



# Annual Report



2024

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Little Rivers is now in its 20th year of operation as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). Our dedicated and thoughtful team has built strong relationships to meet community needs and fulfill our mission. While operating an FQHC is rewarding, it comes with challenges such as navigating complex and evolving funding, rising expenses, and stringent compliance requirements.

## Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide respectful, comprehensive primary care for all residents in our region regardless of their ability to pay for it. We offer quality healthcare services to everyone. In the spirit of community, we reach out to and welcome those who need health services but have insufficient means to access them. We commit ourselves to continually reduce the burden of illness, injury and disability, and to improve the health and functioning of the people in our service area.

# Letter From Leadership

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the resilience, dedication, and compassion that define Little Rivers Health Care. This has been a year of remarkable growth, innovation, and deepening connections within our community.

We have made significant progress in expanding access to care, with construction on both the Whitney-Rowe Clinic and the Dental and Health Access Center at 55 Main Street in Wells River now nearly complete. Together, these projects represent \$5.5 million in total investment and will enhance our ability to serve the region for decades to come.

Our team welcomed new providers in family medicine and behavioral health, strengthening our ability to deliver high-quality care close to home. We expanded our established school-based services throughout the Orange East Supervisory Union through a new partnership with the Rivendell Interstate School District, to reach even more students and families, meeting them where they are and removing barriers to care. In addition, we began offering medical services open to students, staff, and community members at the Waits River Valley School through our mobile medical services trailer.

We also began offering preventive dental services in Newbury, including cleanings, X-rays, fluoride treatments, and sealants.

This year also marked the launch of our Healthy at Home program, bringing medical, nursing, and behavioral health care directly to homebound patients in our most rural communities. This initiative embodies our mission to meet patients where they are, ensuring that geography or mobility limitations do not stand in the way of essential care.

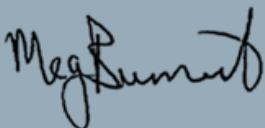
We advanced innovation in revenue cycle management by implementing automated tools within our electronic health record and clearinghouse systems, creating more efficient, accurate, and resilient billing processes.

Financial stewardship remains a cornerstone of our mission. Site- and department-specific accounting continues to guide strategic decisions and helps us to adapt to a changing healthcare environment.

None of this progress would be possible without the dedication of our staff, the trust of our patients, and the generosity of our community. Together, we are building a healthier future for all.

In Partnership,

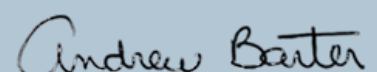
Meg Burmeister  
Chair, Board of Directors



Simone Lessac-Chenen, MD  
Chief Medical Officer



Andrew Barter  
Chief Executive Officer



# Board of Directors

Little Rivers Health Care is designated as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). FQHCs are required to have a community board of directors that represents the community and governs the affairs of the organization. At least 51% of the board members must be patients of the health center. Little Rivers has been extremely fortunate to have always had active, engaged board members who generously volunteer their time and expertise. Without them, Little Rivers would not be here.

**MARGARET BURMEISTER, Topsham (2009)** is the executive director of Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging. She previously was the director of case management for the Central Vermont Council on Aging. Meg is the Chairperson of the LRHC board.

**WILLIAM CAMPBELL, Littleton, NH (2014)** is a mental health clinician at Center for New Beginnings and iHope Network, as well as a psychology professor at River Valley Community College in New Hampshire. His past experience includes four years as project manager of a Federally Qualified Health Center in New York State. Bill is the vice-chairperson of the LRHC board.

**ELIZABETH DAVIS, E. Corinth (2023)** is a recent retiree of the World Bank. She has expertise in data and information governance, financial analytics, and information quality, as well as leadership development. She is Board Treasurer for The Ashland Institute in Oregon and has been appointed to the Budget Committee of the Town of Corinth for the last two years. Liz currently serves on the Little Rivers' Finance Committee.

**SUSAN GAELIC, Newbury (2023)** Susan is a longtime resident of Newbury. She is a retired RN who spent 40 years in pediatrics, home health, ICU and 2 years part time at LRHC. Susan currently serves on the Little Rivers' Quality Committee.

**SUSAN GORDON, Groton (2024)** Susan and her husband have been well cared for patients of LRHC in Wells River for over 34 years. She was the former Executive Director of the Vermont Alzheimer's Association for 13 yrs. She has served on a number of boards in a leadership position and is eager to bring her experience to LRHC. She is committed to the Mission and honored to represent LRHC in her local community.

**BERNICE MILLS, Fairlee (2024)**

**STACY PRATT, Bradford (2024)** is a retired RN with management experience in home health care, care management at an academic medical center and at a PACE Program for a Federally Qualified Health Center in Massachusetts. Stacey serves on the Little Rivers Finance Committee.

**KELSEY ROOT-WINCHESTER, Wells River (2020)** - is a health coach and yoga teacher. She owns Rising Spirit Yoga and co-owns the Wells River Wellness Hall. She also sits on the Blue Mountain Union school board and is Chairperson of the Wells River Action Program (WRAP). Kelsey is the secretary of the LRHC board.

**DEBI RUGGLLES, E. Corinth (2024)**

**DARREN SHERBURNE, Newbury (2021)** Born and raised in Newbury, VT, Darren Sherburne has traveled throughout New England working in the Hospitality sector before returning back to his native area to pursue a career in Real Estate. Working for Four Seasons Sotheby's International Realty, Darren is interested in bettering his community and spreading the good word about the Upper Valley and the quality of life it allows.

**JILL SKOCHDOPOLE, Ryegate (2021)** is a small animal veterinarian who founded Ryegate Small Animal Hospital in 1993. She is married to a farmer in the dairy industry and is the mother of 2 grown kids. She and her husband enjoy producing most of their own food - from their gardens and the animals they raise. Free time is mainly spent outdoors, though reading and cooking are her favorite indoor activities.

# Primary Care Staff



**Maureen Boardman, FNP**



**Stephen Genereaux, MD**



**Kate Goyette FNP**



**Joel Lazar MD, MPH**



**Patricia Pratt MD**



**Carey Brodzinski PMHNP, FNP-C MSN, APRN**



**Marlene Bristol FNP**



**Mary Griffin MD**



**Yeonsoo Kim NP**



**Simone Lessac-Chenen, MD, MPH, DipABLM**



**Jenny Meyer DNP**



**Grace Kozik PMHNP, MSN APRN**



**Madison Culver FNP**



**Fay Homan MD**



**Barbara Lazar MD**



**Rachel Morse FNP**



**Ally Noble FNP, PMHNP**

## Services

**Family Medicine with Pediatrics**—Care for people of all ages.

**Obstetrics** —Family planning/maternity care before, during, and after birth.

**Internal Medicine and Infectious Disease**—Care for adults.

**Wellness Support and Disease Prevention**—Dietetics and Food Access

**Continuum of Care**— Hospitalizations and nursing home visits.

**Patient Enabling Services** — Healthcare navigation

**Home visits**—Care for homebound individuals.

**Medications for Opioid Use Disorder**

**Behavioral Health and Psychiatry**

**Agricultural Worker Outreach**

**Oral Health**



# Behavioral Health Clinicians



**Stacy Wayland**  
LICSW



**Michael Brandli**  
LCMHC



**Lila Bradly**  
CMHC



**Mia Brown**  
CMHC



**Betsy Mattox**  
CMHC



**Sarah Metz**  
LICSW



**Rebecca Partington, LICSW**



**Kim Therrien**  
LICSW



**Mark Rizzacasa**  
LICSW



**Sarah Storjohann**  
MA, LCMHC



**Amanda Regis**  
LICSW, LADC



**Tracy Thompson**  
LICSW, LADC



**Jazmin Smith**  
LICSW



**Tiffany White**  
LICSW, LADC

## Group Therapy

### **Acuwellness**

Is a specialized form of acupuncture that is applied by placing five thin, sterile, single-use needles in the ears. The needles are generally left in place for 35-45 minutes. Treatment time may need to be altered for clinical or training purposes. State Licensed Acupuncturists, Licensed Auricular Detoxification Technicians (ADTs) and/or other persons training to become Auricular Detoxification Technicians (ADT Trainees) administer the treatments.

### **Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing**

This group introduces participants to the theory and concepts of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy. Group participants are given some information on what the preparation process and a typical reprocessing session looks like. Patients are informed of appropriate expectations during the process. The participants can ask questions and begin to build a rapport with the EMDR clinician. They walk away from the group with the ability to make an informed decision if this type of therapy would fit their needs.

### **Healthy Relationships**

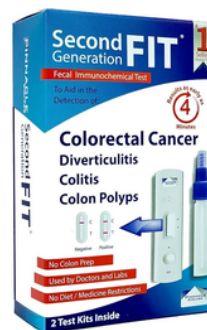
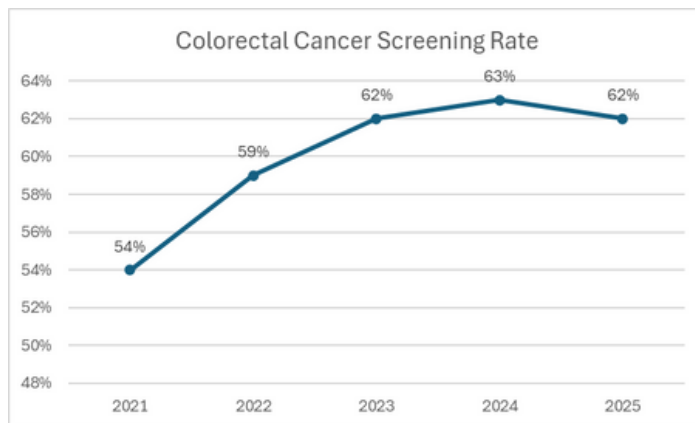
This is a psycho-ed style group, providing information and support for understanding what makes a relationship healthy vs. unhealthy; types of unhealthy relationships (codependent, abusive- physically, psychologically, emotionally, etc.) and the cyclical nature they follow; understanding why we stay in unhealthy relationships/why it is difficult to leave; and how to break the cycle of unhealthy relationships—unhealthy relationships with family and also with one's self

# Quality Improvement Highlights

LRHC employs quality improvement projects to identify opportunities for updating or changing processes and protocols, ensuring better, higher-quality care tailored to each patient's needs. These initiatives aim to reduce medical errors, prevent infections, improve chronic conditions, and enhance the overall satisfaction of both patients and medical staff with LRHC services.

## Colorectal Cancer Screening

LRHC is advancing preventive care by improving access to colorectal cancer (CRC) screenings, particularly for patients in rural areas. In partnership with the Vermont Department of Health, LRHC mailed FIT (Fecal Immunochemical Test) kits to low-risk patients aged 45 and older who were due or overdue for screening—resulting in a 9% increase in screening rates and surpassing our 60% participation goal. With CRC rates rising across all age groups, especially among younger people, LRHC has expanded screening eligibility, improved accessibility through mailable kits, and strengthened patient follow-up. We continue to explore convenient, efficient solutions to meet our patients' needs and are actively seeking funding to support staff time, FIT kit supplies, and mailing costs to sustain and grow this life-saving initiative.



## Rural Maternity and Obstetrics Management Strategies (RMOMS)

LRHC partnered with Dartmouth Health to develop a shared care model for obstetric care. LRHC developed a plan for pregnant patients to complete their 36 weeks of prenatal care before transferring their care to Dartmouth Health for delivery and then returning them to LRHC for their postpartum and continued care.



# Quality Improvement Highlights

Little Rivers Health Care provides holistic, patient-centered care that goes beyond traditional medical services by recognizing and supporting the full range of factors that influence health. Our approach considers each patient's access to healthful food, opportunities to engage with the outdoors, personal health goals and preferences, and reliable transportation—all of which are essential to achieving overall well-being in our rural communities.

## The Food Farmacy

Located in the largest food desert in Vermont, LRHC is committed to addressing the dual challenges of chronic disease and food insecurity—conditions that affect 75% and 8% of our patients, respectively.

Launched in 2020, the LRHC Food Farmacy is already making a meaningful impact by serving 110 patients with access to nutritious, medically supportive food. Research continues to affirm the role of food as medicine in preventing and managing diet-responsive conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. In collaboration with Dartmouth's Center for Advancing Rural Health Equity and the Bi-State Primary Care Association, LRHC is building a sustainable, scalable model to serve more patients in need.

With fresh, locally gleaned produce from Willing Hands and shelf-stable nutritious options from the Vermont Food Bank, the Food Farmacy is more than a program—it's a pathway forward. As we grow, we remain deeply rooted in our mission to support whole-person health and health equity in rural Vermont.





# Whitney Rowe and Dental Clinic

LRHC has made significant progress on the design schematics and funding for both the Whitney Rowe Clinic (formerly Wells River) Expansion project (approximately \$2.4 million) and the Wells River Dental Clinic (approximately \$1.4 million). Despite rising costs and some delays to ensure environmental safety, the two sites are well underway and expected to be fully functional in early 2026. We have deep gratitude for our generous community for supporting these projects through our capital campaign. LRHC continues to raise money to complete these projects and to expand the excellent care our patients experience here.



Little Rivers Health Care proudly names our Wells River location the Whitney Rowe Clinic—honoring Dr. Harry and Mary Rowe for their decades-long legacy of care. A generous family gift supports this tribute and our mission to strengthen community health.

Whitney Rowe Clinic – Expanding Care for Our Community

Renovating 3,500 sq. ft. of the historic clinic

Adding over 2,500 sq. ft. of new space

New features include:

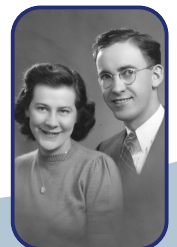
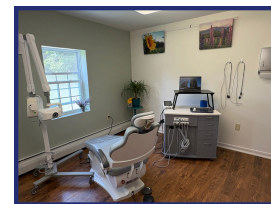
9 modern treatment rooms

Expanded facilities for care delivery

Impact:

Improved access to medical and mental health care

Greater capacity to meet growing community need



# Audit of Financial Statement

## Balance Sheet December 31, 2024 and 2024 ASSETS

	2024	2023
Operating revenue		
Net patient service revenue	\$ 9,898,493	\$ 8,168,327
Grants and contributions	2,041,948	2,493,583
Other operating revenue	39,128	23,342
Net assets released from restriction for operations	61,116	41,602
Total operating revenue	12,040,685	10,726,854
Operating expenses		
Salaries and wages	7,079,220	6,253,102
Employee benefits	1,686,716	1,535,730
Contract services	1,017,806	1,049,156
Program supplies	888,397	734,761
Occupancy	192,221	238,304
Computer Expense	536,806	479,287
Other operating expenses	642,488	461,933
Depreciation	312,092	309,965
Interest expense	122,920	105,626
Total operating expenses	12,478,666	11,167,864
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(437,981)	(441,010)
Net assets released from restriction for capital acquisition, placed in service	-	63,767
Decrease in net assets without donor restrictions	(437,981)	(377,243)
Net assets with donor restrictions		
Contributions	163,053	103,103
Grants received for capital acquisition, purchased but not in service	69,214	179,400
Net assets released from restrictions for operations	(61,116)	(41,602)
Net assets released from restrictions for capital acquisition, placed in service	-	(63,767)
Increase in net assets with donor restrictions	171,151	177,134
Change in net assets	(266,830)	(200,109)
Net assets, beginning of year	2,460,132	2,660,241
Net assets, end of year	\$ 2,193,302	\$ 2,460,132

# Audit of Financial Statement

## Statements of Functional Expenses Years Ended December 31, 2024 and 2023

	2024	2023
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 140,674	\$ 318,082
Patient accounts receivable	665,782	516,610
Current portion of pledges receivable	47,870	59,367
Prepaid expenses	64,926	38,596
Total current assets	919,252	932,655
Assets limited as to use	93,450	90,220
Pledges receivable, less current portion	33,211	50,515
Property and equipment, net	4,611,135	4,524,379
Total assets	<u>\$ 5,657,048</u>	<u>\$ 5,597,769</u>

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current liabilities		
Line of credit	\$ 495,594	\$ 499,955
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	506,053	186,386
Accrued payroll and related expenses	834,622	686,252
Refundable advances	75,873	92,286
Current portion of long-term debt	173,797	119,596
Total current liabilities	2,085,939	1,584,475
Long term debt, less current portion	1,377,807	1,553,162
Total liabilities	<u>3,463,746</u>	<u>3,137,637</u>
Net assets		
Without donor restrictions	1,568,558	2,006,541
With donor restrictions	624,744	453,591
Total net assets	<u>2,193,302</u>	<u>2,460,132</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 5,657,048</u>	<u>\$ 5,597,769</u>

# 2024 Donors

LRHC is a not-for-profit organization that relies partially on federal and state grant funding, which covers only a small portion of the cost of providing care for individuals and families in need. We are deeply grateful for the additional support from our generous donors.

- James and Bethany Ames
- Michael Audet
- Andrew Barter
- Arthur L. and Frances P. Hyde Fund
- Wayne Berry
- Steve Boyce
- Dan and Richard Butler
- Sarah Calley
- Eleanor Cassady
- Rick and Marian Cawley
- Lenice Cicchini and Robert Chapla
- Patricia and Stephen Clark
- Community Bank Foundation of New England
- Community Bank N.A.
- Copeland Furniture
- Susan and Kevin Rowe Dalton

- Joyce Day Homan
- W.G. and Cheryl Deuel
- Donald Eaton
- Carole C Freeman
- Cadence Genereaux
- John Gilmour
- Luise Graf
- Garrett and Carolyn Hack
- Marvin and Louise Harrison
- Rick and Emmy Hausman
- Lisa Hervey
- Hope Hutchinson
- Thorton Todd Jesdale
- Jessie Johnson
- Knoxland Farm, Inc.
- Michael Kolakowski
- Lake Morey Resort
- Mary and Kathleen Harriman

- Jim Morel
- Jennifer Nelson
- Paul Perry
- Claude Phipps and Connie Philleo
- Christopher Preston
- Jane Rowe
- John Rowe
- Peter Sinclair
- Brent Smith
- Matthew Smith
- St. Martins Episcopal Church
- Altoon Sultan
- Town of Fairlee
- Town of Ryegate
- Laura Waterman
- Betsy Rowe Waters
- Wells Rivers Savings Bank
- Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank
- The Whitney Rowe Fund

**To donation or for more information, please contact us:**

Little Rivers Health Care, Inc.

P.O. Box 8, Newbury, Vermont 05051

Ashleen Buchanan, Manager of Public Relations and Grants.

802-222-3003 | [abuchanan@littlerivers.org](mailto:abuchanan@littlerivers.org) | [www.littlerivers.org](http://www.littlerivers.org)

Outright Gifts • Financial Benefit Gifts • Estate Gifts

[www.LittleRivers.org/capital-campaign](http://www.LittleRivers.org/capital-campaign)

**DONATE**



## ADMINISTRATION

### BRADFORD

437 South Main Street  
802-222-9317

### EAST CORINTH

720 Village Road  
802-439-5321

### 4628 Main Street

Newbury, VT 05051  
802-222-4637

### WELLS RIVER

65 Main Street North  
802-757-2325

### NEWBURY

4628 Main Street  
802-866-3000