

The Healthcare
Consortium

2024 Impact Report

Our Mission

To improve access to healthcare and support the health and well-being of the people in our rural community.

Our Values

Access to healthcare is a fundamental right of every individual. Individuals are primarily responsible for their own healthcare decisions and require information and education to fulfill their role effectively. Improving the health of our community occurs through the partnership of health, social service and wellness organizations, and all levels of government. Collaboration and the provision of preventative and wellness services have long-term efficiencies.

HEALTHCARE IS A MAZE

We can help you through it

A Letter from Our Executive Director

Greetings to the Board, Staff, Partners, and Supporters—All Friends of the Consortium!

As you might expect, preparing this report always prompts a bit of reflection, and looking back on 2024, I feel a great deal of satisfaction. As is so often the case, many things did not go exactly according to plan (or at least, *my* plan) but I still find myself feeling pleased by the way things turned out.

In the past year, we invested a great deal of time and energy to ensure that the organization itself—from board to staff, structure to infrastructure—would be robust enough to both sustain *and* enhance our programs. We also developed a new strategic plan, created with help from the Board and the incomparable Mary Gail Biebel, a consultant and friend to the Consortium who facilitated the process on our behalf, to guide our efforts in the next few years (see page 7 for more on that).

That work behind the scenes is essential, but it only matters because it is in service to our *real* work—supporting the health and well-being of the people living in our rural community.

In the next few pages, you will find brief descriptions of our programs, and some data that provides a sense of our impact. Perhaps even more revealing are the stories that our clients have to tell about how our services have affected them personally. Our first aim is to alleviate the confusion, stress, and yes, genuine fear that so many people experience when they try to navigate the health and human service system. We start that work by offering a friendly greeting and a calming and reassuring word or two: “Hello and welcome. How can we help? Come in. Let’s get some things sorted out.” And then, without fuss or fanfare, our staff deploys their deep knowledge, years of experience, and rock-hard determination to way-find and problem-solve on that person’s behalf. And when we are successful, we will have achieved our second goal for our clients: to improve their circumstances and leave them better off. This is the “Consortium way”—a model of service delivery that puts our clients’ most pressing concerns first and then aims to unpack and address the underlying issues that gave rise to their worries in the first place. I sometimes refer to this as playing the “short game” and the “long game” and it is intrinsic to our approach.

And so, while the work behind the scenes is important to do, it’s our work with clients that is rightfully center stage in the pages ahead.

Preparing this report also prompts a bit of forecasting, and as I think about the year ahead, my sense is that there will be challenges—for the organization, perhaps, but more to the point, for the people of our community. Happily, those challenges—at least the ones we can anticipate—are exactly those our organization can help meet, because we possess all the things to make that possible:

- **Clients** whose needs and experiences guide our work
- **Staff** with the desire and dedication to serve others
- A **focus on the value** we create as way-finders and problem-solvers
- The **partnerships** within our whole system of health and human service providers that make that way-finding and problem-solving possible
- And we have **YOU**, a community that needs *and* nourishes us

We are more certain than ever that our work is not just about providing services. It’s about strengthening connections, and we are glad to be connected to you in doing the good work. Thank you for being a part of the Consortium’s community; with your involvement and support, the work described in the next few pages, which is so meaningful to so many, will continue and grow.

Sincerely,

Claire Parde

Claire Parde
Executive Director



Our Impact, In Numbers

The Children and Adults Rural Transportation Service (CARTS)

For over 25 years, CARTS has been helping Columbia County residents to access their care by providing door-to-door non-emergency medical transportation

From doctor's visits to dialysis treatments, **CARTS connects our community to care**

13,394
rides provided



569
clients served

247,516
miles traveled

RxAccess & Referral Program

Prescription drugs can be costly, especially for those who have little or no insurance

The Healthcare Consortium's RxAccess and Referral Program offers help in obtaining low-cost or no-cost prescription medications for residents of Columbia, Greene, and Northern Dutchess Counties



\$16,981
in medications paid for by the program

60
clients served

Navigator Program

Our Navigators help people—in-person and by phone—shop for, select, and enroll in both public and commercial health insurance plans on the NY State of Health Marketplace

2,432
people helped to enroll



NY Connects

NYC Connects provides information, assistance, and referrals for individuals and their families in need of long-term services and supports due to aging or disability

741
clients served

Community Cancer Funds

Financial aid for individuals experiencing financial hardship as a result of a cancer diagnosis to offset health-related and household expenses

\$9,420
in aid provided to 11 people with cancer



Our Impact, In Our Clients' Own Words

At the Consortium, we know that nothing feels more personal—and sometimes, more fragile—than one's own health or that of a loved one. That is why we focus on providing responsive, compassionate, individualized services to help our clients overcome the **physical**, **financial**, and **practical** barriers they encounter when trying to access care.

physical

I started taking rides with CARTS in 2016 after I was not able to drive due to medical reasons. CARTS is a godsend! Without it, I would have had to move to where they have more public transportation. I would have had to leave Columbia County, so this program really preserved my existence. I learned of CARTS through the Office of the Aging and have used them regularly over the past 9 years. **My whole life would have changed if CARTS wasn't there. I like where I live, I like Columbia County, and CARTS kept me here.**

— Fran, *Children and Adult Rural Transportation Service (CARTS) Client*

financial

My husband was very sick and we were constantly in and out of the hospital and hospice when I got cancer. A woman at our doctor's office asked to speak to my husband and I because she said we could get some help because we really needed it and she started me off with [the Consortium.] **We did not know this help was available and it made my husband feel a lot more comfortable before passing, knowing that I was being taken care of.** When my husband passed, I had to learn to live on my own, and because he used to handle everything for me so I was like a six-year-old learning everything all over again. **The gas money and other support [the Cancer Funds] gave me have really helped and I really can't believe that this help is happening and [the Consortium] is there for me.**

— Teri, *Community Cancer Funds Client*

practical

Doreen's been helping me navigate healthcare coverage through self-employment, retirement, Medicare and Medicaid eligibility. I've had a change in circumstance and **she was quick to realize that I would no longer be eligible for Medicaid. She picked up the phone and told me personally, kindly and clearly.** She offered the assistance of her colleague Rachel. Rachel was on the phone with me in minutes, made me an in-person appointment with her, advised what info I should bring along. Once there she walked my wife and me through using Medicare.gov and described and showed us benefit options to close the gap that coming Medicaid ineligibility will bring. She put us in touch with a choice of brokers. That same day, once home, I was able to enroll for my choice of Medicare Supplement plans and Part D, drug coverage. **It is always a pleasure to work with kind, knowledgeable people who obviously care a great deal about real people and the problems we encounter.**

— Annie, *Navigator Client*

Our Network Members

In addition to the programs and services that the Consortium staff provide directly to clients, we also serve as the **Rural Health Network** of Columbia County. The Network is a formal partnership among a number of public agencies, our local hospital and its health system, providers of mental health, addiction, and disability services, faith-based institutions, and businesses, all of which commit to developing strategies to improve healthcare in our rural community. Called "Network Members," each organization is represented on the Consortium's Board of Directors, which also includes healthcare consumers, in order to ensure that we foster positive and productive working relationships, exchange information, and promote collaboration on a regular basis.

"The inclusion of network members on the board of directors creates the opportunity for the many different community organizations in Columbia and Greene Counties that have an impact on the healthcare of residents to collaborate in meaningful ways. This opportunity directly benefits the residents of the counties and contributes to an increase in services and opportunities."

— Rebecca Polmateer,
Board President



Our 2025 - 2027 Strategic Plan

In 2024, select members of our Board and staff participated in a series of strategic planning sessions to plot a course for the next three years. The 2025-2027 Strategic Plan that emerged from these efforts is a recommitment to working directly with and on behalf of the residents of Columbia and Greene Counties to dismantle barriers to care so they can get and stay healthy. The Plan outlines four broad goals. As we pursue these goals, we will strive to center the needs and experiences of our clients, strengthen our relationship to the rural communities we serve, foster a positive workplace culture, and secure the resources needed to advance our mission.

Our 2025 - 2027 Goals

Preserve and Enhance Our Core Functions

We will preserve and enhance our core functions by delivering high-quality services to the residents of Columbia and Greene Counties and by seizing opportunities to add new services whenever we can. Furthermore, we will enhance our impact by fostering collaboration among the health and social care providers in our Network, and by promoting systems thinking. As a trusted convener and facilitator, we will lead responsive group assessment and planning efforts while providing technical assistance and support to our Network Members.

Communicate Our Value

We will communicate the value we bring to our community by widely sharing how we help clients dismantle barriers to care and achieve better health outcomes. Furthermore, we will create greater awareness and connection with our clients, partners and supporters by showing our leadership on key issues and reinforcing our service to both Columbia and Greene Counties. Through clear, inclusive messaging and diverse communication strategies, we will ensure our impact feels visible, understandable, and valued by the communities we serve.

Sustain Our Workforce

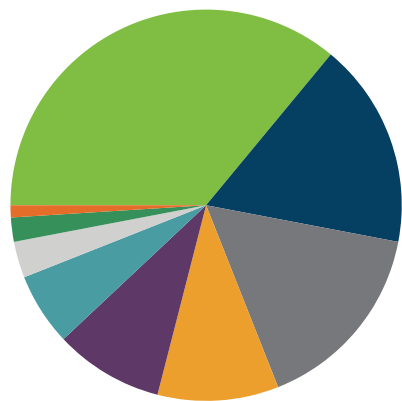
We will sustain our workforce by attracting mission-driven individuals, fostering a positive workplace culture, and offering competitive compensation so our staff feel valued, supported, and engaged. Furthermore, we will focus on staffing that supports both current operations and future expansion to ensure the continuity of services and our ongoing success.

Grow Our Support

We will grow our support by deepening connections with existing partners and welcoming new ones, including foundations, businesses, and individuals. By expanding our network and increasing awareness of our impact, we will create more opportunities for investment in our work. By scaling up thoughtfully and carefully, we will ensure that we can continue to serve our community in an efficient, effective, and sustainable way.

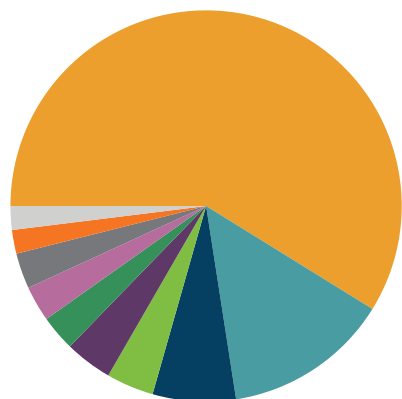
Our 2024 Financials

Total Revenue & Support



Children and Adult Rural Transportation Service	\$587,180	36%
Navigator Program	\$275,780	17%
General Operating Support	\$264,188	16%
OFA: NY Connects	\$167,141	10%
Rural Health Network Program	\$149,001	9%
Tobacco-Free Action	\$91,112	6%
Other Programs	\$49,118	3%
RxAccess & Referral Program	\$24,357	2%
Financial Assistance Funds	\$11,785	1%
Total	\$1,618,036	100%

Total Expenses, by Function



Salaries and Wages	\$911,233	60%
Fringe Benefits	\$211,494	14%
Agency Contractual Services	\$108,138	7%
Medical Transportation Services	\$62,687	4%
Occupancy Expense	\$54,540	4%
Depreciation Expense	\$49,068	3%
Other Expense	\$41,559	3%
Agency Operation Expenses	\$38,897	3%
Medical, Drug, and Financial Assistance	\$26,355	2%
Health Education & Promotion	\$23,133	2%
Total	\$1,527,105	100%

Sources of Revenue & Support

NYS Grants **\$515,893**

New York State Department of Health (32%)

Foundation Revenue **\$378,468**

Foundation for Community Health, Dyson Foundation, HRBT Foundation, Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, and The Home for the Aged (23%)

Columbia County Departments **\$261,141** (16%)

Departments of Human Services, Department of Health, and Office for the Aging

NYS Medicaid Program **\$187,799** (12%)

Columbia County Government **\$104,740** (6%)

Board of Supervisors

Other **\$98,753** (6%)

Greene County **\$104,740** (3%)

Departments of Social Services & Health

Individual Donors **\$27,124** (2%)

Total **\$1,618,036**

Our 2024 Supporters

We are grateful for the support we receive from foundations, local businesses, organizations, and countless individuals throughout the year. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps us help our community to get and stay healthy. This year, we brought our community of supporters together twice—first for our Annual Recognition Ceremony in the spring, and then to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of CARTS in the summer. **THANK YOU** to all who joined and continue to support our work!

Our Foundation Supporters

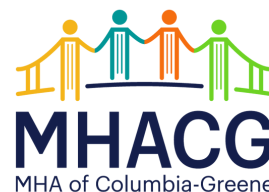


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The Healthcare Consortium

Contributions are part of what makes our work possible.
Please consider supporting our mission in 2025.

columbiahealthnet.org/donate

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