



Community Health Needs Assessment 2020 Progress Report



This report contains data collected by Gaylord staff and compiled by the Public Relations Department to address the progress of the initiatives established in the triennial 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment.

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To read the full plan or any of the following, [click here](#) for the 2019 CHNA & Implementation Plan:

Inventory of Services

Community Gaylord Serves

Rational, Research and Survey Findings

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABI - Acquired brain injury

ACMA - American Case Management Association

ALS - Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis

BITS - Bioness Integrated Technology Systems

CARF - Commission for the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities

CHEFA Grant - Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority Grant

COPD - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

CVA - Cerebrovascular accident/stroke

MARTTI - My Accessible Real Time Trusted Interpreter

MCI - Mild cognitive impairment

MS - Multiple sclerosis

SCI - Spinal cord injury

TBI - Traumatic brain injury

USOC - United States Olympic Committee

ABOUT GAYLORD

Gaylord Specialty Healthcare is a rehabilitation-focused, nonprofit health system that provides inpatient and outpatient care for people at every point in their journey from illness or injury to maximum recovery. The organization is comprised of three components: Gaylord Hospital which is a long term acute care hospital (LTCH) licensed for 137 beds; Outpatient Services which offers over 30 programs for a variety of medical conditions; and Gaylord Physical Therapy which offers orthopedic rehab as a result of injury or surgery.

Gaylord Hospital provides medical rehabilitation for acute illnesses, accidents and complex medical conditions. Licensed as a long-term acute care hospital, Gaylord Hospital fills a critical gap in the continuum of care by serving patients with complex medical needs who require hospitalization and rehabilitation for an extended period – on average 25+ days. Gaylord Outpatient Services offers nearly 30 programs for a wide range of conditions, focusing mainly on neurologic diagnoses, with specialized technology and staff with advanced training to meet the needs of these patients. Gaylord Physical Therapy provides orthopedic rehabilitation services for recovery from surgery, injury, sports-related injury and other medical conditions.

Together, these entities deliver a complete continuum of rehabilitation care driven by technology, research, clinical experience and human compassion. Headquartered in Wallingford, Connecticut, Gaylord serves a mix of local, regional, national and international patients.

As a nonprofit institution, Gaylord is governed by a Board of Directors, which meets six times a year and whose members are not compensated. There are several standing Board committees that oversee the operations of the system, including Budget & Finance, Audit, Nominating, Investment, Joint Conference, Development and Human Resources. Our Executive Committee annually assesses the performance of our Chief Executive Officer based upon her stated goals.

LOCATIONS

Gaylord Hospital
50 Gaylord Farm Road, Wallingford, CT 06492

Gaylord Outpatient Services
50 Gaylord Farm Road, Wallingford, CT 06492

Gaylord Physical Therapy
1154 Highland Avenue, Cheshire, CT 06492

Gaylord Physical Therapy
8 Devine Street, North Haven, CT 06473

OPENED IN MAY 2020

Gaylord Physical Therapy
50 Berlin Road, Cromwell, CT 06416

ACCREDITATIONS AND EXPERTISE

Areas of expertise include:

- **Spinal Cord Injury** – We create a personalized treatment plan to maximize physical and emotional recovery and rehabilitation from spinal cord dysfunction caused by disease or injury.
- **Brain Injury** – We offer one of the most comprehensive brain injury treatment and rehabilitation programs in the Northeast. Our full range of care begins at inpatient, follows through to an on-campus transitional living center and on to outpatient services.
- **Stroke Recovery** – Our patients receive an individualized care plan to rehabilitate a wide range of impairments including partial paralysis, speech loss, swallowing and visual deficits. Survivors may participate in the transitional living center and utilize our extensive options in outpatient rehabilitation.
- **Neurological Rehabilitation** – Our specialized care team can treat patients suffering from many neurological disorders, some of them rare, including ALS, muscular dystrophy, Guillain Barré, Multiple Sclerosis and others.
- **Orthopedic Rehabilitation** – Our specialists treat musculoskeletal problems for patients following major multiple trauma, amputations, joint replacements, fractures and arthritis.
- **Pulmonary Program** – Our team, which is led by a board-certified pulmonologist, offers exceptional care to the many people suffering from a range of diseases, including COPD, the largest pulmonary diagnosis affecting Connecticut's population. Our specialists care for patients in need of ventilator weaning and offer an educational program for families that want to bring a loved one home who is still vent dependent. All respiratory patients who are seeking better overall health and enhanced mobility are provided a robust exercise program and disease specific education.
- **Complex Medical Conditions** – Patients who have had organ transplants, require extensive wound care, have experienced complications following surgery, have congestive heart failure, or other cardiac complications can benefit from the hospitalist led medical team at Gaylord.

Gaylord is accredited by the Joint Commission, which includes a rigorous survey to maintain accreditation. Gaylord is the only Commission for the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) accredited facility in the state for inpatient and outpatient programs. Additionally, the hospital is one of only two in the country with three CARF subspecialty accreditations in stroke, traumatic brain injury and spinal cord.

Gaylord is a member site of the Model Spinal Cord System, of which there are only 14 in the nation. Gaylord is also one of only 19 locations in the US to have the Ekso® bionic exoskeleton, which enables people who are paralyzed to walk. We are one of only 14 facilities nationwide to be designated a Center of Excellence for the Passy-Muir speaking valve, which allows patients with a tracheostomy tube to speak. Gaylord was the first in the nation to be designated a Center of Excellence for our expertise in using the Vapotherm technology, which delivers heated humidified air to our vent-dependent patients, which improves outcomes. We are the flagship hospital for this program and are working with Vapotherm to set the standards for designation of other hospitals as a Center of Excellence.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

- Mission – To enhance health, maximize function and transform lives.
- Vision – To be a recognized and acknowledged destination for rehabilitation and complex medical care providing high-quality, patient-centered, compassionate, team-based healing at every point in the journey from illness or injury to maximum recovery.
- Values – Clinical excellence, compassion, integrity, respect, accountability and a commitment to safety.



2020 Care Highlights

1,475
INPATIENTS



148
COVID-19 PATIENTS

163
BRAIN INJURY PATIENTS

339
STROKE PATIENTS

118
SPINAL CORD INJURY PATIENTS

MAINTAINED FIRST CLASS
PATIENT CARE, TRAINING FOR
MEDICAL AND THERAPY STAFF, AND
CRITICAL EQUIPMENT FOR PATIENTS
TO GUIDE THEM IN THEIR RECOVERY

GAYLORD
ACHIEVED ONE
OF THE BEST
NATIONAL
VENTILATOR
WEANING RATES

77%
**FAR ABOVE THE
NATIONAL AVERAGE
OF 52.9%**



SUMMARY OF 2020

The normal challenges to providing healthcare services in a typical year paled in comparison to the challenges presented by the arrival of the coronavirus in the United States and the changes which began to affect the delivery of patient care in March 2020.

Although the pandemic continues, we are proud of the care provided in 2020 and are optimistic about 2021. Gaylord's healthcare teams demonstrated their unique ability to adjust quickly to the demands of a pandemic, providing outstanding care for all of our patients. The images of joyous reunions between patient and their families after weeks or months of separation, sustained tired staff. The opportunities to create even deeper relationships as staff became "family" to so many in this time of crisis softened the constant request to pivot, change direction and almost as soon as any routine was established, all were challenged to pivot again.

In the midst of this pandemic, Gaylord launched its Telemedicine program. Under the leadership of Jerrold Kaplan, MD, our program delivered 3,148 telehealth visits to our outpatients. Gaylord safely and successfully opened a fourth outpatient location - an additional physical therapy site in Cromwell, CT - in May 2020. Gaylord's leadership continually made changes to keep staff and patients safe, well cared for and reassured that the well-being of our community was at the heart of every decision.

The direction of previously identified initiatives were assessed and analyzed, and while some were placed on hold due to the impracticality of in-person care for our more fragile community members, the number of new services, ways to deliver care and amount of communication supplied to all who needed Gaylord, was nothing short of astounding. As a healthcare system, we proudly report the following progress on our 2019 CHNA and Implementation Plan.

Priority 1: Brain Health and Mild Cognitive Impairment programming

Brain health refers to the ability to remember, learn, play, concentrate and maintain a clear, active mind. It's being able to draw on the strengths of your brain—information management, logic, judgement, perspective and wisdom. Brain health is all about making the most of your brain and helping reduce some risks to it as you age.¹

Strategies to address this need from 2019 CHNA:

- 1) Gaylord is beginning to foster a relationship with the Mayo Clinic for the HABIT program. We are going to send a neuropsychologist out to the Mayo Clinic to receive MCI training. This training will expand the types of patients that Gaylord serves from those with major concussions or brain injuries to those with mild cognitive impairment and dementia. This program will also have physical activity as well as nutrition components.
- 2) Investigate and look to implement additional screening evaluations and programming for patients who are required to, or voluntarily wish to, gather more information about their mental capacity.
- 3) Increase the availability for pediatric and adult neuropsychology services to meet the demand in the community.

Anticipated impact:

- Establish additional programs for better patient care.
- Share the information with referring providers for more coordinated care.
- Increase the number of patients utilizing the psychology department each year.

2020 Strategy Updates:

- 1) A Gaylord neuropsychologist has been trained by the Mayo Clinic staff to administer the HABIT Healthy Action to Benefit Independence & Thinking® program which is designed to equip older adults with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) to compensate for losses and develop healthier habits to slow the progression of the disease. The launch of this program was delayed when the pandemic reduced neuropsychology staffing and caused a reallocation of staff hours to cover COVID-related needs. HABIT is a group based model, with 20 people per group, including caregivers. Gaylord's adherence to DPH mandates regarding social distancing and group size, prevented the offering of the program anytime in the near future. Materials and staff are ready to start when it is safe to do so.

¹ <https://brainhealth.nia.nih.gov/>

- 2) The need for neuropsychological screenings for pilots as mandated by the regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has been identified as a population for Gaylord to serve. Supplies have been ordered and a staff member is prepared to administer the screenings during spring 2021.
- 3) During FY2020 the psychology department provided 3,456 outpatient visits. This represents an increase of 20% over FY2019 visits. Both numbers represent pediatric and adult appointments.

Priority 2: Expand healthcare options for those involved in work place injuries

The Bureau of Labor Statistics shows a large volume of work-related injuries. Gaylord seeks to expand its staff and capabilities to address the high demand by providing quality care and excellent outcomes. Injured workers currently benefit from the technology and staff expertise already in place at Gaylord.

Strategies to address this need from 2019 CHNA:

- 1) Establish dedicated programs for inpatients and outpatients who require specialized resources to help them through the workers' compensation system.
- 2) Contract a physician specialist available to see injured workers.
- 3) Use a trained care manager to interact with the insurance companies, worker compensation liaisons/adjustors, lawyers, etc.
- 4) Integrate the use of rehab technology to expedite the recovery of the patients using Gaylord's programs.
- 5) Communicate the scope of the services to appropriate audiences.

Anticipated Impact:

- Increase the number of patients able to access rehab services for work-related injuries.
- Help workers return to any type of work status, including full-time, part-time or per diem.
- Provide clinical speakers to interested audiences who have relationships with decisions makers in the worker's compensation fields to facilitate care options.

2020 Strategy Updates:

- 1) Gaylord has built a dedicated team to address the needs of the injured worker and others involved in their care, whether it be the treating team in the acute care hospital, the insurance carrier or the family. The Gaylord staff makes themselves highly available to answer questions and assist the community by aligning clinical needs with the various experts across the Gaylord continuum. Gaylord provides coordinate, individually managed, team-based, rehabilitative and complex medical care for injured workers in both inpatient and outpatient areas. In 2020, Gaylord Outpatient treated an 8.3% increase over patients in 2019. Gaylord Inpatient treated 25% increase over 2019.

Program information, click here: <https://www.gaylord.org/Patients-Families/Conditions-Services/Workers-Compensation>

- 2) Gaylord had hired Dr. Jerrold Kaplan in 2019 and 2020 to provide oversight of injured workers care on a part-time basis. As of January 1, 2021 Dr. Kaplan has come on Gaylord staff full-time to oversee all outpatient services and inpatient and outpatient workers' compensation cases. The volume of visits increased in the outpatient setting over 8% from FY19 to FY20. Treatment plans are created and led by this board certified medical director with extensive experience in workers' compensation, using the latest evidence-based rehabilitation to maximize patient outcomes. <https://www.gaylord.org/Patients-Families/Levels-of-Care/Outpatient-Services/Dr-Kaplan>
- 3) Gaylord expanded the care management team in 2020 in order to provide robust supervision to patients in the injured workers program. A dedicated outpatient care manager with clinical training as a certified occupational therapist assistant joined the team established by a registered nurse, who now focuses on inpatient care management. Both establish a direct line of communication between Gaylord and the adjuster or Nurse Case Manager assigned. This facilitates the injured worker's progress toward achieving goals of treatment and return to work.
- 4) To differentiate Gaylord's program, the use of advanced rehabilitation technology is made a priority. From offering use of tablets with the latest rehab-focused apps to high-end robotic technology, intellectual and financial investments are made yearly to continue improving the program to facilitate patient recovery. A few noteworthy pieces of rehab tech are:
 - a. The Ekso® Bionic exoskeleton, or Ekso, is a portable, adjustable bionic suit designed to help patients with lower-extremity paralysis or weakness, resulting from a spinal cord injury, stroke or other neurological condition, to stand and walk.
 - b. The ZeroG® Gait and Balance System protects patients from falls while providing dynamic body-weight support as patients practice walking, balance tasks, sit-to-stand maneuvers and even stairs. Only available in CT at Gaylord.
 - c. AlterG® Anti-Gravity treadmills use NASA-developed Differential Air Pressure (DAP) technology that enables unprecedented unweighting therapy and training capabilities. This unique unweighting with air pressure comfortably lifts the user and allows him/her to walk or run at a fraction of their body weight.
- 5) Communications with referral sources, potential patients and legislators are delivered in the form of press releases on new staff appointments and purchases of technology and an annual report on the outcomes of the patients in the injured worker program. The FY20 report is currently being compiled. [Click here](#) to view Gaylord's 2019 Worker's Compensation Performance Report.

Priority 3: Pulmonary/COPD rehabilitation, ventilation weaning and caregiver training

Gaylord has the expertise and resources to not only wean patients from the vent but to teach the patient's caregivers how to care for them while on the vent. Our clinical staff has identified the need for a program to explain the magnitude of the responsibility of taking a loved one home on a vent. Gaylord will endeavor to create a video based program to teach caregivers about the various challenges of taking someone home on a vent and provide a realistic and helpful account of what is needed.

Strategies to address this need from 2019 CHNA:

- 1) In 2019, Gaylord applied for a grant from CHEFA to create a video about educating caregivers on the responsibilities of caring for someone on a ventilator. The purpose of these videos will be to better prepare patients and family members that are considering being discharged on a ventilator. This is an underserved educational need.
- 2) Gaylord will track the number of caregivers who watch the video.
- 3) To improve general pulmonary care, Gaylord is continuing to investigate increasing outpatient space for the pulmonary program.
- 4) Gaylord will continue to offer outpatient pulmonology and sleep medicine physicians onsite to see patients one day a week/twice a month.

Anticipated impact:

- Gaylord will make the vent videos public and share them with other healthcare systems. The Admissions staff experience barriers when it comes to insurance case managers approving a Gaylord stay for vent dependent patients. These videos will be used to attempt to educate the insurance industry to the value of vent caregiver teaching.
- All patients being considered for vent admissions will be given the opportunity to watch the video series as it will increase their knowledge about the methods used to care for their loved one while at Gaylord Hospital.

2020 Strategy Updates:

- 1) A series of three videos were created as an educational series for all audiences in need of realistic, detailed information for taking home a loved one on a ventilator. The videos are serving to educate those in the insurance industry, those in acute care hospitals and patients and caregivers. The vent videos were uploaded to YouTube on November 19, 2019.
- 2) In an effort to serve as wide a community as possible the video series was placed on YouTube. This placement was convenient for potential Gaylord patients and their caregivers to watch and learn, and also provided world-wide access to critical information that is not well represented for this population.

We are unable to determine the exact number of views by caregivers against referral sources and other clinicians, but numbers below represent views from November 2019-January 2021.

- Vent Program Video 1- Ventilator Care at Gaylord: 1.3K views
 - Vent Program Video 2- Training Caregivers: 1.2 K views
 - Vent Program Video 3- Preparing the Home: 2K views
- 3) Gaylord's Outpatient Rehabilitation Program secured a donation to be used to refresh and enlarge the space where outpatient pulmonary services are delivered. The larger space allowed an additional class session for exercise and education to be offered every nine weeks.
- 4) Gaylord Outpatient Medical Services trialed having physicians' services in the Wallingford, CT location for 6 months. The volumes for both pulmonary and sleep patients was deemed not large enough to continue the model. We are currently investigating a new model for providing these services, while maintaining a relationship with the previous physicians and using their current office locations for patient care when referrals are needed.

COVID-19 impacted healthcare systems around the world. All providers were challenged to modify delivery of care and to offer new options to keep patients and staff safe. Gaylord Specialty Healthcare played an enormous role in the state of Connecticut, and across New England and the Tristate area by providing inpatient care to more than 150 COVID-19 patients, many of them who were on vents, and required oxygen.

After several months of treating and rehabbing these patients, Gaylord started a virtual COVID-19 support group via Zoom. This program was offered to all former COVID-19 patients who were under our care.

After several weeks of learning about the ongoing struggles and symptoms that these "long-haulers" were experiencing, Gaylord started an Outpatient COVID-19 Rehabilitation and Recovery Program, run by Dr. Jerrold Kaplan, the Medical Director of Outpatient and Workers' Compensation Services. The patient first meets with Dr. Kaplan, who conducts a thorough examination and then determines the best approach to maximize recovery. Patients are exhibiting a vast improvement in their physical recovery, cognitive well-being and ability to return to a higher level of functioning after participating in the program.

Priority #4: Provide wellness lectures and access to adaptive sports opportunities

As a nonprofit healthcare system, Gaylord strives to provide educational opportunities and wellness programming to our community, from school-aged children through senior citizens. By arming the community with the latest research on health conditions and how to avoid risky behaviors, we hope to build a stronger, healthier tomorrow. Our community's members often reach out via our website "Contact Us" form looking for resources. By continuing to inform them where and when to seek help, we can build a stronger relationship. Educational opportunities include the ThinkFirst program, rehab technology updates, how to better exercise, avoid falls, increase balance and how to slow the process of osteoporosis to name a few.

Strategies for implementation:

- 1) Provide community lectures on topics related to Gaylord Outpatient Services and Gaylord Physical Therapy offerings.
- 2) Partner with local YMCAs, community employers, Chamber of Commerce's, etc. to provide education.
- 3) Build relationships with sport clubs, teams, schools, etc. to allow Gaylord Physical Therapy staff to interact with local youth groups to encourage active living.
- 4) Provide support to the Gaylord Sports Association (adaptive recreational and competitive sports) for their programs to be expanded upon.

Anticipated impact:

- Maintain our relationship with the community as a trusted healthcare resource in central Connecticut.
- Increase the physical benefits, social opportunities, independence and skill enhancement for those we serve.

Strategies to address this need from 2019 CHNA:

- 1) Due to the implications of COVID-19, all events changed from in-person to virtual via Zoom. Director of Respiratory and Radiology Services, Lorraine Cullen, MS, RRT, presented twice on COPD, as well as providing COVID-19 education. Staff from the nutrition, physical therapy, and psychology departments presented on various other timely topics including COPD, diabetes prevention, diet and exercise related to COVID, mindfulness, osteoporosis and TMD/TMJ jaw pain. Gaylord held 18 presentations in 2020. An average of 15 people attended each presentation.

- 2) Gaylord partnered with many organizations in 2020 in order to reach a wider audience and to help community members to stay connected during this difficult time including Chesprocott Health District, BH Care, the Wallingford, Cheshire, Berlin and New Britain YMCAs, as well as the Cromwell and Cheshire Senior Centers.
- 3) Due to restrictions from schools and sporting leagues, Gaylord was unable to coordinate opportunities to interact with sport and school organizations. Gaylord did make financial contributions to various community teams and activities in an effort to keep healthy activities running. Any team or club whose sport or activity was postponed, will have Gaylord's support when the restrictions are lifted.

The Gaylord Sports Association activities were severely impacted by COVID-19. Scheduled sport trips and adaptive sport programs were placed on hold in March 2020. Many of the in-person events were switched to Zoom mid-summer in order to keep participants connected and physically active. Through the hard work of many staff and volunteers, 232 individual athletes were served in 2020 via 37 events. Events included archery, bocchia, golf, sled hockey, kayaking, wheelchair rugby, alpine skiing, tennis, triathlon and yoga.

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- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mild-cognitive-impairment/symptoms-causes/syc-20354578>



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Gaylord was the first in the country to earn this distinction.

