



BELKNAP-MERRIMACK COUNTIES, INC.
EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES SINCE 1965

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

**BUILDING
PATHWAYS
FORWARD:**
**Advancing
Stability and
Support in Our
Communities**



WWW.CAPBM.ORG



Building Pathways Forward: Advancing Stability and Support in Our Communities

MISSION

Our mission is to assist in reducing poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals to reach economic stability.

THE PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.

We care about the ENTIRE community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

Dear Friends, Partners, and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year, our agency has experienced an extraordinary journey of growth, adaptation, and resilience. The challenges we've faced and the opportunities we've embraced have shaped us into a stronger, more dynamic organization. At the heart of our work remains our unwavering commitment to assisting low-income families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency and improve their quality of life. This mission continues to guide our vision for the future, ensuring we provide opportunities and resources to those who need them most.

This year has been one of both reflection and action. We have taken the time to assess our strengths and recognize areas where we can improve. True to our mission, our programs have evolved to better meet the demands of an ever-changing world, ensuring that we remain a reliable resource for those who depend on us.

That requires **Enhancing Accessibility** to make our services more accessible and user-friendly for the community through streamlining processes, like transitioning to a single application system and incorporating online applications.

As well, we are **Expanding Outreach**, now using two mobile food assistance vans to help us reach underserved populations more effectively and ensure that essential resources are delivered where they're needed.

Lastly, **Leveraging Technology** has also been a focus. By embracing digital solutions, we aim to improve efficiency and provide more convenient options for those who rely on our services.

Whether through direct services, advocacy, or community engagement, **we have focused on innovation, collaboration, and forward-thinking strategies** to chart a path toward sustained growth and impact for the individuals and communities we serve.

Looking ahead, we are excited about our agency's future. Our plans are ambitious, yet grounded in the realities of those we serve. **We are expanding our reach, enhancing our services, and building strong partnerships to maximize the resources that allow us to support families on their journey toward self-sufficiency.** At the core of this vision is the understanding that we can create lasting change by empowering individuals, promoting independence, and fostering a thriving community.

We invite you to join us on this journey as we continue to push forward, ensuring that our agency remains a beacon of hope and support for years to come.

With warm regards,

Chris Pyles

Chair, Board of Directors

Jeanne Agri

Chief Executive Officer



Introducing our Leadership Team

Jeanne Agri

Chief Executive Officer

Michael Tabory

Chief Operating Officer

Jill Lesmerise

Chief Financial Officer

Beth Heyward

Director of Strategy and Planning

Kristin Bertrand

Director of Energy and Area Resource Centers

Ken Boyer

Director of Housing Rehabilitation and Energy Conservation

Randy Emerson

Director of Emergency Food Assistance

Heather O'Brien

Director of Elder Services

Jacqueline Oliveira

Director of Affordable Housing

Terri Paige

Director of Transportation

Heather Patton

Director of Child Development

Liza Reynolds

Director of Electric Assistance Program

Susan Wnuk

Director of Community Health and Nutrition Services

Board of Directors

Chris Pyles, *Chair*

Board member since: 1/14/2021

Represents – Attorney/Law Counselor

David Croft, *Vice Chair*

Board member since: 5/13/2021

Represents – County Government

A. Bruce Carri, *Treasurer*

Board member since: 3/12/2020

Represents – CPA/Financial Services

Safiya Wazir, *Secretary*

Board member since: 11/2/2016

Represents – State Government

Heather Brown

Board member since: 1/15/2009

Represents – Low-income Individuals & Families in the community

Sara A. Lewko

Board member since: 2/21/2001

Represents – County Government

Dennis Martino

Board member since: 2/24/2005

Represents - Education

Ashley Reed

Board member since: 5/12/2022

Represents – Low-income Individuals & Families in the community

S. David Siff, Esq.

Board member since: 10/2/2013

Represents – Attorney/Law Counselor

Tracy Vergason

Board member since: 5/12/2022

Represents– Education

We recognize the importance of collaborating with our partners to address the needs within our communities, while at the same time supporting our agency, staff and participants. As such, we are excited to continuously work on initiatives within our strategic plan to help advance our momentum toward goals that align with both our agency and the needs of the communities we serve.

Resource Development

- Little Green Light fundraising software has been purchased to track donations.

Workforce Development

- Created an agency-wide on-boarding program.
- Competitive benefits for employees.
- Working on recruitment practices.

Internal Communications

- We have updated The Hub, our staff intranet used as a central online resource of procedures, forms, and more.

Leveraging Technology

- Setting up computers for client use (piloting 3 centers to start).
- Gathering FAQs by program for website inclusion.
- Integrating a new CAP60 CRM software into agency programs.
- Development of ongoing technology training for new and current employees.
- Updating door codes (to ensure security).
- Development of online donations and fundraising portal.

External Communications

- Consistent utilization of the agency Brand Kit for all marketing materials, including training staff on the use of these materials.
- Enhanced Community Outreach in all program areas ensuring cohesive messaging to the community across all programs.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT STATS & FACTS

Reflecting on a year of accomplishments at CAPBM, we are especially proud of the direct impact our programs and services have had on the individuals and families who make up the communities we serve.

Over the last year, we have worked to...

Increase Access to Essential Services like housing assistance, energy savings programs, and food insecurity initiatives. These services help alleviate the financial burdens on low-income households, allowing them to reallocate resources toward other economic needs.

Reduce Poverty Levels through programs aimed at reducing poverty levels to improve the quality of life for individuals and families.

Through our commitment to this work, we are proud to witness the ripple effects of benefits our programs have on the community at large. Thanks in part to what CAPBM offers, there can be more spending in the broader economy and our communities grow stronger through increased social cohesion and as a result, an improved quality of life.

COMMUNITY IMPACT JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024





The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

CAPBM is the Statewide TEFAP Administrator with the New Hampshire Community Action Partnership network providing support with local food access throughout NH. With 324,250* households experiencing food insecurity in NH, the need is great. CAPBM warehouses ship food statewide to all ten counties in NH.

- Food is provided to over 225 hunger relief organizations.
- Food assistance is provided to approximately 25,000 households each month.
- Distribution of over 15,000 cases of food each month.
- 180,980 cases of food will be distributed this year.
- 4,017,839 pounds of USDA food this year.
- Valued at \$5,721,980.

**Reported by NH Hunger Solutions as of August 19, 2024.*

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

WIC is the special supplemental nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children for those who are at or below 185% of the federal poverty guidelines. Automatic Income Eligibility for WIC is for families that receive SNAP benefits, Medicaid, TANF or are foster children up to their fifth birthday.

Did You Know?

About 40% of all infants and 22% of children ages 1 to 5 in the United States participate in the program.

WIC provides supplemental foods, nutrition education, and referrals to healthcare and other social services to low-income, nutritionally at-risk pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, infants, and children up to 5 years of age.

WIC provides a healthy food package that participants can purchase at approved grocers with an EBT card. These food packages are aligned with the latest nutritional science including with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Plus a monthly cash value benefit to purchase fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables.

\$26.00 for Children

\$47.00 for pregnant and post-partum women

\$52.00 for breastfeeding women

The program promotes breastfeeding and provides support to pregnant and breastfeeding women through trained nutritionists, Certified Lactation Counselors, and Breastfeeding Peer Counselors as well as a larger food package to help improve their diet. Breast pumps are available to those in need.

WIC also offers a wide variety of special projects:

- Fit-WIC, a physical activity and nutrition education program
- Learn the Signs Act Early, a CDC developmental monitoring program
- Smoking cessation
- Lead screening
- Water Pitcher Filter Screening Project
- Gestational diabetes screening
- Screening for alcohol and substance use
- and referrals to SNAP, Medicaid, TANF, Home Visiting, Fuel Assistance, Childcare and other support services.

Services are provided at 21 clinic sites throughout Belknap, Merrimack, Grafton and Coos Counties.



Meals on Wheels Program & Senior Center Programs

“There is so much more beyond the plate”

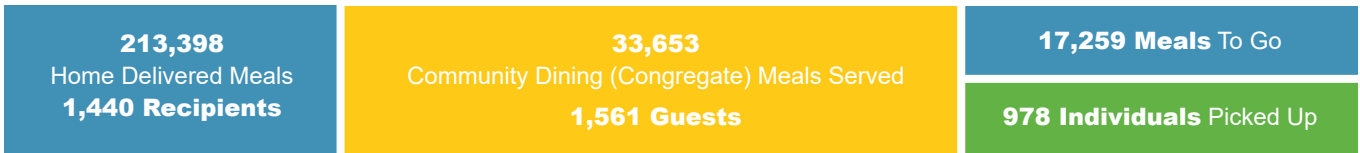
Senior Centers

- 1. Increased access to Community Services:** Various programs, speakers and information are available at each center along with access to all CAPBM programs
- 2. Increased Socialization:** We see a lot of friendships turn into family! Older adults and their caregivers are welcome at the center for their own socialization and they can bring their loved ones.
- 3. Better Nutrition:** Our balanced, nutrient dense meals help sustain weight loss or weight gain and provide meals for those who may not be able to afford it. We offer various food options such as community dining or Grab and Go.
- 4. Encourage Healthy Lifestyles:** Our activities such as ping pong, chair yoga, walking groups, healthy nutrition education, and VNA services provide easy access and motivation to embrace healthier habits.

Meals On Wheels

- 1. Good Nutrition:** We provide a variety of foods for various health conditions and to help sustain weight gain / loss. As well, the program is a welcomed meal for those who may not otherwise be able to afford it.
- 2. Caregiver Relief:** With a daily meal provided to the person they care for, the responsibility of making meals regularly no longer falls on the caregiver. Daily wellness checks through Meals on Wheels also save a caregiver from having to check on their loved one all the time.
- 3. Increased Independence at Home:** By providing the daily meal, this allows for increased independence for those who may not be able to prepare a nutritious meal, but are otherwise able to care for themselves. The Daily wellness checks allow for individuals to remain at home but if there is an accident the Meals on Wheels volunteer would be able to assist and call for help.

A LOOK AT
FY 23-24



We have seen an increase in our congregate and Grab and Go meals since the last fiscal year. Individuals are looking for low cost resources and socialization opportunities either because they can't afford to pay for any, or because they are looking to offset their costs of daily living. We see a lot of our individuals are struggling to support their basic needs. Others who have a bit more income choose to pay for other items they can afford for themselves such as a car or clothing. We have certainly started to see new individuals coming into the center who are over 60 years old and disabled looking for socialization.

Summer Food Service Program

With a lack of a school lunch program during summer break, our Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) fills the gap for those students who don't always have enough food at home. The program focuses on lower income locations and students enrolled in summer programs. Providing children with a well-balanced meal allows for healthier growth both physically and mentally.

In FY 23, there were 16,356 breakfast meals and 20,246 lunch meals provided throughout the summer months. The highest enrollment being in the month of July with 2,381 individuals under the age of 18.



Mobile Food Program

We work with two older adult sisters that live on the outskirts of Concord that our Mobile Food Van stops by regularly. The older sister takes care of her younger sister who has intellectual disabilities and they don't have any form of transportation.

They are always very happy and appreciative when we make food deliveries. The younger sister especially loves the SpaghettiOs we provide in the food box.



Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

CSFP works to improve the health of low-income persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA Foods.

The agency oversees the distribution of CSFP foods to all ten counties in NH, delivering to over 85 sites in Belknap, Merrimack, Grafton, Coös, Strafford and Carroll Counties, while collaborating with two other community action agencies for the other four NH counties.

Delivering to elderly housing, senior centers, churches, community centers and other places frequented by seniors.

Food packages provided to seniors may include items such as:

- Nonfat dry and ultra-high-temperature fluid milk
- Juice
- Ready-to-eat cereal
- Rice
- Pasta
- Peanut butter
- Dry beans
- Canned meat, poultry, or fish
- Unsweetened or extra light syrup canned fruits
- Low sodium canned vegetables and soup.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)

All CSFP participants are eligible to receive SFMNP during the summer months consisting of locally grown produce by New Hampshire Farmers.

Participants receive one bundle of fresh NH produce valued at \$32.00!

We make it easy! The only requirement to participate is the senior must be enrolled in CSFP and complete a Rights and Responsibility form.

Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) helps residents in Belknap and Merrimack Counties with the overall energy efficiency of their homes.

Lowering energy costs and improving comfort in the home through various measures helps residents remain independent and comfortable in their homes. We are also able to help repair and replace heating systems under certain circumstances.



“I’m so happy with everything they did. I can’t thank them enough.” ~ Resident of Hopkinton

An elderly resident from Hopkinton was pleasantly surprised on the day of her initial home assessment when she learned of the many services our weatherization program offers.

In her case, a simple clean and tune-up done on her furnace, as well as insulating her home and improving her home’s overall energy efficiency.

Upon completion of the work she shook the hand of Kyle LaValley, Energy Auditor, reminding him again of how grateful she was for everything we did for her.

All assessments are conducted by a professionally certified Energy Auditor to ensure safety and accuracy.

Weatherization services include, but are not limited to:

- Insulation of the home
- Weather stripping exterior doors
- Spray foam insulation
- Attic hatch sealing and insulation
- Chimney sealing
- Attic ventilation
- And more

CAPBM conducts roughly 300 Energy Assessments each year with approximately 200 resulting in completed installations. We also conduct around 100 heating system assessments resulting in roughly 100 repairs or replacements.

The program also covers heating emergencies during the winter months to ensure that residents are kept warm. This includes delivering space heaters prior to repair or replacement of their heating system.



Affordable Housing Program

The current housing crisis in New Hampshire is dire and we are proud to do our part in alleviating it.

The Affordable Housing Program includes housing for eligible senior citizens and affordable multi-family housing units. There are five (5) Section 202 PRAC Housing Properties for anyone 62 and over, two (2) Section 202/8 properties for those 62 and over or disabled, and five (5) non-age restricted Tax Credit Locations within Belknap and Merrimack Counties.



Over the last six months, we have housed 34 Seniors that were either homeless or at risk of homelessness.

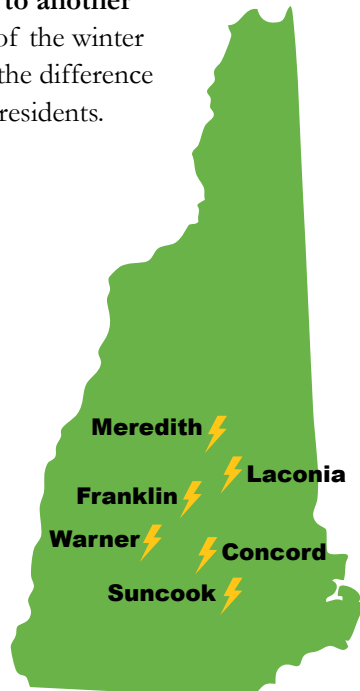
Fuel Assistance Program (FAP) / Electric Assistance Program (EAP)

The Fuel and Electric Assistance Programs help eligible households cover their heating and energy costs during the Winter months. Whether oil, kerosine, propane, wood, natural gas, coal, or electric, the harsh New England winters can make heating costs unaffordable for many households. Although we had a relatively mild winter, the 2023-2024 heating season was no different.

Throughout Belknap and Merrimack Counties, CAP enrolled 5,149 households in our fuel and electric assistance programs. We also helped 167 households that experienced a heating emergency by securing an emergency fuel delivery, delaying a utility disconnection notice, or referring them to another source of assistance. During the depths of the winter months, having access to heat could mean the difference between life and death for our community residents.

6 Area Resource Centers

All serve as resource hubs for residents to access our CAPBM's programs. Residents can receive help with their fuel and electric assistance applications, learn about other programs for which they might be eligible, and also receive food from one of our three food pantries housed within the resource centers.



A participant came to the Area Resource Center (ARC) to drop off an application for fuel and electric assistance. She had been out of work for 8 months. Her savings were exhausted, she had a disconnection notice on her natural gas, and she wasn't sure how she was going to pay her mortgage or electric bill. She had never reached out for help before.

Heather Chiavaras, our Concord ARC Site Coordinator was able to do an application for the electric and fuel assistance program, as well as submit an application for the Neighbor Helping Neighbor program to assist her with the disconnection.

As a result of CAP's assistance, the client was able to stop the disconnection and set up a payment plan for her Natural Gas. As well, her electric bill will be reduced by 86% and she will have help heating her home this winter.



Housing Stabilization

Our Housing Stabilization Program aims to help individuals who may be experiencing homelessness or are at risk of becoming homeless. We have dedicated staff who are working boots on the ground with individuals who are the most vulnerable, and our programs allow us to help these individuals with many different barriers in the housing continuum. We give supplies to those experiencing homelessness, food to homebound individuals, and case management services to housed people who are trying to get their housing first voucher.

Last year we helped over 100 individuals stay in their home with our programs. Whether it be a security deposit, first month rent, or back rent, we can utilize funds and support these individuals.

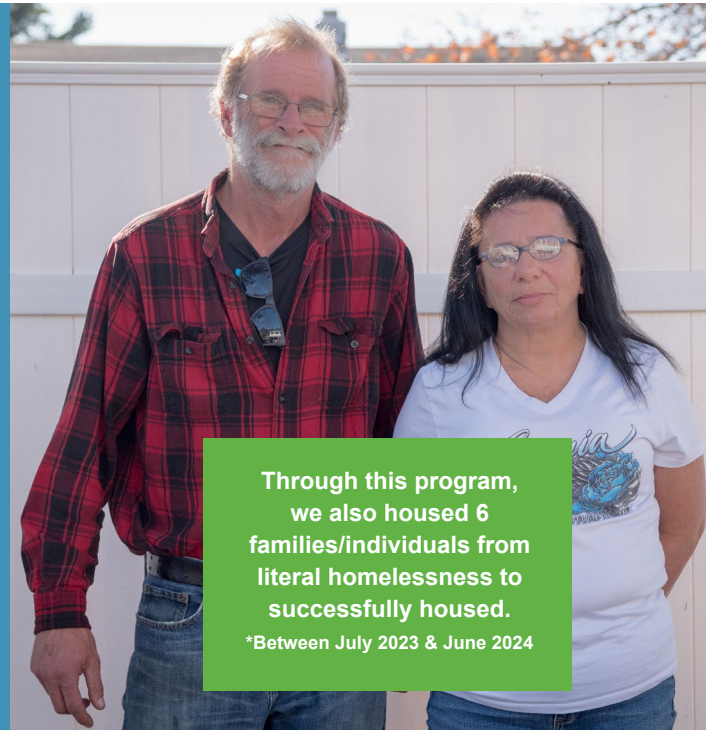
Our street outreach team is building relationships with landlords, businesses and people experiencing homelessness. We work together to find housing for those most vulnerable.



Lois & Robert Potter came to CAPBM as an unhoused couple in 2019 indicating that they had been experiencing homelessness since 2018.

Right around Christmastime 2019, our Housing Stabilization Department was finally able to obtain housing for this couple and enroll them into one of our Rapid Rehousing Programs to ensure housing success. From 2019- 2022, the Potters worked very hard and with the help of our knowledgeable housing support specialists, were able to successfully complete the program.

During our time with them, we were able to connect them to mainstream resources and helped them obtain a Housing Choice Voucher. With the voucher in hand, we were able to help them locate a nicer apartment and assisted with a security deposit to move in! To this day this couple is still successfully housed!



Through this program, we also housed 6 families/individuals from literal homelessness to successfully housed.
*Between July 2023 & June 2024

Transportation

CAPBM recognizes the need for transportation for many individuals and families in our community to simply get to where they need to be, whether it's appointments, work, or to the grocery store. That's why we're committed to providing transportation services to the general public, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.

ADA Complementary Paratransit Service | Concord Area Transit
Concord Senior Transit | Mid State Transit | Volunteer Driver Program

A FEW KEY STATS:

20% increase in production numbers (rides provided, miles driven) last year, breaking a 20-year ridership record with over 135,000 rides.

Services focused on serving people over age 60 and individuals with disabilities in Belknap and Merrimack Counties.

Top 5 Destinations: employment, medical facilities, shopping, the hairdresser, and the gym.



Transportation



AmeriCorps Senior Companion Program

We have seen a large demand in need for companionship for isolated homebound older adults which has created a waitlist of 443 statewide waiting for companionship through our program. Older adults today are now less sensitive to the pandemic and more comfortable leaving their homes in search of more social interaction. In addition, increased efforts for program outreach have been effective resulting in more referrals to our programs.

The Senior Companion Program offers great benefits to those enrolled:

- 1. Increased access to the community and routine medical care. The Result:** Decrease in non-routine medical care and improved ability to remain in their homes with less dependency on working family members.
- 2. Increased socialization & access to community resources. The Result:** Decreased social isolation & decreased mental & physical issues.
- 3. Increased Caregiver Support. The Result:** Caregivers are more able to tend to their own personal and healthcare needs and enjoy peace of mind that their loved ones are taken care of.

LAST FISCAL YEAR	46 companions provided...	31,258 hours of companionship/independent living support to...	301 homebound older adults statewide
AND...	29 companions provided...	4,763 hours of respite to...	42 unpaid caregivers throughout the state

Aging and Disability Resource Center of Merrimack County (ServiceLink)



ServiceLink provides in person support for older adults and individuals with disabilities to access various services that can be challenging to navigate.

- Information and Referrals
- Long Term Supports and Services
- Family Caregiver Support
- State Health Insurance Program (SHIP)
- Medicare
- Veteran Directed Care
- Medicaid Eligibility

The increase in fraud against older adults has increased the volume of people we serve, and the advancements of technology have increased the demand for in-person assistance. As well, there has been a dramatic increase in need for Family Caregiver Support as more loved ones can't afford other care.

IN FY23 WE FIELD	6,206 contacts to ServiceLink (60% phone / 40% office, community, home visits, etc.)	from 2,539 people	Who we subsequently referred to 12,603 various needs / services
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The highest number of individuals contacting ServiceLink were for...

- Long-Term Care Information & Options Counseling
- Medicare and Medicaid Information/Referral
- Aging and Disability Resource Centers

In 2023, the New Hampshire SHIP helped 1,413 people save \$2,959,971.04 by comparing and enrolling into Medicare Part D prescription insurance plans.



Head Start / Early Head Start Program

The Head Start/Early Head Start program is designed around four cornerstones:

1. Child development
2. Family development
3. Community development
4. Staff development.

The focus is not only educational, but also emphasizes and incorporates goals for health.

Program Goals

1. Promote healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women enrolled in Early Head Start.
2. Promote the physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional growth of infants, toddlers and preschoolers and prepare them for future growth and development.
3. Support parents and guardians in their role as the primary caregivers and educators of their children, and in meeting family goals and achieving self-sufficiency across a wide variety of domains.
4. Strengthen community support for families with young children.
5. Develop a staff of highly skilled, caring, and compassionate caregivers who are adequately compensated.

**DURING THE
2023 - 2024
PROGRAM
YEAR...**

The program **maintained 75% of its full enrollment, serving 285 children.**
*(140 Head Start;
145 Early Head Start)*

The program **served 36 dual language learners** in Head Start and **56 dual language learners** in Early Head Start.

The program served **51,453 nutritious meals** (In accordance with CACFP guidelines) to children enrolled in the program's center-based services with the **implementation of Family Style Dining.**

16% of the program's participants were experiencing **homelessness.**

The program has 10 certified car seat technicians on staff who are able to help install car seats in vehicles and provide education on car seat safety. With the collaboration of the local fire departments and Concord Hospital, the program's Concord and Laconia sites serve as car seat installation sites for the community.

The program Family Service Workers, Home Visitors, and Health Coordinators support families by connecting them to appropriate resources. **By the end of the 2023-2024 program year, nearly 100% of our enrolled participants identified as having health insurance and access to routine medical and dental care.**

Family Planning

Title X Family Planning provides access to equitable, affordable, client-centered, quality family planning services to men and women, providing confidential reproductive health care.

Fees are based on a sliding scale for those that are income eligible and do not have health insurance.

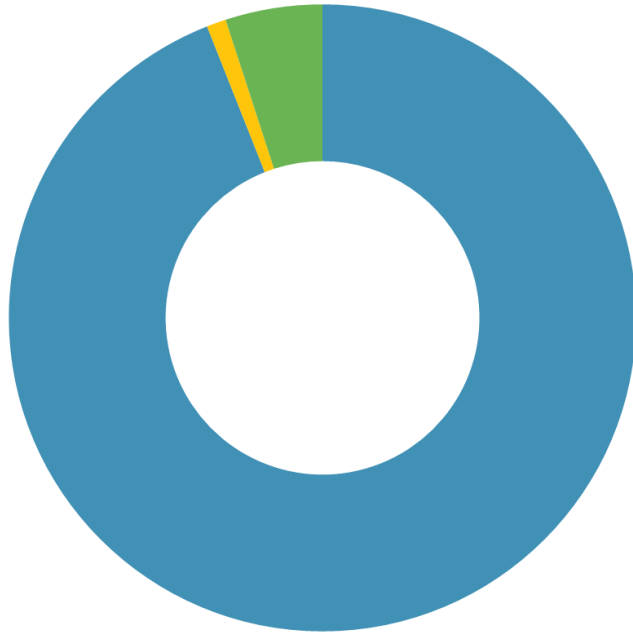
No one is denied service due to an inability to pay and Medicaid application assistance is provided to eligible individuals.

Services include:

- Physical exams, including pap smears, pelvic and breast exams
- Routine laboratory testing
- Pregnancy testing and options counseling
- Birth control supplies
- Testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, vaginal infections, and urinary tract infections

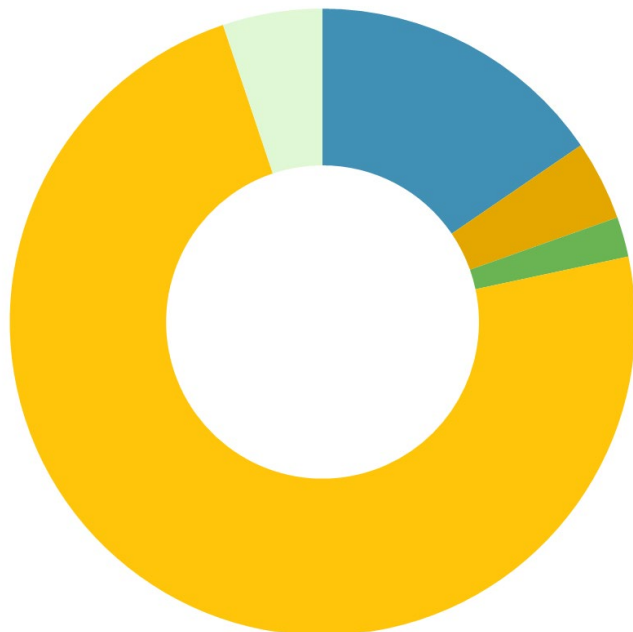
The financial report provides an overview of Agency revenue, expense allocations, and funding sources. The Agency continues to maintain a stable position, ensuring we can continue delivering impactful services across Belknap and Merrimack counties. This report underscores our commitment to transparency, financial accountability, and sustained community support.

2023 Financial Year in Review.....



Revenues and Other Support

- Grant awards: 94%
- In-Kind: 1%
- Other Funds: 5%



Expenses

- Salaries & Wages: 15%
- Payroll Taxes & Benefits: 4%
- Occupancy: 2%
- Program Services: 71%
- Other Costs: 5%
- Depreciation: 1%
- Travel: less than 1%

Value Statement

Empowering Communities: Over \$20 Million in Assistance Impacting Thousands

In a remarkable demonstration of mission driven work during July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024, CAPBM’s 20+ programs delivered assistance services valued at over \$20 million. This work has positively impacted the lives of more than 10,000 individuals and nearly 20,000 households across 2 counties and 38 towns. This significant investment not only supports those in need, but also strengthens the local economy, fostering growth and resilience in our communities. Below is a detailed chart showcasing the economic impact in each town, presented by county, highlighting the breadth and depth of our commitment to improve communities by helping people to help themselves and each other.

BELKNAP COUNTY

Town	Total People	Total Households	Total Value
Alton	476	366	\$474,609.80
Barnstead	350	337	\$453,549.83
Belmont	915	1,076	\$1,101,402.00
Center Harbor	53	64	\$57,784.23
Gilford	493	681	\$558,087.97
Gilmanton	303	305	\$284,511.69
Laconia	2,122	2,490	\$2,722,599.38
Meredith	545	560	\$580,474.46
New Hampton	153	126	\$163,939.91
Sanbornton	196	157	\$144,579.11
Tilton	546	540	\$736,934.76

Total Value of Services by County	Total People	Total Households
Merrimack	\$13,347,239.90	13,581
Belknap	\$7,278,473.14	6,152

Town	Total People	Total Households	Total Value
Allenstown	632	1,298	\$613,997.11
Andover	181	159	\$104,128.38
Boscawen	419	440	\$604,090.68
Bow	285	194	\$168,410.99
Bradford	215	153	\$153,287.78
Canterbury	139	93	\$76,257.24
Chichester	181	138	\$147,411.74
Concord	4,523	3,126	\$4,833,868.60
Danbury	158	158	\$135,171.03
Dunbarton	87	76	\$54,379.19
Epsom	534	670	\$424,002.59
Franklin	1,621	1,301	\$1,706,554.61
Henniker	307	264	\$283,995.94
Hill	130	118	\$87,420.47
Hooksett	751	997	\$735,227.84
Hopkinton	312	274	\$248,144.57
Loudon	566	446	\$444,473.51
New London	113	56	\$88,969.02
Newbury	161	137	\$119,997.72
Northfield	479	395	\$419,362.22
Pembroke	716	1,030	\$598,214.00
Pittsfield	354	640	\$673,973.70
Salisbury	126	88	\$66,064.46
Sutton	73	64	\$74,763.51
Warner	327	256	\$262,317.76
Webster	82	72	\$75,533.94
Wilmot	109	84	\$81,156.84

The Concord - Laconia Connector

The aging demographic in New Hampshire is driving increased demand for transportation services as more people are unable to drive themselves. To meet the demand, we expanded our Concord Area Transit (CAT) services to establish the Concord - Laconia Connector (CLC).

Funding came through a grant from Merrimack County who used some of their ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds to provide grants to various service organizations. This grant was used to match the NHDOT 5311 grant which would fund operations for the route.

The CLC is an intercity commuter public transit bus route provided by Concord Area Transit through CAPBM Transportation Services. The CLC started January 22, 2024, as a fare-free, public transit service connecting Concord to Franklin, Tilton, and Laconia.

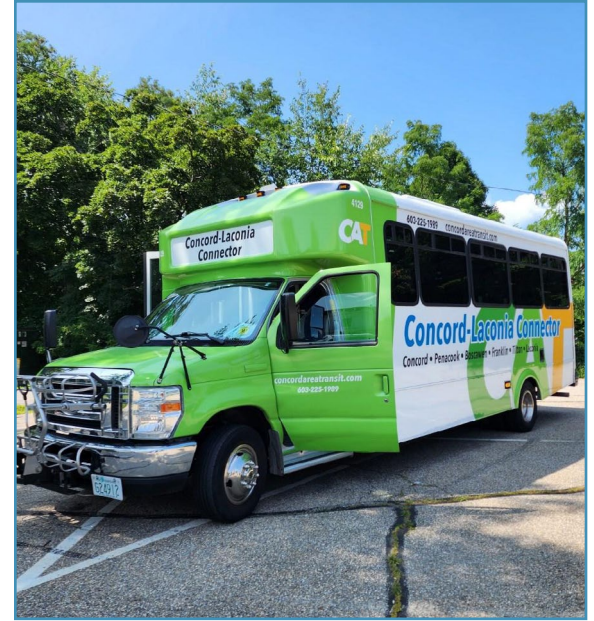
The CLC commuter route was identified through a study commissioned by NH Department of Transportation to create the Strategic Statewide Transit Assessment (SSTA), which was published on January 31, 2020.

The CLC combines the indirect commuter route and the intercity service concepts to provide service to towns that previously had no public transportation, and the route could easily connect with the existing Penacook Route in Penacook providing access into Concord. Beyond transportation, drivers have noted they also have meaningful conversations with riders providing valuable human connection.

From an economic impact perspective, a significant percentage of the 106,000 rides were for employment purposes, helping to keep people in the workforce.

The CLC makes four round trips per day with the first leaving downtown Concord at 5:45 AM arriving at Concord Hospital-Laconia at 7:26 AM and the Church St parking lot downtown Laconia at 7:31am. Because this is a commuter route, it has extended service hours from the regular Concord Area Transit fixed-route bus service.

A complete schedule for the route can be found at ConcordAreaTransit.com or in the new CAT Riders Guide.



“We are very excited about this new route. It gives residents of these communities access to thousands of jobs, while also providing a way for residents to travel to medical appointments and other services outside their home community. And since it is fare-free, it will give them a much-needed break from the cost of driving.”

~ Terri Paige, Transportation Director for Community Action Program Belknap-Merrimack which operates CAT

Who's Using the CLC?

- Tyler, 58, who takes the ride to work at BJ's Wholesale Club Gas Station in Tilton, and to Laconia on his day off for lunch at a local restaurant and to explore downtown.
- Individuals headed to Belknap Marketplace and Franklin Industrial Park for work.
- Seniors looking for a ride to meet up with friends and/or get to appointments.
- And, others just like them who experience the challenges presented by a lack of public transportation in Belknap & Merrimack Counties.

CAPBM CREATES JOBS IN THE COMMUNITY

CAPBM plays a significant role in the local economy by providing various employment opportunities that reflect diverse qualifications and experiences. From technical positions such as weatherization technicians to essential roles like teachers, nutritionists, administrative staff, and direct support staff, our organization offers jobs that require specialized skills and expertise.

By hiring locally and across various professions, we contribute to the economic stability of Belknap and Merrimack Counties, ensuring that a broad spectrum of individuals can find meaningful employment.

The jobs we create benefit the employees and ripple out into the community by supporting local businesses, fostering economic growth, and improving the overall quality of life for residents. Through our expansive hiring, we are investing in the workforce and strengthening the region's economy, which we proudly serve.

PARTNERSHIP SUCCESSES AND EXPANSIONS

The NEW CAPBM Lived Experience Ambassador Program (LEAP) is a proposed initiative that we are in the process of launching. At CAPBM, we have been providing harm reduction services in partnership with Navigating Recovery, New Hampshire Harm Reduction Coalition (NHHRC), Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP), and The Doorway for our shared participants over the last couple of years. These collaborations have been highly successful, thanks to the teamwork between all organizations.

During This Time,

We have supported several important efforts. We assisted with the launch and hosting of the Navigating Recovery Laconia Exchange (LEX), hosted NHHRC's exchange program for several months while they worked on launching their mobile exchange, and provided safe exchange services to unsheltered individuals during outreach through the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) as part of our engagement activities. These efforts have significantly increased participant engagement, positively impacting their ability to access housing, maintain their health, and address many public health and safety concerns.

Many participants initially connected with us while they were unsheltered. Due to this increased engagement, we have successfully housed numerous individuals under the Housing First model. To further advance these outcomes, we are launching LEAP.

LEAP has selected a person with lived experience from the community who has recently overcome unsheltered homelessness and is also a person in recovery. Through participation in services and a harm reduction plan (SAFER USE) supported by our program, they have successfully maintained housing. This individual will work at the harm reduction clinics we host, conducting safe exchange, distributing safer use supplies, and educating peers on the harm reduction strategies that helped them succeed.

This paid position is designed to provide individuals who are doing well the forward momentum, employment opportunities, and sense of purpose that we all need.

This program is made possible through partnerships with Health First, NHHRC, the RCORP consortium, and generous funding from the Health First HRSA grant.

Advancing Our Mission

The next steps for advancing our agency's journey and future direction are critical to ensuring sustained progress and impact. Our commitment to serving the people of Belknap and Merrimack Counties with dignity and respect remains steadfast as we pursue the following priorities:

Strategic Planning and Goal Setting

We continue to implement our five-year strategic plan, ensuring that our goals align with the community's evolving needs. This approach includes setting clear, measurable outcomes and establishing timelines to track our progress, reinforcing our mission to empower individuals and families.

Key focus areas include:

- Resource Development
- Leveraging Advanced Technology
- Enhancing Communication Strategies

Each of these areas is supported by a dedicated team, actively driving progress and innovation to ensure we remain a responsive, forward-thinking organization that meets the challenges ahead.

Strengthening Partnerships and Resource Development

Collaboration remains key to our efforts in tackling poverty and promoting self-reliance. To support this, we will focus on identifying target donor segments and strengthening our relationships with existing donors. We will build and maintain personalized stewardship plans for donors, encouraging deeper engagement with our mission through mission-related activities, impact updates, and recognition programs.

Program Innovation and Expansion

We will enhance and expand our programs to meet emerging needs, integrating new technologies and methods. We plan to implement an agency-wide centralized intake system (CAP 60) to streamline operations and improve service delivery. Additionally, we will invest in technological improvements, including updating fiscal software, training staff on cybersecurity, and enhancing our website to improve client access to services.



Communications and Staff Development

We are committed to fostering a culture where staff are empowered and supported.

This includes:

- Creating an onboarding and professional development strategy that equips staff with the tools and training needed to thrive within our agency.
- Developing leadership tracks and career pathways to promote internal growth.
- Fostering team-building activities and recognition programs to enhance morale, increase staff engagement, and make CAPBM an employer of choice.
- Improving internal communication strategies by enhancing the use of platforms like SharePoint for document sharing and collaboration while establishing a central hub for real-time updates, announcements, and discussion forums.

These steps will guide us as we continue to grow, innovate, and respond to the needs of those we serve. We remain dedicated to advancing our mission of creating a community where every individual has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

None of this would be possible without the dedication and hard work of our incredible staff, volunteers, and community partners. Their tireless efforts are the foundation of our success, and we are deeply grateful for their contributions to our mission.

Thank you for your ongoing trust and partnership.

Community Engagement and Advocacy

We will increase our efforts to engage the community through outreach initiatives, advocacy, and public events.

Our marketing and communications team will lead efforts to build CAPBM's brand awareness, share success stories, and demonstrate our impact. A strategic plan for agency-wide marketing will focus on sharing data-driven stories of how our programs make a difference in the lives of the individuals and families we serve.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A robust system for monitoring and evaluating our programs will ensure accountability and transparency. Regular assessments will provide us with valuable data, allowing us to make informed decisions that improve the quality of our services. In addition, we are establishing a customer satisfaction system that will gather feedback from the community and program participants, using this information to further enhance our services.



A special thank you to

Randy Emerson,

Director of Emergency Food Assistance
(31 years with CAPBM)

- and -

Susan Wnuk,

Director of Health and Nutrition Services
(38 years with CAPBM).

With the ever changing needs of the community, Randy and Susan have been steadfast leaders, guiding us through much evolution and growth over the last 30+ years. Through their passion and leadership, we have an organization today that has a solid foundation and continues to evolve to meet the needs of the community.

Thank you Randy and Susan!



Randy Emerson



Susan Wnuk

Volunteer Spotlight



Cay Bowman

Volunteer since
April, 2006

Cay is CAPBM client, turned full time volunteer, dedicating all her time to our Elder Services programs. She is a Medicare Specialist and Information and Referral

Specialist who supports clients with Medicare/Medicaid guidance and other needs. She also supports the office with administrative tasks. She is invaluable to the work we do. Thank you Cay for your time, dedication, and passion.

We appreciate all you do!

“I was referred to contact the CAP office by a friend when I moved back to Concord and needed to find available resources in the community. I met with a very pleasant person who made me feel welcome, shared who CAP is and what they can help with. She was able to connect me to services I didn’t even know I qualified for. I left the office feeling confident that I could make it on my own.

I became a volunteer with ServiceLink to help people navigate the Medicare system and understand the new prescription drug coverage in 2006. It is my passion to help clients understand how their Medicare coverage works, share the cost savings options that are available and help people avoid the pitfalls I had experienced.”

~ Cay Bowman

In Memoriam Kathy Howard,

who served CAPBM
for 26 years as our
Executive Coordinator
passed away in
September, 2024.

Her impact on our organization was truly remarkable. She provided invaluable support to our executive leaders and the participants we served, always greeting everyone with a warm smile. Her deep knowledge of our programs and unwavering commitment to our agency’s goals made her an indispensable part of our team.

Kathy was not just the friendly face at the front desk; she was a reliable source of information and assistance for all of us. We will deeply miss her positivity and dedication, and we are incredibly grateful for everything she contributed to CAPBM.



CREATING A COMMUNITY

where **Every Individual** has
the **Opportunity** to reach
their Full Potential.

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COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM



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