

## APPENDIX K-1

### Mascoma Transaction Summary for Public



# Mascoma Community Health Center's Future

## CURRENT

Mascoma Community Health Center (MCHC) currently cares for more than 5,505 patients and has had 56,785 patient visits during its nearly six years of operation. We add about 50 new patients every month. Many of our patients are low income and have no health insurance or are underinsured. Many receive care at a reduced fee using our income-based sliding fee scale system. We accept Medicare and Medicaid and insurance coverage from more than 100 different health insurance companies.

We employ a doctor and two nurse practitioners in the medical clinic, along with other staff who support these providers. Up until July, 2022 we had a dentist, two dental assistants and a dental hygienist in the dental clinic. We had to close the dental clinic when our dentist left to enter private practice. We look forward to re-opening the dental clinic when we can find a new dentist and dental support staff. MCHC currently employs 12 full-time and part-time staff of which 80% are residents of our 5 core Mascoma Valley communities (Canaan, Enfield, Grafton, Orange, Dorchester)

## WHAT MAKES MCHC A MAJOR HEALTH ASSET IN OUR COMMUNITIES?

- We are you. We care about you. We are your neighbors. We are a non-profit with a volunteer board of directors many of whom are MCHC patients and understand your hopes and needs.
- We have three very qualified medical providers and consistent support staff.
- We have our own lab for many of our testing services.
- Starting later this year after collaboration with HealthFirst, we will be able to offer federally subsidized pharmacy discounts.
- We accepted payments from more than 100 different insurance companies in 2022.
- We are accepting new primary care patients
- We offer a sliding fee scale system for low-income patients.
- We have a program for small employers which offers 25% fee discounts for their employees.

### Our Services

- General Family Medicine
- Pediatrics - infant, children, adolescents
- Pediatric and Adult Physicals
- Pre-Employment Physicals
- Sports Injury Management
- Women's Health/Gynecology
- Geriatric Care
- Family Planning
- Tele-Health Visits
- Lab Services
- DOT/CDL Physicals
- COVID Testing
- Immunizations

### Our Providers

Dr. Ben Gardner  
Medical Director



Isabel Watts  
Nurse Practitioner



Rachel Hansen  
Nurse Practitioner



- We offer 15% discounts for cash payments.
- We accept walk-ins where time is available.
- We offer vaccinations and testing services quickly for a variety of illnesses.
- We provide pre-employment, CDL and youth physicals.
- We gladly will consult with you via telehealth at your request as appropriate.
- We have a web portal that allows you to access your records, to make appointments and to communicate with us by email.
- When it's really critical, we even make house calls.

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Today, our operating budget is in excess of \$1.8 million a year. Part of this cost is funded by nearly \$1.1 million in fees paid by patients and their insurance. The shortfall of \$700,000 a year has been covered by about \$100,000 in grants, with the remainder funded from private donations. For long term sustainability, we need the same Federal funding that other Community Health Centers receive. MCHC can get this funding by becoming a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). The following is the vision of Mascoma Community Healthcare, Inc.'s Board of Directors for a Federally Qualified Health Center future with more staff, new services and reliable cash flow to assure financial stability.

## HOW CAN WE ASSURE THAT MCHC WILL OFFER HEALTH AND DENTAL CARE THAT IS ACCOUNTABLE, AFFORDABLE AND SUSTAINABLE?

# Become a Federally Qualified Health Center!

### Why? As an FQHC MCHC will be able to offer:

- Behavioral Health and Medically Assisted Drug Treatment
- A staff person to provide Dietary and Health Education
- Federally supported low-cost pharmacy benefits

### AS an FQHC MCHC will receive:

- Increased Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements
- Federal grants for all services including dental services
- Greater operating capital of more than \$600,000 a year to support more services and cover subsidized care, allowing MCHC to be financially strong

Collaborating with a neighboring FQHC can give us immediate FQHC status. This has been a goal even before we opened. In 2020 we had begun the process of creating such a collaboration when Covid-19 hit us. This year we are completing that process.

## Who?

We propose partnering with HealthFirst Family Care Centers, a non-profit FQHC with health centers in Laconia and Franklin, NH. HealthFirst has been a successful community healthcare provider for more than 27 years and shares a vision and mission closely aligned with ours.

## How and When?

Mascoma Community Healthcare, Inc. (MCH) will retain ownership of MCHC and will lease it to HealthFirst. HealthFirst will retain our providers and staff and will be responsible for day-to-day operations. Like MCH, more than 50% of its Board members are patients at their health centers. Once we complete our arrangement with HealthFirst, patients of MCHC will be represented on the HealthFirst Board. Mascoma Community Healthcare, Inc. (MCH) will continue to have 501 (c) 3 status. MCH will continue to be an effective advocate for our Upper Valley communities. MCH will continue to raise funds in support of MCHC programs. The Health Center will remain in the Mascoma Valley, serve local patients and be a vital part of our communities. We are working to complete our arrangement with HealthFirst this summer to assure MCHC's eligibility for FQHC financial assistance.

## IMPACT

From the opening of the Health Center in 2017, we recognized achieving FQHC status was critical for our long-term survival. We explored possible affiliations with neighboring, well-established Federally qualified centers. These included Mid-State Health Center, North Star Health (formerly Springfield Health Care Systems) and HealthFirst Family Care Center. HealthFirst became the best option. As previously noted, Covid-19 delayed the plans for the collaboration.

### IMPACT ON HEALTHFIRST

- HealthFirst will gain:
  - Expanded patient base from wider Mascoma service area - currently 5500 patients with additional outreach planned
  - Additional medical and dedicated support staff from MCHC
  - A turn-key, fully furnished dental suite
  - Office space for professional and administrative purposes
  - Space for potential pharmacy, physical therapy and radiology services
  - Existing, dedicated area for behavioral health services
  - Ample space for community gatherings
  - Expanded telehealth capacity
  - Space for training and educational services

### IMPACT ON MASCOMA COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE CENTER

- MCHC will gain:
  - Long-term financial stability
  - Expanded services

- Back-up professional expertise
- Increased professional information technology services
- A partner who shares MCH's mission of providing community-focused rural wellness and health education

## VISION BEYOND 2023

To ensure long-term continuity of care in our service area:

MCH will retain its 501(c)3 status and will continue to seek local charitable gifts, on a reduced scale, to help fund new initiatives at the Health Center.

MCH will continue to own the building and retain the obligation to pay the USDA building and equipment loans. Under the lease agreements, rental income paid by HealthFirst will more than cover the obligation to the USDA

MCH will create a capital reserve fund to prepare for large building repairs, funded from the rental income.

By collaborating with HealthFirst, MCHC has selected an established FQHC that has operated for more than 27 years and has experience managing multiple sites. HealthFirst's stability and expertise helps ensure its capacity to successfully operate the MCHC location.

Extensive financial analysis indicates that the collaboration with HealthFirst will yield break-even operating expenses within three years. After one year, FQHC grants will help sustain MCHC operations until break-even status is attained. HealthFirst has other financial resources to sustain operations through the initial three-year phase.

MCH will continue to act as an advocate for Mascoma Valley area patients and will reach out to needy populations in eight towns with a combined population of more than 25,000 to assure that physical, mental health and dental care is available.

In the unlikely event HealthFirst ends the collaboration, the lease agreement states that MCH will retain the facility and equipment and reestablish its patients and operations, thereby giving MCH a new opportunity to operate the Center with increased patient census and added new services.

Furthermore, if HealthFirst ends the collaboration, MCH will likely seek another FQHC partner in order to sustain MCHC FQHC status.

Mascoma Community Health promotes health in our communities through our health center that draws local resources together to provide personal, affordable, accessible, quality care.



## SUMMARY of CONSIDERATIONS FOR COLLABORATION:

- The Mascoma Community Healthcare, Inc. mission is to provide a local, community-controlled health center that offers medical care, dental care and behavioral health services. This would not change.
- Is it difficult for MCHC to sustain raising large amounts of donations in the future to fund operations. A strong collaboration would reduce the dependence on fund raising for operating expenses.

- MCHC does not currently offer behavioral health services and collaboration would add behavioral health, substance abuse treatment, nutritional services and a low-cost pharmacy.
- Under the proposed collaboration, MCHC providers and staff would remain the same.
- The Mascoma Community Healthcare, Inc. Board would continue to support the Health Center, reach out to community members to grow the practice, and serve as an advocate for patients.
- Mascoma patients would have proportionate representation on the HealthFirst Board of Directors because FQHC statutes require it. This guarantees local input to all decisions affecting the Health Center.
- The Health Center and equipment would continue to be owed by Mascoma Community Healthcare Inc. and leased to HealthFirst, thus guaranteeing MCH's the long-term commitment to the health needs of the Mascoma Valley.
- We would have strength from sharing staff and knowledge from HealthFirst's two other health centers.
- Day-to-day management would be performed by HealthFirst and would be accountable to the reconstituted HealthFirst Board that includes MCHC patients.
- Mascoma Community Healthcare volunteers would still provide guidance in growing the combined HealthFirst/Mascoma health system.
- We believe that this is the best option for Mascoma Community Health Center to go forward financially and expand services to our communities in the future.

We will be holding a community wide meeting to listen to your ideas about this collaboration. We would appreciate your input. Please share your thoughts with us so that we can make the best decision for our communities. Attend our first Listening Session at 9 AM Saturday April 1<sup>st</sup> at the Mascoma Health Center on the corner of US Route 4 and Roberts Road in Canaan.

Send comments by April 10th to: [Director@Mascomahealth.org](mailto:Director@Mascomahealth.org)

**or mail to PO Box 550, Canaan, NH 03741 or drop off written comments at the Health Center.**

**ZOOM LINK CLICK [HERE](#) FOR LINK TO PARTICIPATE IN ZOOM ON APRIL 1!**

Thank you - Mascoma Community Healthcare Board of Directors  
[www.mascomahealthcare.org](http://www.mascomahealthcare.org) or see our Facebook page.

**Right Care, Right Costs, Right Here.**