



Northeast Georgia Health System

Community Health Needs Assessment 2017-2019

MOVE THE NEEDLE

5 HEALTH PRIORITIES, 10 OUTCOME MEASURES

“improving the health of our community in all we do”

2019 PROGRESS REPORT


(prepared Spring 2020)

2017

2018

2019



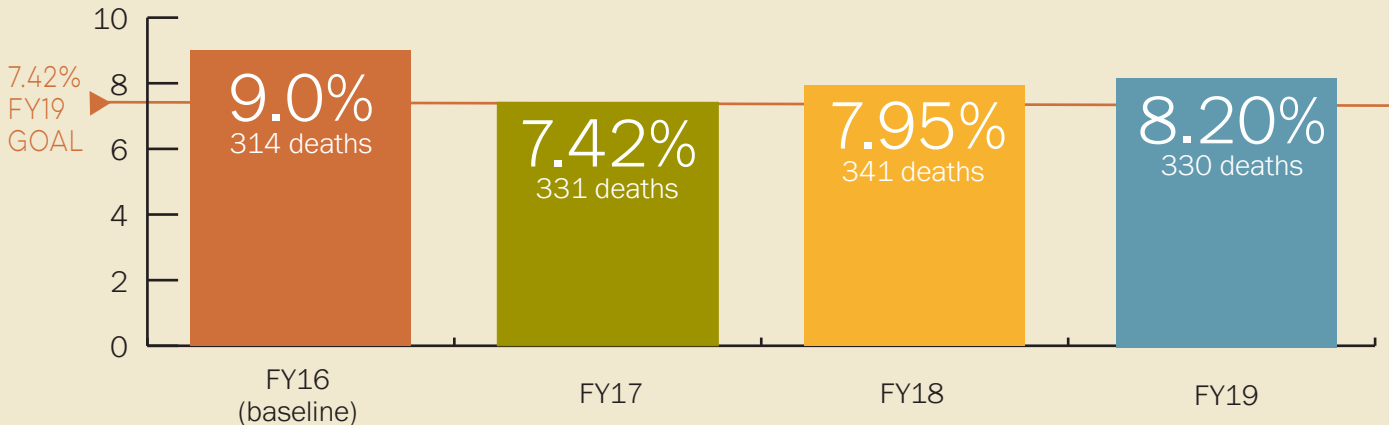
Based on a comprehensive community health needs assessment conducted in 2016, Northeast Georgia Health System (NGHS) identified five important health priorities and ten outcome measures to assess the health system’s progress in reaching ambitious goals for addressing specific health concerns for our community. To learn more about each priority, click on the  “Move The Needle” icon in this 2019 update report.



REDUCE OVERALL MORTALITY
RATE FOR SEPSIS

MORTALITY RATE AMONG PATIENTS WITH SEVERE SEPSIS/SEPTIC SHOCK

Lower is better.



2019 ACTIONS:

- **Screenings** are conducted as part of standard workflow at admission, as part of each shift assessment of inpatients, and at discharge.

- The **EPIC Predictive Model** used to identify patients at risk of sepsis before symptoms occur for earlier intervention, has been validated with our patient population and will be implemented by the end of FY20.

- A **Sepsis RN Response Nurse** has been funded to provide concurrent review of patients to support front-line staff in early identification and appropriate intervention.

- An **Outpatient (OP) Sepsis Workgroup** was identified and held regular meetings for FY19. A Best Practice Advisory has been developed and is being tested in the ambulatory setting. In addition, a patient Signs & Symptoms handout was developed for use in the ED & Ambulatory setting for patients discharged home with an infection.

- Posts on Social Media and Sepsis 101 tent cards were designed and placed in all Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) campuses for **Sepsis Awareness Month**.

- Two community lectures were developed to provide **community education**: Sepsis 101 & Antibiotics: Triumph or Tragedy. Also, NGMC participated in local Health Fairs and provided 3 Lecture Series Programs to the community touching 584 community participants.

- 16 Sepsis Awareness Events were held at NGMC campuses and Long-Term Care during September to continue to educate staff, including at the **Northeast Georgia Regional Infection Prevention Symposium**, a free conference offered to any healthcare provider throughout the state by NGMC's Infection Prevention & Control department.

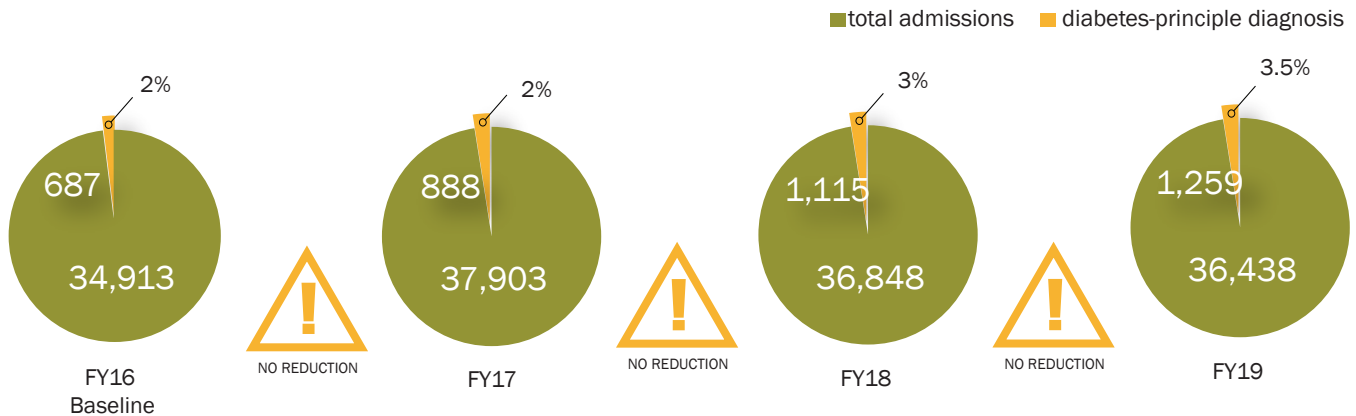
- Funding from the NGHS Foundation has been granted to create a **Sepsis Regional Population Health Team** that will use evidence-based protocols throughout the region to decrease the number of deaths due to sepsis. This funding makes it possible to form the regional collaborative to evaluate the use of evidence-based protocols across the region to standardize care, add staffing needed to create a Sepsis Alert Team, and focus on community education.



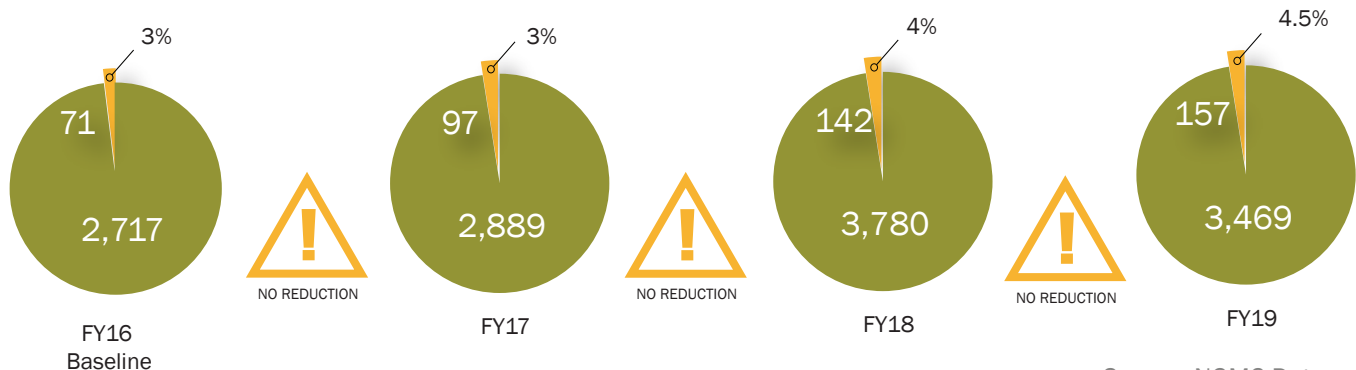
DIABETES

REDUCE HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS AND RE-ADMISSIONS FOR PRINCIPLE DIAGNOSIS OF DIABETES MELLITUS (DM) AND ITS PREVENTABLE COMPLICATIONS

ADMISSIONS WITH DIABETES AS PRINCIPLE DIAGNOSIS



RE-ADMISSIONS WITH DIABETES AS PRINCIPLE DIAGNOSIS



Source: NGMC Data

2019 ACTIONS:

FY19 showed an increase in overall readmissions for patients with diabetes as principle diagnosis; however, the implementation of the Acute Care Diabetes Project Team during the latter half of the year resulted in decreased readmissions for patients with diabetes.

In FY19, the majority of Diabetes Core Team improvement efforts were focused on inpatient diabetes care improvement and less on ambulatory. In FY20, a project team will be developed to focus on diabetes care improvement in the ambulatory setting, with development of a diabetes care pathway.



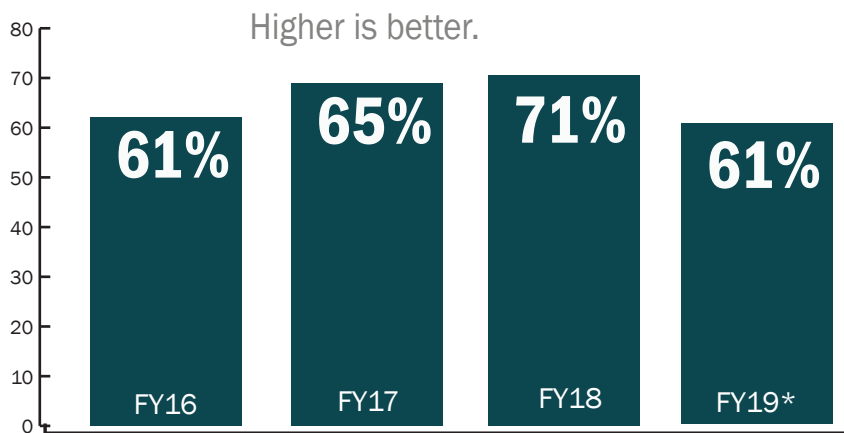
DIABETES

IMPROVE OUTPATIENT DIABETES CONTROL RATE

PERCENT OF OUTPATIENTS WITH DIABETES WITH AN A1-C OF LESS THAN 8



This 2019 report includes NGPG FY16-FY19 data and no longer includes Northeast Georgia Diagnostic Clinic. Data for the Longstreet Clinic was not available.



Sources: Phytel
* EPIC

2019 ACTIONS:



NGMC's Diabetes Education Program continued to partner with the YMCA in Gainesville and Winder to offer the Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Program, a proven evidence-based lifestyle program to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. This course is taught by a certified facilitator and supports participants with elevated risk for developing diabetes understand and choose methods to decrease risk of getting diabetes.



NGMC Diabetes Education runs the Prevent T2 Program and achieved Full Recognition status through the CDC, demonstrating effectiveness by achieving all of the performance criteria detailed in the CDC's Diabetes Prevention Recognition Program Standards.



Diabetes Education classes were made available in Spanish and offered on Saturdays to increase accessibility.

The Diabetes Core Team created a **Vision for a Diabetes Center of Excellence** and shared with Senior Leadership. Partnering with The Longstreet Clinic, a **Medical Director for Diabetes and Endocrinology** was hired to lead standardization of diabetes care across the system.



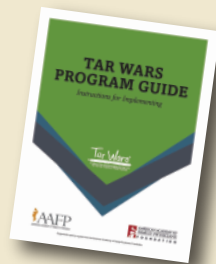
CANCER

REDUCE INITIATION OF TOBACCO USE AMONG MIDDLE SCHOOLERS IN BARROW COUNTY

According to NGHS's 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment, Barrow County had a lung cancer indicator value of 87.9, compared to 54.1 in neighboring Gwinnett County.

2019 ACTIONS:

NGMC Barrow partnered with Barrow County Schools to implement "Tar Wars" to 2,300 fourth and fifth grade students; and trained 8 school nurses in the Tar Wars lesson plan. "Tar Wars" is a program for fourth and fifth grade students developed by the American Academy of Family Physicians to teach kids about the dangers of tobacco use and the tobacco industries advertising tactics.



The greatest knowledge gain for fourth and fifth graders combined was for the True or False question "Advertisers tell the truth about tobacco use," where 70% of students answered correctly (false) in the post test compared to 35% in the pre-test. The second greatest learning gain was for "Vapes are safer than regular cigarettes" (false) improving from 54% pretest to 81% answering correctly in the post-test.

With a grant from the Georgia Healthy Family Alliance, NGMC promoted awareness and access to **low dose CT (LDCT) scans for lung cancer screening** for indigent patients in Barrow County. This program aimed to increase access and assist those without insurance coverage to receive proactive screening. From January 2019 to October 2019, **more than 715 LDCT lung cancer screenings were performed at Gainesville, Braselton and Barrow** (150 screened in Barrow) and **12 lung cancer diagnoses** were made.

IMPROVE THE STAGE OF DIAGNOSIS OF LUNG CANCER IN HIGH RISK COUNTIES

When it comes to cancer, the earlier the diagnosis, the greater the chance of survival. The goal is to reduce percentage of newly diagnosed late stage (stage 3 & 4) lung cancers, thereby raising newly diagnosed early stage diagnosis (stage 1 & 2). Data shows improvement in every county except Barrow. See page 5.

Through a grant from the American Cancer Society, NGMC **partnered with Good News Clinic to offer LDCT screenings to the under-served and uninsured populations in Hall County.** To reduce barriers to obtaining the screening, small monetary incentives were provided for completing an LDCT lung cancer screening. The grant also allowed for rehabilitation services and funds for transportation if clients were diagnosed with lung cancer through the program.

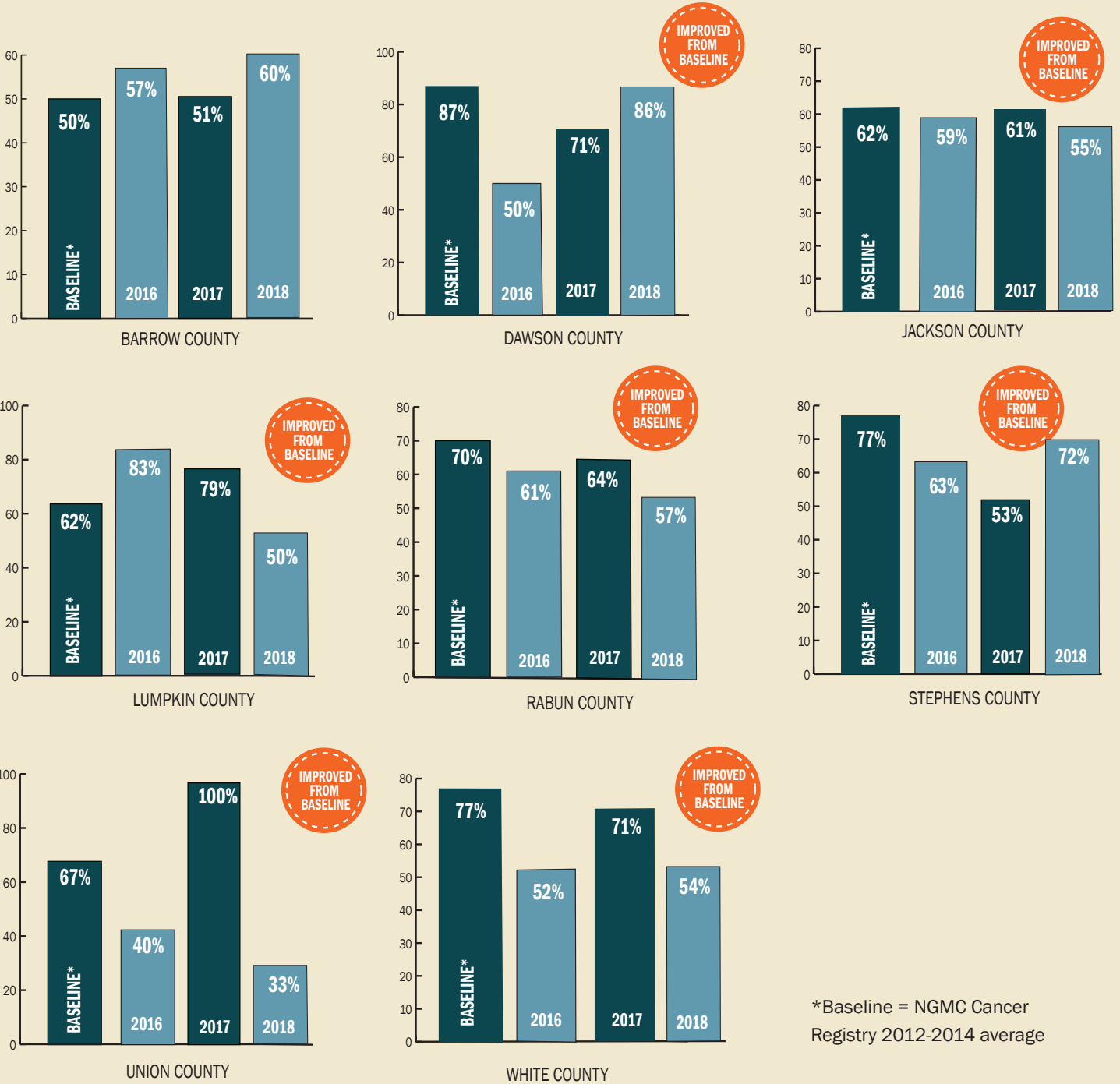
Oncology Services provided **community education in Barrow County** at local health fairs, as well as smoking cessation classes and support groups.

NGMC's **patient navigation program** provides cancer patients with guidance throughout their cancer journey. Seen as a **"living resource directory"** for patients, services include: providing emotional support, connecting them with community resources, helping patients understand their diagnosis, communicating with healthcare staff and providers, addressing logistical issues such as transportation needs and helping patients understand medical terms and treatment options.



Diagnosis at Stage 3 or 4 (late stage)

Lower is better.

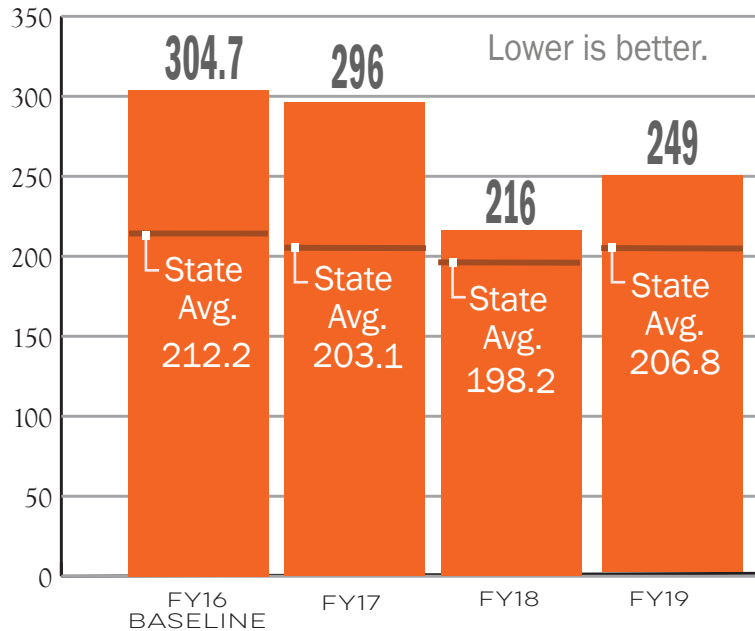


*Baseline = NGMC Cancer Registry 2012-2014 average

INJURY

REDUCE FALL RATES IN STEPHENS COUNTY

FALLS PER 100,000 STEPHENS COUNTY



Source: Georgia Department of Public Health

2019 ACTIONS:

NGMC and Northeast Georgia Physicians Group (NGPG) Toccoa Clinic providers implemented a **shared decision making process** whereby **patients screened at high risk for falls** decide jointly with their provider on the best path for improvement, such as home exercise, physical therapy, local exercise programs, or other appropriate options.

NGMC is an active partner with the **Northeast Georgia Falls Prevention Coalition**. In FY19, this collaborative of local agencies **provided a Falls Prevention Expo** for the Northeast Georgia region, offering resources, education and screenings. Additionally, three mobile workshops were held including one at Stephens County Library.

According to the CDC, more than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling, and falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries.

In FY16, Stephens County had the highest indicator value for falls within our service area at 304.7 with 92 more falls per 100,000 people than the state average.

In FY19, there was an 18% decrease in falls compared to the baseline.



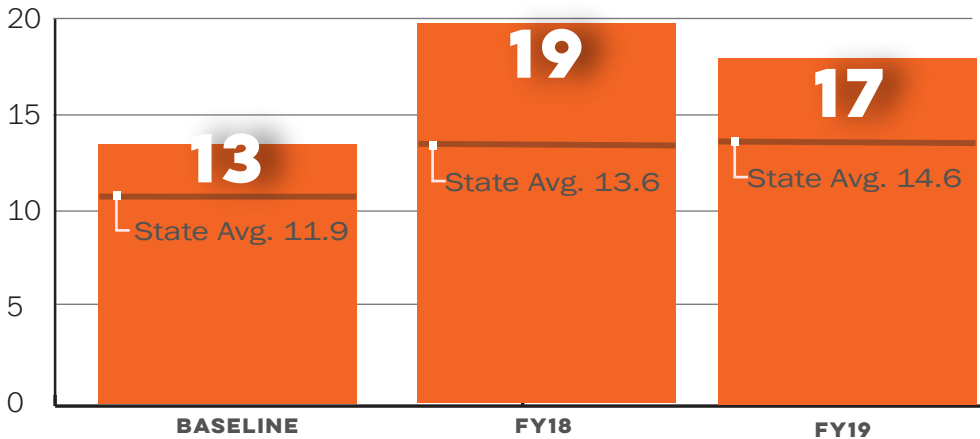
NGMC partnered with Legacy Link Area Agency on Aging to provide **“A Matter of Balance”** education classes to seniors at the **Stephens County Senior Center**. Two staff members of the senior center received training to become course instructors and help sustain fall prevention efforts. Additionally, **NGMC’s Trauma Outreach Coordinator became a trainer** of the course and provided falls prevention education and outreach.

Fall Prevention education and resources were placed in public areas around Stephens County such as in local pharmacies, using the CDC’s STEADI (Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths & Injuries) tools.

INJURY

REDUCE SUICIDE RATE TO ZERO IN HALL COUNTY

HALL COUNTY SUICIDE DEATH RATE PER 100,000



The zero suicide rate outcome measure for Hall County is meant to be an audacious goal: a rallying cry around which the community will come together to intervene upstream on the issues and conditions which after lead to suicide.

Source: National Vital Statistics System (CDC/NCHS, 2010 - 2014).

2019 ACTIONS:

NGHS is working to **address the population-to-mental health provider** ratio (currently 1350:1), and in FY19 expanded Integrated Behavioral Health at NGPG by adding:

- five new Behavioral Health hubs
- three new Behavioral Health Specialists
- one new Social Worker who is bilingual
- evening and weekend patient appointments

Depression and anxiety scores for NGPG patients dropped between 60-80% pre- and post-treatment. Also, efforts are in place to increase access to mental health providers at NGHS, including seven new mental health providers hired in Hall County.

NGHS is a partner in **United Way's One Hall Mental and Behavioral Health Subcommittee**. The committee is working to coordinate mental health services in northeast Georgia through new forms of connectivity which will include a shared platform and navigation system, providing Mental Health First Aid training to targeted audiences, greater collaboration and eliminating the stigma around the need for mental

health services. Stakeholders in this initiative range from AVITA Community Partners to school systems and law enforcement. Youth Mental Health First Aid Training has been provided to 300 people so far.

The **2019 NGHS Foundation Open Golf Tournament**, which was held in FY19, raised a record-breaking \$340,000 to fund the **construction of a Student Success Center (The Hub)**. Located at Gainesville High School and open to the Hall County community, students are provided with resources for academic and workforce development, mental and behavioral health services, and a variety of free support services designed to help them reach their full potential through health and development opportunities. In addition to these resources, The Hub also has a food pantry and clothing closet to help meet students' basic needs.



INJURY

Fifty percent of people with a mental illness are also affected with substance use disorder (State of Mental Health Report 2018, Mental Health America). **NGMC is an active partner with the Partnership for a Drug Free Hall** which provided free education about addiction, intervention, and recovery to more than

2,000 people in the community through outreach and events.

As a leader in this partnership, NGMC was instrumental in obtaining a grant for **J's Place, the Jeffrey Dallas Gay, Jr. Recovery Center** in Gainesville.



From supporting legislative changes, to participating in Georgia's drug monitoring programs to reduce over-prescribing, NGMC will continue to make strides to be part of the community effort to defeat the opioid crisis.

NGMC's emergency departments continue to partner with the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse to implement the ED-CARES (Certified Addiction Recovery Empowerment Specialists) program, connecting people who have been admitted to emergency rooms for an opioid-related overdose with trained **peer recovery coaches**. ED CARES plays an important role in helping people avoid another overdose and encouraging them to seek treatment. Peer Recovery Coaches have touched 3,100 individuals since 2017.

NGMC was the first in the nation to offer the **CARES program in its Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs)** to help families of babies born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) find a path to recovery.

Since the start of the program in 2018, **Peer Recovery Coaches have touched 100 moms**. Furthermore, NGMC NICU nurses sought specialized training to care for babies born addicted and their families; and not only implemented protocols that reduced the length of stay (LOS) needed for these babies, but they are also empowering and strengthening the mothers and fathers to care for their babies.

In 2014, the average LOS for infants with NAS was 37.6 days. As the new standardized morphine treatment protocol and non-pharmacologic measures were introduced, LOS significantly decreased each year to 16 days in 2019. The NICU team was **awarded the 2019 Team Daisy Award for their work with babies born with NAS**. Their results were so impactful, they were invited to present at the **Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society Convention** in Washington DC that connects thousands of nurses across 100 countries.





ACCESS TO CARE

DEVELOP PARTNERSHIP WITH INDIGENT CLINICS BASED ON BEST PRACTICE TARGETING POPULATIONS ALONG THE 400 CORRIDOR

PARTNER WITH AREA CLINICS DEDICATED TO SERVING INDIGENT AND UNDER-SERVED POPULATION TO MONITOR AND IMPROVE CLINICAL EXCELLENCE IN CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT

GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION: FILL ALL GME SLOTS IN 2019

2019 ACTIONS:

NGMC continues to partner with **Good Shepherd Clinic** in **Dawsonville** and provides office space to care for the indigent population. **Jo Brewer**, Executive Director, Laboratory Services and NGMC's Administrator of Medical Plaza 400, serves on the clinic's board.

NGMC supports the **primary care clinic at the Hall County Health Department** to improve access to primary health-care services for low-income residents in our community. In FY19, **NGMC contributed over \$1.1 million** to this clinic.

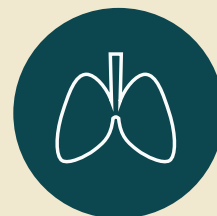
NGMC also supports **Community Helping Place**, an indigent health clinic in **Lumpkin County** which provides medical and dental services for the area's most vulnerable populations. **Dr. Donna Whitfield**, Chief of Medical Staff at NGMC Lumpkin volunteers and **Kay Hall**, NGMC Emergency Department Manager is on the Board of Directors. NGMC staff participated in the **Lumpkin Matters Initiative** which connects the uninsured with affordable quality healthcare, educational, and social services.

At NGMC, financial assistance is provided for indigent patients to obtain urgently needed discharge medications and transportation through the **Indigent Patient Fund**. The NGHS Foundation provides funding for this program that **served over 1,000 people in FY19**.



NGMC provides support to **Good News Clinics (GNC)**, the largest free clinic in Georgia. In FY19, over **\$500,000 was donated to help GNC provide care to indigent patients**.

Additionally, with a grant from the American Cancer Society, NGMC Cancer Services partnered with GNC to offer low dose **CT lung cancer screenings to the underserved and uninsured populations** in Hall County.



ACCESS TO CARE



NGMC, The Longstreet Clinic and Hall County Health Department continue **servicing low income mothers-to-be** helping them receive prenatal care, seeing an average of over 200 patients per month. These patients are cared for with one main goal in mind: healthy baby and healthy mom. In FY19, **NGMC provided support of over \$200,000.**



Dr. Antonio Rios, Chief Physician Executive for NGPG, continues as Chairman of **The Georgia Board for Physician Workforce**, which identifies the **physician workforce needs of Georgia communities and helps develop medical education programs.** **Dr. John Delzell**, VP of Medical Education and designated institutional official for Graduate Medical Education, also serves on this board.



The **Family Medicine Residency Program** received **Initial Accreditation from the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education** (ACGME), marking our third GME program to receive Initial Accreditation, following Internal Medicine and General Surgery Residency Programs. **NGMC welcomed its first 26 GME residents in July 2019.** NGMC estimates **178 residents by 2024** in the following areas: **Internal Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, General Surgery, OB/GYN, and Psychiatry.**



Northeast Georgia Medical Center

Questions?

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