Gifford Health Care

FY 2027–2029 Strategic Plan

Gifford's future is rooted in a simple commitment: to provide expert, compassionate care close to home for the people and communities we serve.

Our FY 2027–2029 Strategic Plan focuses on strengthening Gifford today while preparing for the future. We will steward our resources wisely, respond to the health needs of our communities, continuously improve how we deliver care, invest in the people who make Gifford special, and help shape a strong future for rural health care.

Our Five Strategic Pillars

Be Financially Sustainable

Align Clinical Resources with Community Needs

Foster Continuous Improvement

Be a Great Place to Work

Be a Model for Vermont's Rural Health Care Transformation



Our Commitment

Gifford is more than a place to receive care. We are part of the communities we serve.

This plan reflects our commitment to keeping local care strong, investing in our people and our future, and being here for our neighbors — today and for generations to come.

Strategy Pillar #1

Be Financially Sustainable

Gifford will generate sufficient operating income to sustain operations and steward its financial, physical, and community assets. Financial strength will provide the capacity to invest, innovate, and adapt while preserving local control and responding to changing health care and community needs.



Financial sustainability enables Gifford to remain independent, make local decisions, invest in its people and infrastructure, and respond to changing health care needs while protecting community assets for the future.

Objectives

1. **Achieve consistently profitable operating performance**
2. **Develop and fund a long-term capital investment and technology plan**
3. **Demonstrate community support**
4. **Use efficiency to invest in our people**

Strategy Pillar #2

Align Clinical Resources with Community Needs

Gifford stewards its clinical resources in ways that reflect and respond to the health needs of the community. Community health needs are identified through the Community Health Needs Assessment, demand for care indicators, population demographics, and community risk factors.



Gifford must use its limited resources wisely, ensuring expensive assets like providers, equipment, and clinical space are focused where the community needs them most. Some areas are currently under-resourced while others need to be right-sized. Success looks like operating at full capacity while providing timely access to local care.

Objectives

1. **Expand new and existing services where community needs are unmet**
2. **Reduce services where community needs do not justify the current level of resources**
3. **Collaborate with community partners to leverage existing expertise, reduce cost, and ensure seamless care coordination**
4. **Maximize productivity to serve more patients with existing resources**

Strategy Pillar #3

Foster Continuous Improvement

Gifford is committed to building a culture of continuous improvement in which every team member is empowered to identify waste, reduce friction, and improve the experience of care for patients and staff alike. Through the structured implementation and use of process improvement tools, we will systematically address our highest-priority operational challenges, engage frontline staff as the architects of solutions, and sustain gains through disciplined follow-through and measurement.



Continuous improvement is not an administrative program. It is how we deliver better care, improve the way we work, strengthen capacity, and create an enhanced experience for our patients and staff. We will have a bias towards action, empowering everyone as a potential change agent. We will celebrate our successes.

Objectives

1. **Create the foundation for a culture of continuous process improvement**
2. **Establish a formal Senior Leadership rounding process**
3. **Take action to improve our processes**

Strategy Pillar #4

Be a Great Place to Work

Gifford fosters a culture of trust, autonomy, and continued learning, one where employees have the tools and the fair, objective guidance to do their jobs well. Leadership leads with one guiding question: how can we help you succeed? We build that answer through inclusion, transparent communication, flexibility, and compensation.



Success means Gifford employees choose to stay, grow, and recommend this as a place to build a career, measured in rising engagement scores, reduced turnover, and a workforce that feels equipped, trusted, and recognized for the work they do.

Objectives

1. **Establish and implement internal training programs to help employees advance in their careers**
2. **Shift managers from individual contributors who solve problems themselves to leaders who achieve results through their teams**
3. **Continuously monitor and measure employee feedback and share results and action plans with our teams**
4. **Retain the best rural health care workforce**

Strategy Pillar #5

Be a Model for Vermont's Rural Health Care Transformation

Gifford should leverage its unique position as a Federally Qualified Health Center, Critical Access Hospital, and senior living provider to develop and demonstrate new approaches to delivering rural health care. Gifford will work with partners throughout the region and State to be a model for how rural health care and communities can transform.



Gifford must proactively shape its future to preserve local healthcare access and maintain its independence. By leading a sustainable model for rural healthcare and community vitality, Gifford can help ensure the long-term success of both the organization and the communities it serves.

Objectives

1. **Define the model for independent health care organizations to leverage scale without losing local control**
2. **Be a leader in training the rural health workforce**
3. **Have a seat at the table in Vermont's Health Care Reform conversations and maximize these opportunities**
4. **Leverage local collaborations to drive better community health outcomes**