope (a large private non-profit provider of developmental services) consolidate its services under the corporate umbrella of Northern Human Services.

Since its founding, NHS has transformed itself from primarily outpatient and facility-based settings to a system of specialized services that now reaches a diverse client base spanning virtually all age groups and encompassing a

wide range of individual needs. Yet for all this change, NHS remains committed to the bedrock principles upon which it was founded: developing and providing high-quality services and supports to individuals and families of all ages. The challenges they deal with are the issues we embrace to assist them in moving forward with their lives.

The evolution of NHS continued this past year as movement toward payment reform under Medicaid Care Management continued to loom with increasing complexity. NHS had a strong year by continuing to focus on the fundamentals of the business; that of helping people. Thanks to many staff across departments, the agency continues to meet new regulatory obligations in the most cost-effective manner possible while maintaining a focus on quality improvement.

In what may be the strongest validation of our 2013-2014 performance is the feedback we have received from key stakeholders. All appear to be voicing support for what we have done and the direction we are headed as an organization. We continued to strengthen contractual relationships with hospitals, family health centers, schools and corrections by expanding information sharing about the agency and operations, enhancing on-site community-based services and engaging with new partners.

Reflecting on the past is important to provide perspective and context for future endeavors. At NHS, we recognize the inevitability of Medicaid payment reform and see it as a defining opportunity that demands fundamental change. To that end, this past year we focused attention on reviewing the infrastructure of NHS so that it can be leveraged more effectively for the years ahead. To deliver on this strategy, we made significant progress on several fronts, including advancing the electronic medical record initiative so that we have timely reports on service activity and new software which supports our compliance and risk management efforts. We undertook a comprehensive review of employee's benefits and initiated positive changes. Employee wellness initiatives have been growing and show demonstrated success. The information technology system is being upgraded, and communications platforms are planned to be replaced. While the move to

payment reform quickens the pace of change and regulatory mandates place greater pressure on us to deliver services which meet new requirements, we reiterate our pledge to the individuals and families we serve.

Our success in 2013-2014 would not have been possible without the strong and consistent support of the Board of Directors and the agency's aspirations for the future depend on equally insightful guidance from them. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated group of individuals who share their perspectives and expertise and who help to shape our vision. Their knowledge, leadership and judgment are invaluable assets as we take on the challenges in the year ahead.

We also want to recognize and thank our employees: the men and women who make this organization run every day and whose passion and ingenuity are contagious. They take enormous pride in their work and, while much of what they do occurs behind the scenes, they are truly the keys to the agency's success. Their impact is felt everyday and their work benefits countless individuals and families across the North Country.

While the economic and regulatory environments will continue to pose significant challenges for the agency and those served, we are building momentum and making significant progress in preparing for the future.

The steps we took in this past year have given us greater agility, a deeper knowledge base and an exciting mix of new talent to adapt to changes in external funding streams even as we remain true to our core mission.

Eric M. Johnson, CEO



Sunrise Ascent on Mount Washington

At sunrise on Sunday, August 3rd, a number of dedicated people ascended the Auto Road determined to reach the 6,288-foot summit of Mount Washington, New England’s highest peak. Among them were teams that included an adaptive athlete. The teams of “mules” accompanied and supported athletes up the 7.8 miles to the summit. They were inspired by the beauty of the sunrise, the majesty of the Presidential Range and the determination shared between them.

This unique event is a fundraiser for the Adaptive Sports Partners of the North Country (ASPNC), a year round, non-profit organization that facilitates sport and recreation opportunities for people with physical, developmental, cognitive or intellectual disabilities. ASPNC primarily serves individuals in Northern New Hampshire and the Northeast Kingdom area of Vermont.

In just five years, over 290 adaptive athletes have been encouraged to maximize their abilities through ASPNC programs. It is through this program that many individuals supported by NHS are able to pursue individualized athletic opportunities.

As the Director of NHS’ Common Ground Services and a partner with ASPNC for several years, I was intrigued by the Sunrise Ascent and volunteered to be a “mule” for Team Chester. Chester and I met a couple of years ago in Conway. I liked his positive and optimistic outlook and was excited to be a part of such a unique and rewarding experience.

As a “mule,” ASPNC required that we arrive at the base of the Mount Washington Auto Road at 4:00 a.m. The teams consisted of 16–20 people who met at staging areas to register and prepare for the day ahead. Chester needed to arrive before the rest of us, getting up around 1:00 a.m. It’s a good thing he had such a positive outlook. Chester’s support team assisted him into the Trailrider and zipped him in.

We began the hike up the Auto Road at 5:00 a.m. sharp. The “mules” took turns pushing, pulling

and guiding Chester in his Trailrider up the mountain. During the first couple of miles, Chester was motivated to keep alert but for the last couple of miles, it was Chester motivating us with his encouraging phrase “Yea, Baby!” just when we needed it most. We arrived at the top of Mount Washington around 8:30 a.m. where we took pictures, hydrated and enjoyed the scenic view on an absolutely beautiful day.

ASPNC arranged for us to have a ride down the mountain thanks to volunteer drivers. Once we got down to the base we enjoyed the bottom-side brunch celebration including food, drink and much team celebration. There was one mule who took a very long nap!

Mark Vincent



Employee Wellness Works: Raising Awareness

The Colebrook, Groveton, and Vershire offices have been actively participating in the agency's Wellness Works campaign and they have been raising employee awareness for over a year now. There are more than 20 participants involved in ongoing healthy challenges including: Step Challenge, Strive for Five, Maintain Don't Gain, Resolution Revolution, Weight Loss, Hydration and others. Employees lost a total of 128 pounds in our most recent weight loss challenge. Congratulations!

In the past, Wellness Works efforts have included luncheons attended by presenters from the North Country Recreation Center, Bridge Street Gym, and Fran's Fitness. This year they held seminars provided by Fran Bigney which were sponsored by Cigna. They also shared healthy recipes with staff monthly and encouraged participants to join teams that were eligible to win raffle prizes and engage in healthy competition.

Wellness Champions Joy, Carrie, Michelle, and Tonya are very proud of their efforts and all of the local participants. They plan to continue to raise awareness that Wellness Works!

Staff Recognition and Years of Service

"One afternoon, I saw an individual we have provided services to sitting at Dunkin Donuts, politely discussing the merits of various laundry detergents with a group of elderly ladies. Sounds like a small thing, right? Except I saw a man who, when he first came to Northern from one of our state institutions, had struggled as he waged war with a severe mental illness. For better than 40 years, I have seen the hardworking, dedicated and compassionate staff that make this kind of change possible."

Eileen Theriault
42 years

"I am passionate and optimistic about assisting people affected by mental illness and feel really blessed to be part of the team at Northern Human Services."

Linda Lauzon
26 years



Testimonials from Families Receiving Services

"We have enjoyed having Early Supports and Services in our home. Our service provider has been amazing, and she has shown me some wonderful ways to help my children succeed in their development. She has been such an inspiration, and we love having weekly visits."

"This program is amazing! I have been made to feel so much better and have more of an understanding of my preemie. All of my questions were met with honest answers and the information was clear and to the point. All of the people I have met in this program have handled my daughter as if she was theirs which, to me, is everything. Everyone I have talked to on the phone has been very helpful and beyond nice. I can't say enough about this program. For us, the greatest thing was knowing that our daughter had a head start and that we knew right away if there were any delays, we could pick up on it early. Simple questions to serious ones were always important and answered. This program has been beyond helpful. Thank you!"

"We have all appreciated and enjoyed working with our service provider. She is wonderful with our son, and he is so excited to see her during every visit. He has really progressed, and she has helped me and my husband with how to help our son, what to watch for and work on, etc."

"Our service provider is wonderful at what she does and shows a great interest in my child. She is very warm and friendly and does great activities with us. She has wonderful insights and suggestions, and I would recommend her to anyone. My child really likes her, and he has a smile on his face when he sees her."

"We've had a very positive experience and have worked with an educator, a Physical Therapist and a Speech and Language Pathologist. Progress has been amazing, and we look forward to continuing the journey with our team at NHS."

"Northern is founded on respect; for our clients, for each other, for our communities, and for the work we each do. We recognize that our clients work hard every day to have lives that are worth living in the face of both a serious illness and the stigma attached to it. In spite all the negative things that can and do intrude, this work and this workplace give staff and clients alike the opportunity, each day, to make their personal square inch a good place to live and to be the best person they can be."

Linda Goldstein
37 years

"When I began working at the Vershire Center in 1985, I always said 'God sent me here to help a certain gentleman'. He was very difficult to understand and was told he would probably always talk the way he did. After working with him for about six months, I realized that he was mixing French and English together and because I spoke both languages, I was able to help him. Today he is well understood and only speaks English, and I have often wondered what would have happened to him if he had never been understood..."

Ghislaine (Sam) Boudle
29 years



Healthy Choices/Healthy Changes (HCHC)

HCHC is an innovative client Wellness Program that brings together a broad range of community organizations concerned with health, exercise and nutrition to provide participants with personal health mentors and access to fitness activities provided by program partners. Additionally, nutrition counseling and education, smoking cessation support, medical liaison support and active management of chronic health conditions are available.

Northern Human Services has been engaged in this grant-funded program and as a result has been able to help clients make positive changes in their lives. Several months ago, this writer had the pleasure of joining a group interview with some of the HCHC participants with the original founder of HCHC, Kenneth Jue. All of the stories told by the participants were inspirational but one, in particular, stood out.

Before Kelly started in HCHC, she was experiencing a high level of anxiety which led to her heavy drinking. She also experienced symptoms of obsessive compulsive disorder, relationship problems and low self-esteem. Kelly began working with her Health Mentor in January of 2013 and has since lost 85 pounds but that is only one of a number of accomplishments she has achieved. When someone is suffering from debilitating anxiety, just going to a group interview can be intensely overwhelming. Kelly went, and she told her story to strangers. She talked about realizing that alcohol was negatively impacting her life (even though she had started drinking to temper her anxiety). She also realized that she wanted more out of life and that it was up to her to make that happen. Kelly talked about weight loss and becoming healthy: both physically and mentally.

With support from her Health Mentor, relentless perseverance and a strong commitment to follow-through, Kelly has been able to maintain her sobriety and taper off all psychotropic medications used to treat her life-interfering mental illness. She has also worked to improve her life by expanding her career opportunities: she is one step away from completing course work to become a personal trainer. Kelly's story reinforces our commitment to putting resources into new and innovative programs that can help us achieve our mission to assist people with mental illness and developmental disabilities lead meaningful lives.

We thank Kelly for allowing us to share her story.

Falling Off A Cliff (continued from page 2)

Northern Human Services has provided support to my family through our experience in understanding disability. The support that we have received from NHS has inspired me to become more involved. Serving on the Family Support Council and Board of Directors allows me to give back to the agency and help shape services for other families like my own.

Jennifer Pineo
Littleton



Northern Welcomes Two Psychiatric Specialists

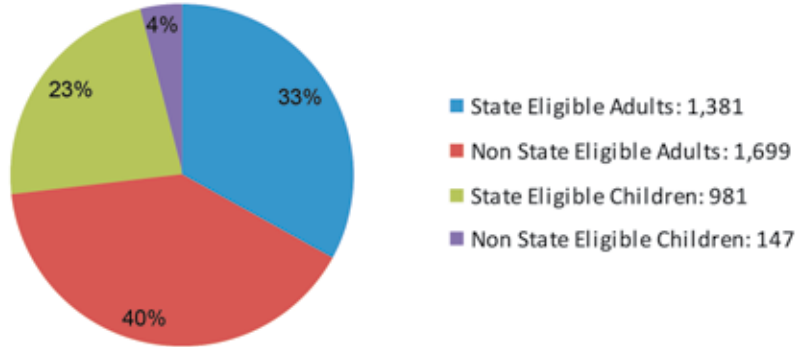
Northern Human Services is pleased to announce that Mariah McHose, APRN, and Megan Carman, MD, have joined the staff at its Littleton, Berlin, and Colebrook offices. They are a welcomed addition to the present psychiatric staff and will enable Northern to better meet the mental health needs of both adults and children in the communities it serves.

Dr. Carman hails from New Jersey and received her medical training at Rutgers Medical School. She brings many years of community psychiatry experience with her, having worked for 16 years at Riverbend Community Mental Health Center in Concord, NH as well as Central Vermont Mental Health Center and, most recently, Northeast Kingdom Mental Health in St. Johnsbury. In addition to four days a week in Littleton, Dr. Carman is piloting a Telepsychiatry Program on her fifth day in which she "sees" patients in Colebrook via televideo. NHS has successfully employed Telepsychiatry in the after-hours emergency services it provides to the seven hospitals in the northern 40% of the state. Medical Director Eric Van Leuven emphasized that "Telemedicine is a successful means of bringing specialty care to sparsely populated areas of the country. Through Dr. Carman's efforts, we can greatly improve access to expert psychiatric care for our northern areas. We are very excited."

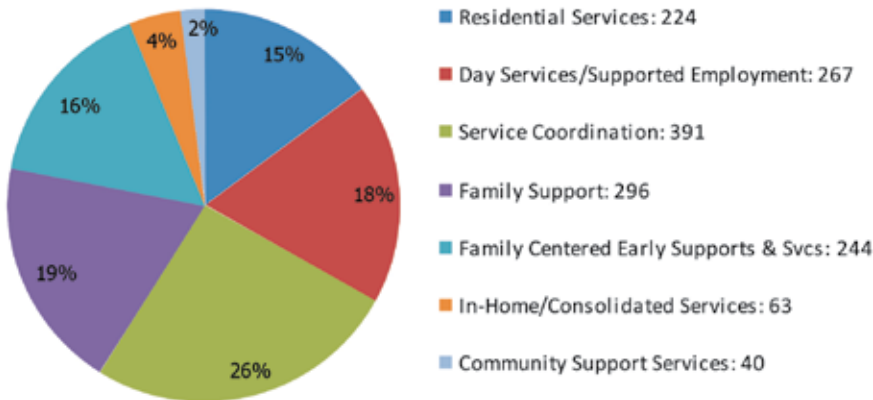
A Bethlehem, NH native, Mariah McHose, APRN, received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from UNH in 2009, and her Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Pennsylvania in 2012 where she garnered additional experience in Electroconvulsive Therapy, Deep Brain Stimulation, and Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation. Her previous work includes Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, Littleton Regional Hospital, Ammonoosuc Community Health Services, and Weeks Medical Center. She will be dividing her time between the Littleton and Berlin offices.

Individuals Receiving Behavioral Health Services

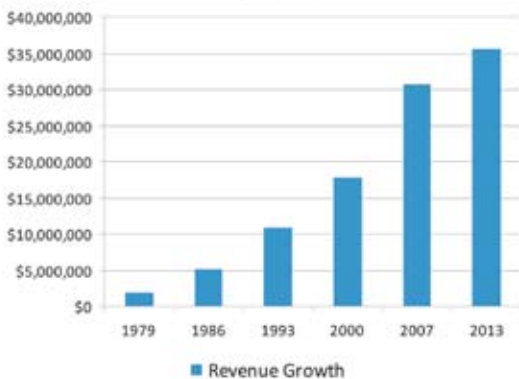
(State Eligible refers to individuals with serious mental illness or emotional disturbance)



Individuals Receiving Various Developmental Services



Revenue Growth



Financial Statement

Audited as of June 30, 2013

Revenue

Program Service Fees	\$ 30,986,713	92.26%
State and Federal Grants	\$ 908,600	2.71%
Other	\$ 379,200	1.13%
Production Income	\$ 455,301	1.36%
Other Public Support	\$ 518,115	1.54%
Local and County Support	\$ 94,207	0.28%
Donations	\$ 245,406	0.73%
Total Revenue	\$ 33,587,542	100.00%

Expenses

Mental Health Program Services	\$ 10,724,344	32.00%
Developmental Services Program Services	\$ 19,404,429	57.90%
Administration	\$ 2,222,116	6.63%
Occupancy	\$ 1,162,592	3.47%
Total Expenses	\$ 33,513,481	100.00%

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 **Northern
Human Services**
Changing Lives

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