

“We are committed to improving the health of our community in all we do.”

- NGHS mission statement

Community Benefit Report 2011*



Organization Overview

Northeast Georgia Health System (NGHS) is a not-for-profit community health system dedicated to improving the health and quality of life of the people of Northeast Georgia. Through the services of a medical staff of more than 500 physicians, the residents of Northeast Georgia have access to comprehensive medical services.

The Health System offers a full range of healthcare services through its hospital in Gainesville, Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC), which was named one of the country's 100 Top Hospitals for 2009 by Thomson Reuters. Northeast Georgia Medical Center's expert level of care has been recognized on a national and statewide level including:

- Number one in Georgia and top 5% in the nation for Cardiac Care
- Accredited with Commendation by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer for Cancer Care
- CARF-accreditation for inpatient rehabilitation including stroke specialty care certification, one of the first in the nation
- American Society of Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence certification and the first hospital in Georgia to offer gastric bypass surgery using the da Vinci robotic surgical system.

Additional facilities in Hall County include: three urgent care centers; a mental health and substance abuse treatment center; two outpatient imaging

* For purposes of this report, 2011 refers to the NGHS fiscal year 2011, which is Oct. 2010 through Sept. 2011.

centers; two long-term care centers; and outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapy clinics. NGHS also plans to build a new hospital in the Greater Braselton area. This 119-acre healthcare village, called River Place, already includes a medical office building that houses numerous physician specialties, an urgent care center and outpatient services including imaging, lab and physical and occupational therapy.

Led by volunteer boards made up of community leaders, the 557-inpatient, 261-skilled nursing bed health system serves more than 700,000 people in more than 13 counties across Northeast Georgia. As a not-for-profit health system, all revenue generated above operating expenses is returned to the community through improved services and innovative programs. NGMC's Charity Care Policy supports the provision of care for indigent patients, regardless of their ability to pay.

Facilities throughout northeast Georgia serve to extend NGHS' reach into the community, including: additional outpatient rehabilitation centers offering physical, occupational and speech therapy; a satellite cancer treatment center; and in-home services such as hospice and Lifeline, a personal emergency response system.

NGMC Recognition/News

Jackson Healthcare awarded a Charitable Service Award

to NGMC in 2011 for the hospital's collaborative **relationship with Good News Clinics and Health Access Initiative**. NGMC was one of 10 hospitals in the nation to receive this award that Jackson Healthcare has created to **recognize and encourage hospital involvement in community health improvement and to help spread the word about best practices that can be replicated in other communities**.

NGMC received the "Get with the Guidelines" Silver Award again for 2011. Hospitals that receive this award have reached an **aggressive goal of treating stroke patients with 85% or higher compliance with the standards of care as outlined by the American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association for 12 consecutive months**. This award recognizes the hard work of all our staff and their commitment to the care and management of stroke patients.

NGMC Closes in on \$1 Billion Contribution to Local Economy

NGMC generated almost \$1 billion in revenue for the local economy in 2009 according to a report by the Georgia Hospital Association, the state's largest hospital trade association.

Charity Care

NGMC's charity care policy removes barriers for low-income populations beginning with free care for patients up to 150% of the poverty level. Further, self-pay patients up to 300% of the poverty level qualify for an adjustment equivalent to the hospital's Medicare reimbursement rate plus an additional 40% discount.

Total Charity Care Cost for 2011:

\$15,647,060 million for Hall County;
\$10,937,273 million for regional residents

Community Outreach

NGMC values cooperative efforts with community services and other healthcare providers to improve the health status of area citizens. NGMC demonstrates its value for collaborative efforts within the community through many partnerships ranging from serving as lead agency of the Safe Kids Coalition of Gainesville-Hall County, to partnering with community health organizations, to helping reach at-risk populations in need of health care.

In 2011, more than \$4.4 million was provided in community benefit programs/outreach.

Community education was provided through free community lectures, various support groups, and the semi-annual health education magazine, *Communicare*. Presentations were made through the Speaker's Bureau, and NGMC also offered smoking cessation classes, as well as Living Lighter, a weight loss program. NGMC offered seven free community education seminars in 2011 on topics including heart disease, joint pain, deep brain stimulation, and parenting. These seminars generated more than 800 participants, and many different physicians from practices throughout the community participated in the seminars.

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Highlights of Community Benefit Programs and Activities

Partnering to Reach the Uninsured: Health Access Initiative, Good News Clinics and Hall County Health Department

NGMC continues partnering with others in the community on the issue of reaching the uninsured or underserved with the health care they need. NGMC is an active member and partner with initiatives aimed at this important issue such as Health Access Initiative (HAI). In 2011, HAI Initiative benefitted from major funding through

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The Medical Center Foundation's (MCF) *Healthy Journey Campaign*. The Medical Center also provided office space as an in-kind donation. By agreement, HAI clients utilize both inpatient and diagnostic services at the Medical Center.



HAI enrolls adult (18 - 64-year-old) residents of Hall County who are uninsured and not eligible for other public programs and are at or below 150% of federal poverty level (\$30,000 for a family of 4). Close to one-fourth of the Hall County population (22%) has income below 150% of the federal poverty level guidelines (US Census, 2000). Approximately 11% of the population in Hall County is uninsured.

Other collaborative partners working with HAI besides NGMC and MCF include Good News Clinics (non-profit organization - free clinic), the Hall County Health Department, MedLink (federally qualified

community health clinic), Department of Family and Children's Services, North Georgia Community Foundation, Healthcare Georgia Foundation, and Hall County Medical Society.

Funding from NGMC also helps provide medications, medical supplies and other support for Good News Clinics - the largest free clinic in Georgia. Founded in 1992, Good News Clinics is a Christian ministry that provides medical care to the indigent and uninsured population at no charge. **In 2011, more than \$265,000 was donated to help Good News Clinics provide care to indigent patients who were at or below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines and did not qualify for other programs.**



NGMC plays a major role in funding 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 2011, NGMC contributed more than \$1.2 million.**

NGMC Volunteers

In 2011, more than **600 NGMC volunteers** contributed more than **61,000 volunteer hours**, equivalent to **36 full time employees** and a **value of over \$1.3 million**. While these figures are not included in the quantitative portion of the community benefit report, they show the depth of support the community gives NGMC. The Teen Volunteer Program had 101 teens to participate in 2011. The teens came from 8 counties and represented 25 different schools within the area.

The Medical Center Foundation Raises Funds to Benefit the Community

The MCF is the fundraising arm of NGMC and NGHS 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. The following are items of interest to note:

- Since 1997, **more than \$2.2 million has been raised for community health improvement projects through The Medical Center Open**
- The 2010 Medical Center Open Golf Tournament, held in 2011, raised over \$186,000 to benefit the Hall County Fire Services AED Program and the Northeast Georgia Regional STEMI program to provide life-saving cardiac equipment for Gainesville City and Hall County Schools and Georgia's Region II EMS.
- The Medical Center Foundation and the W.A.T.C.H. (We Are Targeting Community Healthcare) Employee-Giving Club received the **2011 Spirit**



of Philanthropy Award for Best Employee Giving Program from the Georgia Hospital Association's Georgia Association for Development Professionals.

W.A.T.C.H. members have donated more than \$4 million to support the *Healthy Journey Campaign* since the program's inception in 2000.



Safe Kids Coalition Works to

Keep Kids Safe

The Gainesville-Hall County Safe

Kids Coalition, led by NGMC, is part of the National Safe Kids Campaign, 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. This program provides affordable safety equipment such as car seats and bike helmets to area children in need. Working with a coalition made up of law enforcement, area schools, community volunteers and others, Safe Kids provides educational materials and programs that teach children and their parents how to avoid accidents and injuries. Safe Kids continued the work of injury prevention for families in the Hall County community in 2011 thanks to the support of MCF and the *Healthy Journey Campaign*.

In 2011, members of the Gainesville-Hall County Safe Kids Coalition provided over **300 programs** and events that reached an estimated **51,000 children and their family members, teachers and caregivers**. Through these programs, over 3,000 safety devices were distributed to families who were in need of them.

Getting Older and Better Workshop

Over **200 people** participated in the **Getting Older and Better Workshop** in May at First United Methodist Church in Gainesville and the Spout Springs Library in Flowery Branch. This event was sponsored by The

Medical Center Auxiliary, provided by NGMC, and featured speakers on surgical and non-surgical options for joint pain.

Sponsorships and Donations

In 2011, NGMC **sponsored or made a donation to approximately 15 community agencies** serving health and human service needs, ranging from supporting the American Cancer Society to Teen Pregnancy Prevention. Sponsorships/donations totaled over \$30,000 in 2011.

Employees Lead the Way: United Way Pacesetter & More

NGMC completed its **2011 United Way Cornerstone Campaign in Sept.**



2011. NGHS employees **contributed over \$136,000** to United Way as a Cornerstone Company. **This is 13% more than last year and \$18,000 more than NGHS has ever contributed as an organization.**

NGMC employees are very active in the community, volunteering at the Good News Clinics, in their churches on mission trips and for community agencies such as the Humane Society and Habitat for Humanity. **When it comes to supporting MCF's employee giving club, W.A.T.C.H. (We Are Targeting Community Healthcare), over 2,300 employees donated over \$413,000 in 2011.**



Floyd Higdon of NGMC Plant Operations received the Boys and Girls Clubs' Helping Hands Award at their annual gala. Floyd has served on the Boys and Girls Clubs Board of Directors for over five years. In 2009, he received their President's Award for 1,400 hours of volunteer services and for additional volunteer efforts with his church and overseas missions.

Doug Carter, NGMC's Board Chairman, served as the chairman of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce in 2011.

Carol Burrell, NGMC's CEO, was named to the Atlanta Business Chronicle's Top 100 Names and Faces to Know in the Healthcare Industry.

NGMC volunteers Victor and Judy Dube were awarded the Southern Regional Visiting Chairman's Excellence Award at the National Mended Hearts convention in 2011. They have donated nine years and 2,273 hours of dedicated volunteer service at NGMC.

Blood Drives

NGMC employees donated over 311 units of blood in 2011, benefitting over 900 individuals.

Support of Community Events

NGMC employees also turned out in full force for community events such as the American Heart Walk, March of Dimes' WalkAmerica and American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, averaging participation of 200 - 300 per event.

Training and Education for Healthcare Professionals and Other Students

NGMC supports the training and education of nurses and other health-care professionals.

- NGMC is a training site for high school students with disabilities who work in the areas of materials management, nutritional services, pharmacy and linens. 21 students and 3 instructors participated in 2011.
- 61 students from area high schools participated in the Youth Apprenticeship Program in 2011.
- NGMC partners with Lanier Tech to house a Radiology Tech Program and helps fund faculty. NGMC also provides 2 PC labs and classroom space for Lanier Tech's LPN program.
- 94 job shadows were placed at NGMC during 2011, allowing high school and postsecondary students from area schools to shadow professional health-care staff.

Special Notes

Community Benefit Definition and Objectives:

Programs or activities that provide treatment or promote health as a response to community needs and meets at least one community benefit objective:

- Improve access to health services
- Enhance public health
- Advance knowledge
- Relieve government burden

Not a community benefit:

- Provided primarily for marketing purposes
- Required for licensure or accreditation
- Restricted to individuals affiliated with organization
- Not related to community benefit mission
- Counted as community benefit by another organization or person
- Questionable in the eyes of the community

We also use 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 go to www.nghs.com.