

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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MAINE HOSPITALS AND HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS RECOGNIZED FOR TOBACCO-FREE ACHIEVEMENTS

32 Hospitals and 8 Healthcare Organizations Celebrated for Leadership through Annual Gold Star Standards of Excellence Program

The annual Gold Star Standards of Excellence Hospital and Healthcare Organization Program Awardees have been announced for 2021. The program of the MaineHealth Center for Tobacco Independence's Breathe Easy Initiative recognized thirty-two hospitals, eight healthcare organizations and one individual Gold Star Champions for efforts to address tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure. Celebrated organizations received a plaque for their achievements in advancing their campus smoke and tobacco-free policies as well as promoting tobacco-free lifestyles.

All Maine hospitals and healthcare organizations were encouraged to apply for recognition. This year marks the twelfth annual hospital Gold Star Standards of Excellence Program and the second year healthcare organizations were invited to apply for recognition. Organizations are recognized at the Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze levels are based on best practice criteria such as a smoke and tobacco-free campus policy, annual screening for tobacco use, referral to tobacco treatment and supporting employee education related to tobacco treatment.

"We applaud the ongoing efforts of Maine hospitals and healthcare organizations to address tobacco use, secondhand smoke exposure and nicotine dependence by meeting the Gold Star Standards of Excellence," says Kristen McAuley, Tobacco Prevention Services Director for the Center for Tobacco Independence. She continued, "Addressing tobacco use has continued importance during the current pandemic, as the US CDC states that being a current or former cigarette smoker increases your risk of severe illness from COVID-19."

Applying organizations were invited to nominate an individual or department that had championed tobacco-free efforts at their organization for recognition. Dr. Florence Edwards of Breakwater Dental in South Portland has been recognized as a 2021 Gold Star Champion.

For more information about the Gold Star Standards of Excellence, please visit

BreatheEasyMaine.org/GSSE.

The Breathe Easy Initiative at the MaineHealth Center for Tobacco Independence is dedicated to providing Maine's hospitals with the information and resources needed to make all organizations smoke and tobacco-free. Learn more at BreatheEasyMaine.org.

The program is funded by Maine Prevention Services. Maine Prevention Services is an initiative through the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention working across the state to impact tobacco, substance use, and obesity.

2021 Hospital Gold Star Standards of Excellence Awardees:

Platinum Level:

Cary Medical Center
Houlton Regional Hospital
Maine Medical Center
Mid Coast Hospital
Mount Desert Island Hospital
Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center
Northern Light Mayo Hospital
Pen Bay Medical Center
Southern Maine Healthcare
St. Mary's Regional Medical Center
Waldo County General Hospital

Franklin Memorial Hospital
LincolnHealth
MaineGeneral Medical Center
Millinocket Regional Hospital
New England Rehabilitation Hospital
Northern Light AR Gould Hospital
Northern Maine Medical Center
Redington-Fairview General Hospital
Spring Harbor Hospital
St. Joseph's Hospital

Gold Level:

Bridgton Hospital
Central Maine Medical Center
Northern Light Mercy Hospital
Stephens Memorial Hospital

Calais Regional Hospital
Down East Community Hospital
Rumford Hospital
York Hospital

Silver Level:

Northern Light Inland Hospital

Northern Light Sebecook Valley Hospital

Bronze Level:

Riverview Psychiatric Center

2021 Healthcare Organization Gold Star Standards of Excellence Awardees:

Platinum Level:

Cape Integrative Health
Oasis Free Clinics

Hometown Health Center

Gold Level:

City of Portland Health and Human Services (39 Forest Avenue)

Silver Level:

Breakwater Dental
Mabel Wadsworth Center

Mountain View Dental

Bronze Level:

Goulding Chiropractic

Individual Gold Star Champions:

Dr. Florence Edwards, Breakwater Dental – South Portland