

# NGMC COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT

*"Improving the health of our community in all we do."*



**Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) values cooperative efforts with community organizations and other healthcare providers to improve the health status of area residents. NGMC demonstrates this through many partnerships ranging from serving as lead agency of Safe Kids Gainesville/Hall County, to partnering with organizations such as Good News Clinics and the Public Health Department to reach at-risk populations in need of health care.**

The following contains highlights of community benefit activities provided by NGMC between Oct. 1, 2016, and Sept. 30, 2017. Visit [nghs.com/community-benefit-resources](http://nghs.com/community-benefit-resources) to view the full report.

#### **WHAT DRIVES NGMC'S COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES?**

NGMC, with input from the community, completed a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) in 2016 that included Barrow and surrounding counties before Barrow was acquired by NGMC. The assessment focused mainly on the needs of the community's most vulnerable populations, particularly those with low-incomes who are uninsured. Input from the community and the study culminated in the identification of the following five priority health needs across the region: Septicemia (blood infections), Access to Care, Diabetes, Cancer and Injury — all of which were impacted by these activities:

#### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

In fiscal year 2017, NGMC provided approximately **\$6.8 million** in community benefit programs and outreach through its Gainesville, Braselton and Barrow campuses. Health education was provided through free community lectures, screenings, various support groups and the semi-annual health magazine, *Communicare*. NGMC also offered many community education seminars on topics ranging from health and nutrition to women's health education and more, as well as seminars for health professionals in the community, region and state.

#### **PARTNERING TO REACH THE UNINSURED**

NGMC works cooperatively with other area healthcare providers to care for area residents, particularly the indigent population. Partners include Northeast Georgia Physicians Group (NGPG) Primary Care Clinic at Hall County Health Department, Northeast Georgia Diagnostic Clinic, The Longstreet Clinic, Medlink (federally qualified health center),

area physicians and indigent clinics such as Good Shepherd Clinic of Dawson County.

- Good News Clinics (GNC): NGMC provides funding to GNC (the largest free clinic in Georgia) that helps provide medications, medical supplies and other support. In fiscal year 2017, nearly **\$500,000** was donated to help GNC provide care to indigent patients who were at or below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines and did not qualify for other programs.
- Eva Johnson, NGMC nurse practitioner and heart failure disease manager, helped establish and now runs the Heart Failure Clinic at GNC. Eva was awarded the Sam Poole Community Volunteer of the Year Award for her tireless work with the clinic. This project has been extremely successful, holding the 30-day hospital readmissions to one patient in 2017.
- NGPG Primary Care Clinic at the Hall County Health Department: NGMC funds and staffs a primary care clinic at the Hall County Health Department to improve access to primary healthcare services for low-income people in our community. In fiscal year 2017, NGMC contributed **\$1,070,096** to provide this clinic.
- Indigent Patient Fund: At NGMC, financial assistance is provided for indigent patients to obtain urgently needed discharge medications and transportation. Individuals eligible for these funds are patients whose needs cannot be met through primary insurance, their own personal funds, government programs or other charitable services. This helps to ensure medication compliance and maximize conditions for recovery and recuperation. The Medical Center Foundation provides funding for this resource.

**\$6.8 M**

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**\$500 K**

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more than  
**\$1 M**

contributed to provide primary care services at the Hall County Health Department.

ongoing

## clinical trial research programs

were reorganized under the oversight of the new NGMC Office of Research.

NGHS is a founding member of

## partnership for drug free Hall

to fight the growing opioid epidemic affecting so many counties across the region.

### CHARITY CARE

NGMC's charity care policy removes barriers for low-income populations within our service area beginning with free, medically necessary care for patients whose gross family income is 0 to 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) adjusted for family size. Further, patients from our service area whose FPL is from 151 to 300%, may qualify for an adjustment equivalent to the hospital's Medicare reimbursement rate plus an additional 40% discount to the Medicare reimbursement rate.

### FINANCIAL NAVIGATORS AND PATIENT NAVIGATORS

NGMC has financial assistance counselors who help patients become insured, be it through Medicaid, PeachCare or other programs. This team focuses on being advocates for uninsured and under-insured patients, aiding them in finding viable means to access care. They find the best solutions for helping patients apply for Medicaid or disability, accessing healthcare exchanges or processing charity applications when appropriate. NGMC also has a cancer patient navigation program. This program provides cancer patients with guidance throughout their cancer journey, and they are seen as a "living resource directory" for patients.

### CLINICAL RESEARCH

In fiscal year 2017, all ongoing clinical trial research programs at NGHS were reorganized under the oversight of the new NGMC Office of Research. NGMC's Oncology Research program, through the Georgia NCORP (National Cancer Institute Community Oncology Research Program), received recognition as a high performing research site member. NGMC's Cardiology Research program was recognized by major sponsors as a top enrolling site through participation in pharmaceutical and device clinical trials in cardiology with outcomes that have the potential to improve standard of care for patients throughout the U.S. and around the world.

### PARTNERING IN THE COMMUNITY

Partnership for Drug Free Hall (DFH): As part of the behavioral health issues being addressed in Hall County, much progress has been achieved in fiscal year with regard to the opioid epidemic affecting so many counties across the region and our nation. Hall County's response to this epidemic is the collaborative Partnership for Drug Free Hall. Modeled after a partnership formed in Gwinnett County led by Sen. Renee Unterman, she, along with Deb Bailey, executive director of Governmental Affairs at NGHS, Dallas Gay, former NGHS board member, and Judy Brownell, director of prevention at Center Point, pulled together a diverse group of agencies in Hall County to form this partnership. Other NGHS representatives from Community Health Improvement and Laurelwood also actively serve on this committee.

For more details about NGHS' involvement in the fight against the opioid epidemic, visit [nghs.com/opioids](http://nghs.com/opioids). For resources, visit [drugfreehall.org](http://drugfreehall.org).

### VISION 2030 ([www.Vision2030.org](http://www.Vision2030.org))

An NGMC employee currently serves on the board of Vision 2030 which focuses on the creation of a culture of community wellness, the support and maintenance of lifelong learning, the building of an economy around emerging life sciences, the encouragement of innovative growth/infrastructure development and the promotion of cultural integration. This community-wide program is sponsored by the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce and participation is open to everyone in the community.

fiscal year 2017

## 772 NGMC volunteers

at all three campuses contributed **73,789 volunteer hours**, equivalent to **44 full time employees** and a value of more than **\$1.7 million**.

In 2017, 130 teens participated in the Teen Volunteer Program. The teens represented 28 different schools within the area.

total

## charity cost for fiscal year 2017

was **\$19.9 million** for Hall County with another **\$18.8 million** for regional residents outside of Hall County, and **\$1.2 million** for Barrow County with another **\$308,000** provided to regional residents outside Barrow County.

since 1997  
**\$3.8 M**  
raised for  
community health  
improvement projects  
through The Medical  
Center Open.

### THE MEDICAL CENTER FOUNDATION (MCF)

The MCF is the fundraising arm of NGMC and raises funds to improve the health of the community. The Foundation's operating expenses are supported by NGMC so that donated funds can be used to support NGMC projects and community health improvement initiatives. Following are items of interest to note:

- Since 1997, approximately \$3.8 million has been raised for community health improvement projects through The Medical Center Open.
- The 2016 Medical Center Open Golf Tournament, which was held in fiscal year 2017, raised \$282,454 to fund three homes for deserving families and a neighborhood playground for Habitat for Humanity of Hall County. NGMC senior leadership and employees helped construct the homes through three NGMC Build Days.
- Through the employee giving club known as WATCH (We Are Targeting Community Healthcare), members have donated more than \$8.8 million since 1999. More than 3,500 employees donated about **\$745,000 in 2017.**

### SAFE KIDS COALITION

The Gainesville-Hall County Safe Kids Coalition, led by NGMC, is part of Safe Kids Worldwide, the first and only national organization dedicated solely to the prevention of unintentional childhood injury, which is the nation's number one killer of children ages 14 and under. Safe Kids continued the work of injury prevention for families in the Hall County community in 2017 thanks to the support of MCF and The Medical Center Auxiliary, which donated proceeds from its Marketplace event.

In fiscal year 2017, members of the Gainesville-Hall County Safe Kids Coalition provided more than 76 programs and events that reached an estimated 9,643 children and their family members, teachers and caregivers. Through these programs, more than 4,201 safety devices were distributed to families in need of them.

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employee giving club  
**WATCH.**

### GETTING OLDER AND BETTER WORKSHOPS

More than 220 people participated in the Getting Older and Better Workshops held in September in Gainesville and Braselton. This event was sponsored by The Medical Center Auxiliary, provided by NGMC and featured the topic "Let's Talk About Stroke: Signs, Treatment, and Lowering your Risk."

### AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY (ACS), AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION, AND MARCH OF DIMES

NGMC employees turned out in full force for community events such as the American Heart Walk, March for Babies and Relay for Life, averaging participation of 300 employees per event.

### BLOOD DRIVES

In fiscal year 2017, NGMC hosted 22 drives, resulting in 484 donors and over 404 pints of blood.

### UNITED WAY

NGMC has partnered with United Way to engage employees and leaders in the community. **NGHS employees contributed \$76,415 to United Way**, making NGHS a Pacesetter Company. Three NGMC employees serve on the United Way Board, and Dr. Sam Johnson, Chief Medical Officer at NGHS, serves as Chairman on One Hall United Against Poverty.

In an effort to improve school readiness and literacy for our community's children, NGMC has partnered with the United Way of Hall County's Read Learn Succeed initiative to produce a children's book given to all babies born at NGMC. Printed in English and Spanish, "Welcome to the World," provides education about the importance of reading to children every day, for at least 15 minutes, starting at birth. This book was funded by The Medical Center Auxiliary.

Georgia  
votes to adopt  
**Senate  
Bill 102**

for the establishment of  
emergency cardiac centers and  
the establishment of the Office of  
Cardiac Care within the Georgia  
Department of Public Health.

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#### **NORTHEAST GEORGIA STEMI SUMMIT**

Hosted each year by NGMC, the Northeast Georgia STEMI Summit brings together paramedics, EMS staff and doctors from across the state. They meet to discuss the state of the Northeast Georgia Regional STEMI System – a collaborative effort providing critical care and rapid response in 18 counties across the region to people suffering a severe heart attack known as STEMI (S-T Segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction).

As this year’s summit was in progress, the Georgia House of Representatives voted in favor of adopting Senate Bill 102, which provides for the establishment of emergency cardiac centers and the establishment of the Office of Cardiac Care within the Georgia Department of Public Health. The bill was spearheaded by Jeffrey Marshall, MD (The Heart Center of NGMC) and Deb Bailey, executive director of Governmental Affairs at NGHs.

#### **SANE PROGRAM**

NGMC provides a SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) program which provides nurses special training in rape crisis, trial time with a District Attorney and training with law enforcement and a pediatrician’s office. NGMC employs nurses who have specialized training to complete the Sexual Assault Nurse Exam and provide specialized care for patients who are victims of sexual assault. This program is not a requirement of hospitals and is also not provided at all hospitals throughout the state.

#### **NORTHEAST GEORGIA FOOD BANK SUPPORT**

NGMC Barrow provided a donation to the Northeast Georgia Food Bank’s Food 2 Kids program in Barrow County. This program was developed to alleviate hunger on nights and weekends when other food is not available for children in need.

#### **TAR WARS**

NGMC is partnering with Barrow County Schools to implement “Tar Wars,” a tobacco-free education program for fourth and fifth grade students developed by the American Academy of Family Physicians to teach kids about the dangers of tobacco use, the cost associated with using tobacco products, and the advertising techniques used by the tobacco industry to market their products to youth.

#### **SPECIAL NOTES:**

NGMC uses the precepts outlined in “A Guide for Planning and Reporting Community Benefit,” provided by the Catholic Health Association of The United States and VHA, Inc. The guide’s purpose is to help not-for-profit, mission-driven healthcare organizations develop, enhance and report on their community benefit programs.

**For more information, contact Christy Moore, manager, Community Health Improvement, at 770-219-8097 or visit [nghs.com](http://nghs.com).**