



# Community Health Needs Assessment

# 2022



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# Executive Summary

South Georgia Medical Center (SGMC) is a 330-bed, regional, tertiary, referral medical center and teaching hospital located in Valdosta, Georgia serving fifteen counties in south-central Georgia as well as, Hamilton and Madison counties in north-central Florida. SGMC is a full service, acute care hospital, providing a comprehensive range of inpatient and outpatient services. SGMC is the flagship of South Georgia Health System.

In March 2010, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) was enacted and included a new requirement for non-profit hospitals to maintain their tax-exempt status. Included in the ACA is a requirement that all non-profit hospitals conduct a community health needs assessment (CHNA) and develop an implementation strategy.

Every three years, South Georgia Medical Center assesses the health needs of people living in its service area and identifies unmet health needs in the community of Lowndes County and surrounding areas. This report describes South Georgia Medical Center’s CHNA in compliance with the requirements set forth in the ACA.

## The six identified community health needs

- 1. **Need for enhanced access to primary care services for uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid recipients to reduce the inappropriate use of emergency services for common illnesses and minor injuries.**
- 2. **Need for enhanced timely access to select medical sub-specialty services (gastroenterology, urology, pulmonary medicine, and neurology).**
- 3. **Need for enhanced access to behavioral health services for uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid recipients.**
- 4. **Need for enhanced neonatal intensive care services to reduce the need to transfer very premature newborns who have been stabilized at SGMC to hospitals 90 to 135 minutes away.**
- 5. **Need for partnerships to enhance education and promotion of healthy nutrition, lifestyle, and exercise to reduce the prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, overweight, obesity, and cancer.**
- 6. **Need for enhanced access to non-emergency medical transportation services for persons with limited mobility and financial resources.**

## **A Letter from Sam Allen Chairman, Board of Trustees to the Community**

Dear Friends,

The Hospital Authority of Valdosta and Lowndes County, Georgia d/b/a South Georgia Medical Center is pleased to present our Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan.

With input from local professionals with an understanding of health needs in south central Georgia, we have reviewed, identified, and prioritized community health needs of residents of Valdosta, Lowndes County, and our surrounding counties.

These individuals provided professional knowledge, expertise, and valuable guidance in assisting South Georgia Medical Center in assessing existing programs and resources and provided thoughtful input into ways to enhance residents' health and wellness in collaboration with other community-based organizations.

Our Board of Trustees has reviewed and adopted the 2022-2025 Community Health Needs Implementation Plan and continues its commitment to leveraging existing programs, services, and resources to assist area residents in achieving their highest level of health and wellness. South Georgia Medical Center will continue its focus of working with other organizations to address the health needs of persons residing in our primary service area of Valdosta and Lowndes County.

Please visit us at [www.sgmc.org](http://www.sgmc.org) for more information and follow our progress.

Warm Regards,



Sam Allen  
Chairman  
Hospital Authority of Valdosta and Lowndes County,  
Georgia  
Board of Trustees

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# About South Georgia Health System

SGMC is a not-for-profit medical system dedicated to being the leader in improving the health, wellness, and quality of life in the community.

With 418 licensed beds and more than 600 providers and 2,900 employees, SGMC, its campuses, and affiliates provide a broad range of high-quality healthcare services. SGMC serves 400,000 residents across a 15-county service area on four campuses.

## South Georgia Medical Center

2501 North Patterson Street  
Valdosta, Georgia 31602



## SGMC Smith Northview Campus

4280 North Valdosta Road  
Valdosta, Georgia 31602



## SGMC Berrien Campus

1221 McPherson Avenue  
Nashville, Georgia 31639



## SGMC Lanier Campus

1160 West Thigpen Avenue  
Lakeland, Georgia 31635



SGMC is fully accredited by DNV's accreditation program, Integrated Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (NIAHO) the highest mark of patient safety standards set forth by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

SGMC was established to care for the sick and injured, regardless of sex, race, creed, color, nationality, handicap, or disability. A self-supporting medical system, SGMC proudly provides care for the sick and injured with no local tax support. Because SGMC is publicly owned and operated, any earnings are reinvested back into the system's facilities and services. This allows SGMC to fund valuable outreach and education programs that benefit local students, seniors, the uninsured, and many others.

### **SGMC is a member of:**

- The American Hospital Association
- The Georgia Hospital Association
- The Southwest Georgia Hospital District
- Vizient MidSouth
- Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals

### **SGMC is licensed by:**

- The State of Georgia Department of Community Health

### **SGMC has been approved by:**

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for participation in the Medicare Program
- The State of Georgia Department of Community Health for participation in Medicaid Services
- The State of Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitation Services for participation in Medicaid Services

## **Our Mission, Vision, and Values**



### **Our Mission**

- We exist to serve people.
- Our primary service is restoration of health.
- We will be a provider of most aspects of health care.
- We will provide leadership to improve and develop the healthcare delivery systems of the future.
- We will work with others to improve the health of the people in the communities we serve.
- We will participate in making our community a better place to live.

## Our Vision Statement

“SGMC will be the leader in improving the health, wellness, and quality of life in our communities.”

## Our Values

**Excellence in All That We Do** – We strive to do the right thing the right way, are accountable in all we do, require competence of our people, and are compassionate in our service.

**Integrity and Professional Conduct** – We treat all individuals with respect, expect honesty from all members of the organization, treat all people fairly, and are ethical in our dealings.

**Team Spirit and Individual Initiative** – we encourage team effort, support personal and professional development, acknowledge individual talents and skills, and support innovation and empowerment.

**Efficiency and Effectiveness** – We strive for accuracy, encourage process improvement, expect cost containment, and accept responsibility and accountability.

**Effective Communication** – We strive to communicate openly, accurately and in a timely manner, seek clarity and understanding of information, respect and maintain confidentiality, and understand the value of information in decision making.

**Accept our Responsibility to Our Community** – We support community institutions, participate in community services, give of our time and energy to community projects, and care for all people in our community.

## Our Values Statement

“Our decisions and actions will be guided by our values.”

## Our Quality Statement

“We are committed to –  
Customer Centered, Competent, Compassionate, and Cost-effective Care.”



## Our Services

South Georgia Medical Center as a regional, tertiary, referral medical center and teaching hospital provides a comprehensive range of inpatient and outpatient services to residents of communities across fifteen counties in south-central Georgia as well as, Hamilton and Madison counties in north-central Florida.

Anesthesiology	Infectious Disease	Pregnancy and Birth
Behavioral Healthcare	Internal Medicine	Primary Care
Cancer	Interventional Physiatry	Psychiatry
Cardiology	Laboratory Services	Pulmonology
Cardiothoracic Surgery	Nephrology	Radiation Oncology
Critical Care	Neurology	Radiology
Dermatology	Neurosurgery	Rheumatology
Diabetes Management	Nursing Care Facility	Robotic Surgery
Ear Nose and Throat	Obstetrics	Senior Living Facility
Emergency Medicine	Occupational Medicine	Sleep Services
Endocrinology	Ophthalmology	Spiritual Care
Endocrine Surgery	Orthopedics	Structural Heart Clinic
Family Medicine	Pain Management	Urgent Care
Gastroenterology	Palliative Care	Urology
General Surgery	Pathology	Vascular Surgery
Gynecology	Pediatrics	Women's Health
Hematology / Oncology	Physical & Rehabilitation Medicine	Wound Care & Hyperbaric Medicine
Hospice / Palliative Care	Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery	Youth Care
Hospitalist	Podiatry	

## Our Centers of Excellence



In addition, South Georgia Medical Center has developed four centers of excellence to provide state-of-the-art medical services to members of the communities we serve.

### Pearlman Cancer Center

The Pearlman Comprehensive Cancer Center provides quality cancer care close to home. Our affiliated oncologists and specially trained staff are committed to providing the timely, efficient, and effective cancer care you and your family wish to receive.

A highly expert team of fellowship trained pathologists, surgeons, hematologists/medical oncologists, and radiation oncologists provide full-service clinics and advanced treatments. The Pearlman team collaborates openly to create highly specialized and individualized treatment plans. Our goal is to offer patients the best chances of beating cancer.

Because cancer is emotional and care is complex, Pearlman uses nurse navigators to usher patients through the process. From day one of treatment, your nurse navigator will act as your personal guide providing understanding, education, and support while serving as your case manager and advocate.



### Awards and Accreditations

***Pearlman Cancer Center is accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (CoC). CoC encompasses the best minds in cancer care utilizing expertise from the entire oncology community to set the highest standards of care for CoC-accredited cancer programs.***



***Pearlman Cancer Center is accredited in radiation oncology by the American College of Radiology (ACR). The ACR seal of accreditation represents the highest level of quality and patient safety.***

### Treatments

We offer some of the latest in cancer fighting treatment options which include:

- Radiation Therapy – including Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT) with Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT)
- Advanced Chemotherapy and Biotherapy
- Surgical Oncology
- Clinical Trials including Precision Medicine trials
- Genetic Counseling for cancer-causing genes

# Dasher Memorial Heart Center

SGMC Dasher Memorial Heart Center has grown from humble beginnings to a program with regional recognition over the last decade. From cardiac and endovascular emergencies to diseases that progress over a lifetime, SGMC provides a wide range of cardiac care. With a team of highly skilled cardiologists and surgeons specializing in cardiothoracic and

vascular surgery, larger numbers of complex procedures are being performed right here in South Georgia to meet patients' cardiac needs. Our Heart Center features the region's only Hybrid Operating Room which combines the most advanced operating room and medical imaging technology.



**American College of Cardiology's NCDR Chest Pain- MI Registry Silver Performance Achievement Award**  
*Only hospital in the region  
Among only eight in Georgia*

Recognizes commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of care for heart attack patients.



**Intersocietal Accreditation Commission In Echocardiography In the area of Adult Transthoracic**  
*Maintained since 2017*

Recognizes intense compliance with the published standards thus demonstrating a commitment to quality patient care in echocardiography.



**American Heart Association's Gold Get With The Guidelines - Resuscitation Quality Achievement Award**  
*Only hospital in the region  
Maintained since 2014*

Recognizes commitment to treating in-hospital cardiac arrest, ultimately helping to improve patient survival rates.



**American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Certification**  
*Maintained since 2008*

Recognizes commitment to improving the quality of life by continuing to enhance standards of care in cardiac rehabilitation.

## Non-Invasive Diagnostic Procedures

- Cardiac Interventions Electrocardiograms (EKG)
- Holter Monitors
- Transthoracic and Transesophageal 2D and 3D Echocardiograms
- Dural Isotope Exercise and Pharmacologic Stress Tests
- Tilt Table Tests
- Treadmill Stress Electrocardiograms



## Invasive Procedures

- Angioplasty
- Stent Placement
- Loop Recorder Implantation
- Pacemaker Implantation
- Defibrillator/ICD Placement
- Electrophysiology Studies and Ablations (Cryo and RFA)

## Open Heart Surgery

- Coronary Artery Bypass
- Valve Surgery/Replacement
- Off-Pump Coronary Artery By-Pass Grafting

## Cardiac Skilled Nursing

- Single Stay Units adjust the level of nursing care to meet the patients' needs
- 24-bed Progressive Care Unit – provides nursing care to patients with stable medical, interventional and/or surgical cardiac disorders and patient saving cardiovascular diagnostic procedures
- 24-bed Cardiac Intensive Care Unit – provides specialty nursing care for critically ill adults following heart surgery, cardiac interventions, and other heart problems.

## SGMC Orthopedics



Welcome to the **Total Care Experience**

Joint, hand, knee, hip, or shoulder pain can make everyday life challenging – but it doesn't have to be that way. At SGMC, affiliated surgeons and physical/occupational therapists have years of experience diagnosing and treating disorders and injuries that affect muscles, tendons, joints, bones, and ligaments. They are experts at getting you moving again.

The orthopedics program features:

- State-of-the-art technology
- In-house rehabilitation
- Private rooms for you and your caregiver
- Total Joint Replacement classes

SGMC has dedicated the new orthopedics unit to providing a **Total Care Experience** that begins the moment you arrive and follows you throughout recovery. Whatever condition you have, the affiliated surgeons are here to get you better with individualized, personal care in a comforting environment that we hope feels like home.

## Women's Services



We understand the unique stages of a woman's life and are committed to providing preventative women's health services, disease fighting treatments, diagnostic testing, and education to all the women in our community.

- ✓ Primary Care
- ✓ SGMC Women's Health
- ✓ Pregnancy and Birth
- ✓ Gynecology
- ✓ Plastic Surgery
- ✓ Mammography



## SGMC 2021 Admissions by County

Service Area	County	Inpatient Admissions	Percent of Admissions	Cumulative Admissions
Primary	Lowndes, GA	8,889	62.5%	62.5%
Secondary	Lanier, GA	747	5.3%	67.8%
Secondary	Berrien, GA	728	5.1%	72.9%
Secondary	Brooks, GA	720	5.1%	78.0%
Secondary	Cook, GA	588	4.1%	82.1%
Secondary	Madison, FL	429	3.0%	85.1%
Secondary	Clinch, GA	399	2.8%	87.9%
Secondary	Echols, GA	219	1.5%	89.5%
Secondary	Hamilton, FL	179	1.3%	90.7%
	All other	1,315	9.7%	100.0%
<b>Total Inpatient Admissions</b>		<b>14,213</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

### SGMC Admission Demographics

In 2021, SGMC admitted 14,213 patients with 17% of admissions for women’s and children’s services, 70% for medical/surgical services, 12% for critical care services and 1% for rehabilitation services. In addition, SGMC received 62,106 Emergency Visits - averaging 170 visits per day.



# HEALTH FACTS

## What do we mean by access to health services?

Access to health services means the timely use of personal health services to achieve best outcomes. (1) It requires three distinct steps:

- 1) Gaining entry into the health system.
- 2) Accessing a health care location where services are provided.
- 3) Finding a provider with whom the patient can communicate and trust.

## What are the barriers to health services?

Barriers to health services include:

- Lack of availability
- High cost
- Lack of insurance

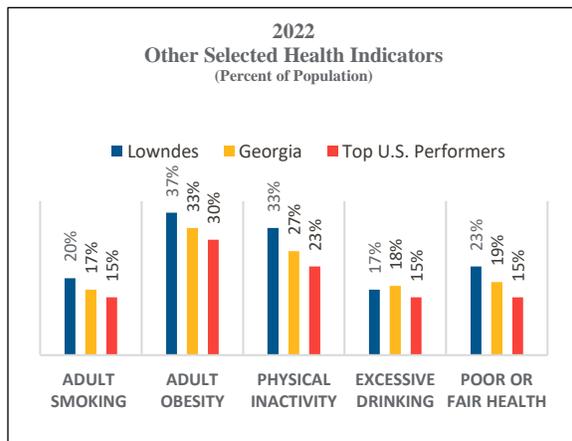
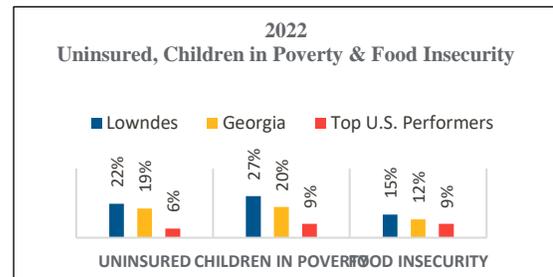
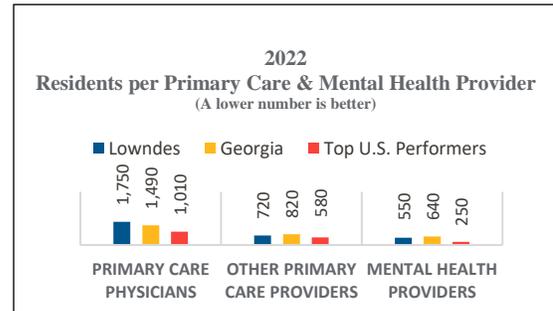
## What do barriers to health services lead to?

Barriers to health services and health care lead to:

- Unmet health needs
- Delays in receiving appropriate care
- Inability to get preventive services
- Hospitalizations that could have been prevented

Sources: "Healthy People 2020" U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Dec. 2020.

- (1) Institute of Medicine, Committee on Monitoring Access to Personal Health Services, National Academies Press, 1993.
- (2) Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2022 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps.



## What are the health risks of obesity?

In addition to diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension, obesity is related to many serious health problems.

- Approximately 20% of cancers in women and 15% of cancers in men are attributable to overweight and obesity.
- An estimated 34% of kidney disease cases in women and 24% of cases in men are attributable to overweight and obesity.
- Overweight and obesity at midlife independently increases the risk of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and vascular dementia.
- Obese adults are more likely to have depression, anxiety, and other mental health problems.

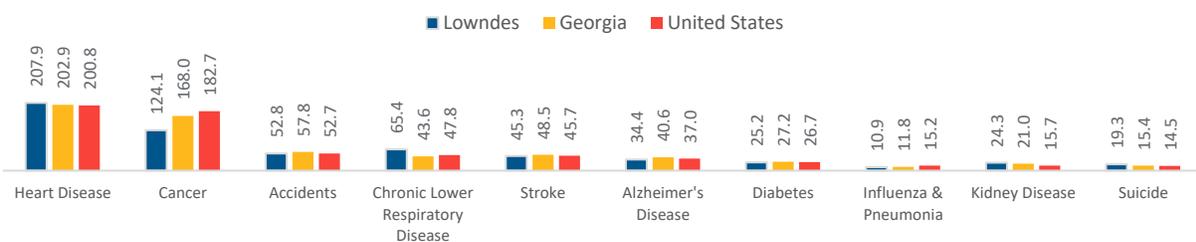
Source: The State of Obesity, August 2017, Trust for America's Health, RWJF

## Why are cause of death indicators important?

Death rates for leading causes of death are the number of deaths from each cause per 100,000 of the area's total population.

Cause of death indicators show where health improvement and prevention programs can be targeted to affect the most people.

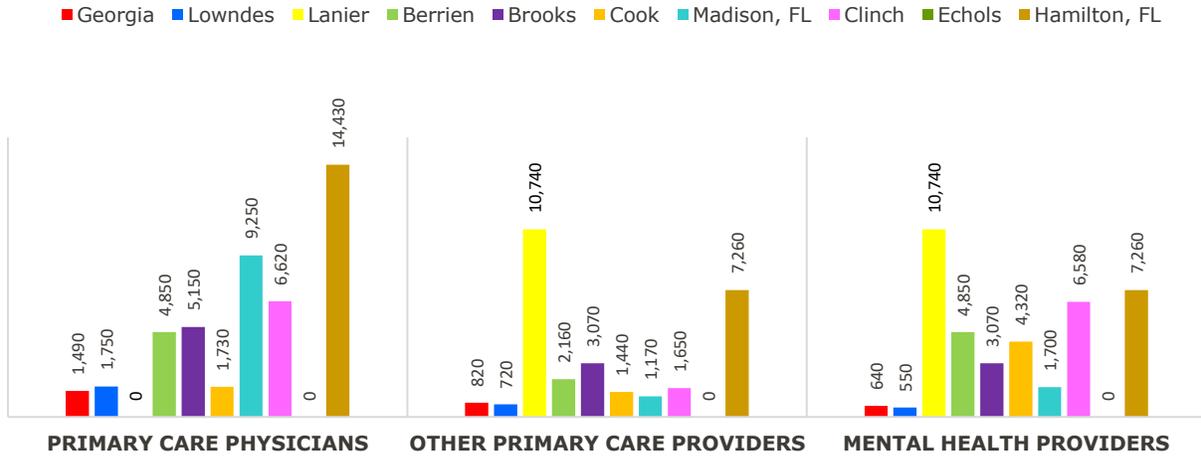
## 2019/ 2021\* Top 10 Leading Causes of Death



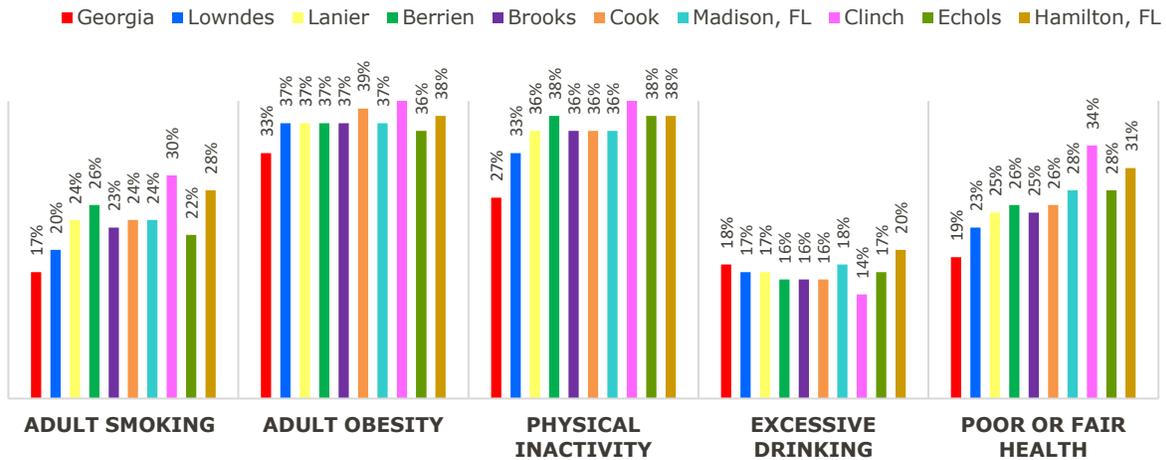
Sources: National Vital Statistics Reports, Vol. 68, No. 6, July 26, 2021; \* State of Georgia Department of Public Health OASIS: 2021 Leading Causes of Death: Georgia and Lowndes County.

# SGMC Primary and Secondary Service Area Counties

## 2022 Primary Care Physicians, Dentists & Mental Health Providers (Residents Served by Provider)



## 2022 Other Selected Health Indicators (Percent of Population)



Sources: "2022 County Health Rankings" Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

**County Health Rankings & Roadmaps**  
Building a Culture of Health, County by County

A Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program

## Purpose and Scope

The purpose of South Georgia Medical Center’s community health needs assessment (CHNA) and implementation plan is to enhance the health and wellness of individuals living in our community.

While SGMC is a regional health care provider serving south-central Georgia and north-central Florida, the scope of this CHNA focuses on addressing the health needs of residents who live within our primary service area community of Valdosta and Lowndes County.

## Approach and Process

South Georgia Medical Center’s approach to achieving community health improvement priorities follows a six-step process designed to be updated every three years to assess progress in addressing the health needs of the community.

It begins with defining SGMC’s target community, and then assessing the health needs of the community using available health data and input from a broad range of advocates representing the health interests of the residents within the target community.

After the health needs are identified, individuals representing the target community establish the health improvement priorities for the community.



From the list of health improvement priorities developed by health advocates of our community, the leadership at SGMC met to develop strategies and plans to address the identified health need priorities.

These strategies and plans are then implemented and reported to the public via the hospital’s website as SGMC’s Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan.

## Acknowledgement

South Georgia Medical Center’s Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan was developed with the assistance of LEGACY CONSULTING GROUP and generous input from a broad group of people representing the health interests of residents of Valdosta, Lowndes County, and our surrounding counties.

The individuals listed below contributed immeasurable value in the formation of this report, providing professional knowledge, expert medical information, and community input regarding health needs advocacy. South Georgia Medical Center would like to acknowledge these individuals and thank them for their generous time and contributions to this assessment.

## *Contributors to Our CHNA*

Johnny Ball SVP Regional Hospital Operations South Georgia Medical Center	Charlene Blache, MD Pediatrician Southern Pediatric Clinic
Dr. LaGary Carter, NP-C, ACSM-RCEP, CEP Associate Dean, School of Health Sciences Valdosta State University	W. Clark Connell, MD Medical Director Emergency Department South Georgia Medical Center
Steven Brian Dawson, MD Chief Medical Officer South Georgia Medical Center	Ronald Dean President & Chief Executive Officer South Georgia Medical Center
Cherise Giddens, RN VP Clinical Nursing South Georgia Medical Center	Traci Gosier, RN Health Promotion Coordinator, South Health District Georgia Department of Public Health
Joseph Hayes, MD Internal Medicine SGMC Internal Medicine	April Lamon Director of Clinical Affiliations Wiregrass Georgia Technical College
John Moore Chief Financial Officer South Georgia Medical Center	John Roan, DDS Vice Chairman, Board of Trustees Hospital Authority of Valdosta and Lowndes County, Georgia
Randy Smith, RN Chief Operating Officer / Chief Nursing Officer South Georgia Medical Center	John Sparks Executive Director Partnership Health Center
Larry Tobey, III President & Chief Executive Officer Valdosta-Lowndes County Family YMCA	Sandra Wilcher, LCSW Assistant Superintendent of Student Services Lowndes County School System

## Community Health Needs versus Other Community Needs

Individuals have multiple needs within a community including available, accessible, and affordable food, housing, educational, social, recreational, and transportation services as well as employment opportunities. These needs are real, growing, and frequently unmet within many communities; however, they are beyond the scope of our assessment. This assessment is specifically focused on community health needs of residents living in SGMC’s service area community.

While SGMC receives patients from throughout south-central Georgia and north-central Florida, it is not practical or realistic for SGMC to address the community health needs of all the patients it sees when they leave and return to their home communities. Thus, SGMC will focus its efforts on identifying and prioritizing the community health needs of residents who live in its primary service area of Lowndes County, Georgia.



## Community Health Needs

The community health needs of residents within SGMC’s primary service area were identified through interviews with advocates representing the interests of the community.



Based on interviews, expertise, and feedback from individuals representing the interests of the community a list of community health needs was developed. There was consensus around six specific community health needs, based on the unprompted frequency that these needs were identified by participants.



From this list of six identified community health needs, each participant was asked to rank community health need priorities on an ordinal scale with 1 being the highest priority and 6 being the lowest priority. The community health needs assessment was completed from October through November 2022. A 100% response rate from all participants was achieved, resulting in the following ranking of community health need priorities within SGMC’s community.

# 2022 Community Health Need Priorities

## The six identified community health needs

1. **Need for enhanced access to primary care services for uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid recipients to reduce the inappropriate use of emergency services for common illnesses and minor injuries.**
2. **Need for enhanced timely access to select medical sub-specialty services (gastroenterology, urology, pulmonary medicine, and neurology).**
3. **Need for enhanced access to behavioral health services for uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid recipients.**
4. **Need for enhanced neonatal intensive care services to reduce the need to transfer very premature newborns who have been stabilized at SGMC to hospitals 90 to 135 minutes away.**
5. **Need for partnerships to enhance education and promotion of healthy nutrition, lifestyle, and exercise to reduce the prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, overweight, obesity, and cancer.**
6. **Need for enhanced access to non-emergency medical transportation services for persons with limited mobility and financial resources.**

## SGMC's Community Health Needs Implementation Strategy

Due to limited resources and the extraordinary cost of maintaining state-of-the-art medical diagnostic and treatment services to meet the needs of its inpatient and outpatient populations, SGMC's community health needs implementation strategy is focused on leveraging existing programs, services, and resources. In addition, SGMC will focus on health need priorities of residents who reside in our primary service area.



Whenever possible and financially feasible, SGMC will assist other community health need efforts in partnership with other community, regional and statewide organizations.



## Community Health Needs Implementation Plan

While SGMC currently provides programs and services to meet the community health needs of residents of its service area, no single healthcare organization has the resources to address all the unmet health needs within its community.

The overall objective of SGMC's 2022-2025 Community Health Needs Implementation Plan is to ensure that most of the pieces of the "community health needs puzzle" are in place to assist each person in the community in achieving their highest level of health and wellness.



For each of the six community health needs identified by persons representing the interests of the community we will provide the following:

### Description of Need

### Objectives for Addressing Need

### SGMC's Ongoing Programs / Services Related to Need

### Progress in Addressing Need





**1. Need for enhanced access to primary care services for uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid recipients to reduce the inappropriate use of emergency services for common illnesses and minor injuries.**

**Description of Need**

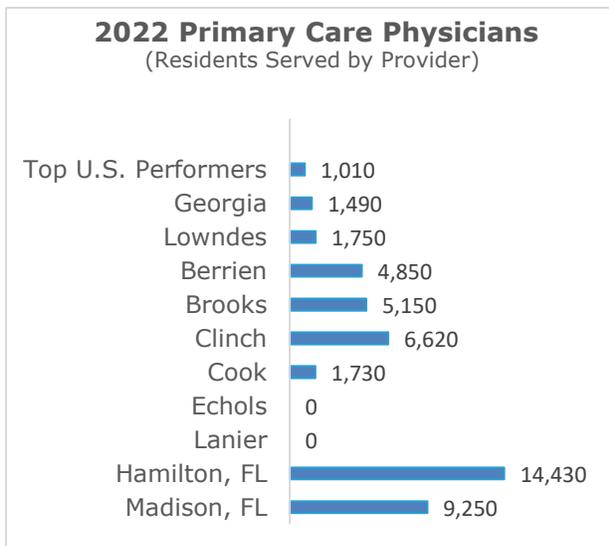
There continues to be a need for increased access to primary care services for persons who are uninsured, Medicaid recipients and unable to find physicians willing to accept Medicaid payment, and individuals who have high insurance deductibles that must be met prior to receiving coverage for primary care services.

Without access to primary care providers, many area residents continue to utilize the Emergency Department at SGMC for primary care services as they know that they will not be turned away for lack of financial resources.



Independent urgent care centers in the community require upfront payment to be seen thus making them unaffordable and non-accessible to the same clientele who are utilizing the Emergency Department for primary care services.

In addition, many primary care providers do not accept Medicaid and/or require payment at time of service, further reducing the affordability and access to primary care services for the target populations described previously.



Compounding the primary care access issue, within each of SGMC’s nine service areas counties, residents served per primary care provider to population are dramatically higher than Georgia overall and Top Performing U.S. counties.

According to the State Office of Rural Health, there is both a geographic and low-income Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) in the service area. Lowndes County has an HPSA rating of 20 on a scale of 1-25.

The local community has not fully embraced cost-effective alternative access options for primary care such as the use of nurse practitioners and physician’s assistants to extend the reach of primary care physicians.

## Objectives for Addressing Need

- ❖ SGMC will continue to provide funding for the provision of free and low-cost primary care services through the Partnership Health Center.
- ❖ Continue to identify appropriate opportunities for nurse practitioners and physician's assistants to extend primary care access options within the community.
- ❖ Continue to facilitate recruitment efforts to attract new primary care physicians to the service area, particularly physicians willing to accept Medicaid patients.

## SGMC's Programs / Services Related to Need

SGMC provides more than \$1.3 million in grant funds to the Partnership Health Center, for the provision of primary care services to uninsured individuals between the ages of 18 and 64.



SGMC has grown its Physician Network to include twelve primary care locations in Lowndes, Berrien, and Lanier counties with 17 physicians specializing in Family Medicine or Internal Medicine. SGMC also utilizes four Nurse Practitioners at its clinics.

In partnership with Mercer University School of Medicine, SGMC launched an Internal Medicine Residency Program with its first group of 8 physicians in July 2022. The residency program will grow to 24 resident physicians by 2024. In addition to inpatient coverage, the residency program includes a continuity clinic. This serves as a low-cost primary care clinic and is an integral portion of the internal medicine training as it allows residents to learn how to manage both common and complicated outpatient conditions and to follow patients over time.



## Progress in Addressing need

SGMC continues to make significant progress in addressing the need to expand access to primary care services for uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid recipients. SGMC has recruited two family medicine physicians and one internal medicine physician to start in 2023.

While there continues to be a need to expand access to primary care services, substantial progress has been achieved in addressing this community health need over the past three years.



## 2. Need for enhanced timely access to select medical sub-specialty services (gastroenterology, urology, pulmonary medicine, and neurology).

### Description of Need

There continues to be consensus about both the need for selected medical sub-specialties within the community and the need to be able to obtain timely consultative appointments to medical sub-specialists in the community. Specifically identified needs for medical sub-specialists include gastroenterology, urology, pulmonary medicine, neurology, and general cardiology.

### Objectives for Addressing Need

- ❖ Continue to monitor the demand for and the time it takes to obtain a medical sub-specialty appointment within SGMC's service area and quantify the magnitude of unmet sub-specialty demand within the community.
- ❖ Identify options for addressing quantifiable unmet demand for medical sub-specialties.

### SGMC's Programs / Services Related to Need

SGMC currently has 302 physicians with admitting privileges. The SGMC Physician Network includes more than 40 specialists to decrease the number of patients who leave the region for care. SGMC has an on-going program to recruit physicians but continues to experience challenges in attracting selected medical sub-specialists to maintain open and active practices within the community.



### Other Programs / Services Related to Need



The South Health District through the Children's Medical Services Telemedicine Program is equipped for pediatric patients to be seen by physicians that are not located in Valdosta via telemedicine. Pediatric patients can potentially see more than 20 specialists, such as cardiologists, dermatologists, endocrinologists, neurologists, pediatricians, psychiatrists, and others.

### Progress in Addressing Need

Over the past three years, SGMC has recruited an endocrinologist and neurosurgeon to address specific previously identified medical sub-specialist needs. In addition, SGMC has recruited a cardiologist who can perform electrophysiology procedures, a colorectal surgeon, two infectious disease specialists, and instituted an OB hospitalist program. SGMC has recruited two gastroenterologists and an OB/GYN to start in 2023. While there continues to be a need to enhance timely access to medical sub-specialty services, significant progress has been achieved over the past three years.



### 3. Need for enhanced access to behavioral health services for uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid recipients.

#### Description of Need

There continues to be a need to increase access to behavioral health services for uninsured, Medicaid recipients, and persons with high insurance deductibles as these target populations are not able to access behavioral health services within the community.



#### Objectives for Addressing Need

- ❖ SGMC does not provide inpatient or outpatient treatment services for patients with behavioral health issues at its facilities in Valdosta or Lakeland. However, South Georgia Medical Center does provide emergency stabilization services as necessary to ensure patient safety when individuals with acute psychiatric and/or substance abuse issues present in the emergency department.
- ❖ SGMC provides inpatient treatment for geriatric psychiatric patients at its SGMC Berrien Campus.
- ❖ SGMC will continue to meet with behavioral health advocates to discuss the need for increasing access to behavioral health services for the target populations identified.

#### SGMC's Programs / Services Related to Need

Other than its inpatient geriatric psychiatry program at SGMC - Berrien Campus, SGMC does not provide inpatient or outpatient behavioral health services. SGMC Main Campus accepts patients within its emergency department in Valdosta who are in need of stabilization, pending transfer to an appropriate behavioral health facility.



#### Progress in Addressing Need

SGMC continues to provide psychiatric and substance abuse stabilization services in the Emergency Department at its Main Campus in Valdosta. SGMC is planning a dedicated behavioral treatment area with 11 behavioral health stations within its proposed Emergency Department expansion; projected to be completed by July 2025. Currently, SGMC does not plan to begin providing inpatient or additional outpatient behavioral health services.



SGMC works with the United Way and United2Prevent, a local task force focusing on preventing suicide, increasing awareness of suicide and destigmatizing mental illness. United2Prevent's Mission is to increase the community's awareness, understanding, and knowledge of suicide so that people contemplating taking their own lives can be helped before they choose it as a solution to their suffering.



#### 4. Need for enhanced neonatal intensive care services to reduce the need to transfer very premature newborns who have been stabilized at SGMC to hospitals 90 to 135 minutes away.

### Description of Need

Multiple community representatives indicated a need for enhanced neonatal intensive care services to reduce the need to transfer very premature newborns who have been born at and stabilized at SGMC to other hospitals in Georgia and Florida. Currently, the closest Level III NICUs are at Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital in Albany, Georgia (107-miles/1:44-minute drive), Wolfson Children’s Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida (124-miles/ 1:54-minute drive), and Atrium Health Medical Center in Macon, Georgia (149-miles/ 2:11-minute drive). Obviously, this is very disruptive and stressful for families living in SGMC’s service area as they have a considerable distance to travel to see their newborn baby.



### Objectives for Addressing Need

- ❖ SGMC will evaluate the regulatory requirements for providing Level III NICU services.
- ❖ SGMC will seek regulatory approval to begin providing Level III NICU services as soon as it has the appropriate physical facilities and is able to obtain regulatory approval.

### SGMC’s Programs / Services Related to Need

SGMC currently provides Level II Neonatal Intermediate Care Services to premature newborns and stabilizes babies less than 32-weeks or less than 1500 grams (3.3 pounds) prior to transferring them to hospitals providing Level III Neonatal Intensive Care services.

### Progress in Addressing Need

SGMC is evaluating the requirements to obtain regulatory approval to begin providing Level III NICU services for its patient population to reduce the need to transfer premature neonates to other hospitals.

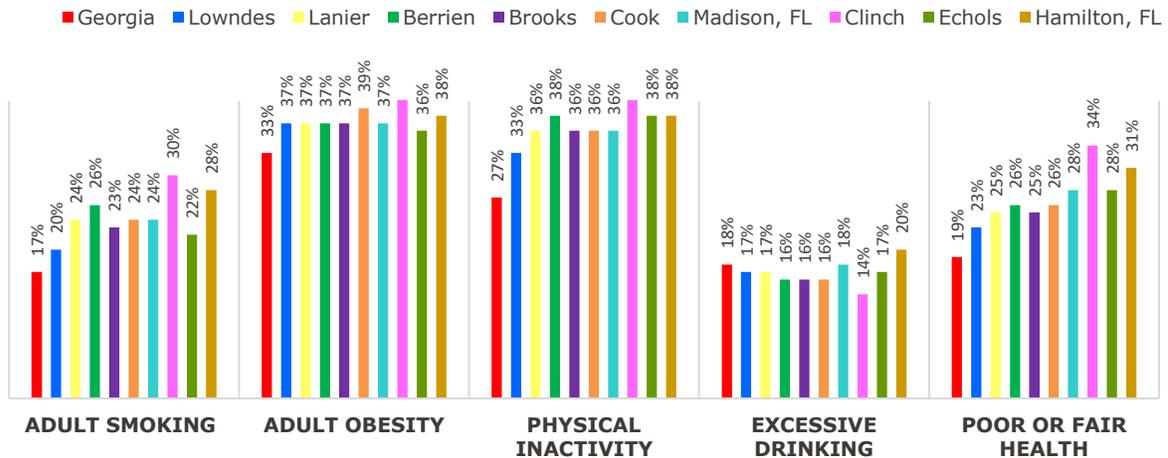


**5. Need for partnerships to enhance education and promotion of healthy nutrition, lifestyle, and exercise to reduce the prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, overweight, obesity, and cancer.**

**Description of Need**

In 2022, the percent of residents in each of SGMC’s service area counties ranked above Georgia in terms of health behavior indicators related to the percentage of adults who smoke, are obese, or are physically inactive. In terms of quality-of-life indicators, each of SGMC’s service area counties had a higher percentage of the population reporting they were experiencing poor or fair health compared to the entire state of Georgia (19%) or the U.S. overall (17%).

**2022 Selected Health Behavior Indicators by County**  
(Percent of Population)



Local physicians and healthcare providers report a significant portion of the local population has diabetes, hypertension and heart disease and there is a continuing need for enhanced educational outreach to assist their patients in understanding the nature of their disease and developing appropriate tools for managing their chronic conditions.

**Objectives for Addressing Need**

- ❖ Continue to support existing initiatives within the community that promote healthy nutrition, lifestyle, exercise, and smoking cessation programs.
- ❖ Continue to identify opportunities to enhance communication channels and social support networks to promote healthy nutrition, lifestyle, and exercise choices.

**SGMC’s Programs / Services Related to Need**

SGMC has multiple programs and activities to promote healthy nutrition, lifestyle and exercise to reduce the prevalence of cancer, diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, obesity and overweight. In addition, SGMC works collaboratively with local community partners to support healthy nutrition, lifestyle and exercise choices. Specific programs that SGMC sponsors and supports in collaboration with local community partners include:

- Healthy Lifestyle: Through its Speakers' Bureau, SGMC provides speakers for Lowndes County civic organizations, clubs and hospital sponsored "Lunch & Learn" programs.
- Smoking Prevention: SGMC participates in the American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking Trainer's sessions as well as provides education on the effects of smoking at the Boys and Girls Club and YMCA.
- Cancer Awareness: SGMC promotes and sponsors cancer awareness programs and events including: Mammos & Mocktails and "Paint Valdosta Pink" a 5K run/walk (breast cancer), Shine the Light (lung cancer) and prostate screenings.

## Community-based Programs / Services Related to Need

Several community organizations provide programs, activities and facilities to promote healthy nutrition, lifestyle and exercise which supports reduction in the prevalence of cancer, diabetes, heart disease, obesity and overweight.

### Valdosta State University



VALDOSTA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

The Center for Exercise Medicine and Rehabilitation: Fitness and Wellness Clinic serves VSU faculty and staff as well as members of the community. CEMR provides exercise prescription, supervision, and education to address the following conditions: diabetes, coronary heart disease, cancer survivor, metabolic syndrome, pediatric obesity, peripheral arterial disease, and weight loss.



### Valdosta-Lowndes County Family YMCA



The Valdosta-Lowndes County YMCA has multiple programs that promote healthy nutrition, lifestyle, and exercise. The YMCA offers aquatics, 24-hour fitness, Silver Sneakers Program for seniors, Y-Nutrition, and Group X Fitness Classes. In addition, the YMCA operates SGMC's Phase III Cardiac Rehabilitation Program and the Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program to help adults with hypertension lower and manage their blood pressure. Team Lean is an 8-week community wide

healthy weight loss challenge sponsored by the Valdosta-Lowndes County Family YMCA. Team Lean is a proven program to help people sustain a healthy lifestyle. The team concept provides accountability and motivation to work hard and achieve healthy results. Participants are allowed to decide what exercise and nutrition program works for their health and well-being. The YMCA supports "Team Leaners" through exercise classes and nutritional education that promote healthy lifestyle changes.



## Progress In Addressing Need

There continues to be a need for partnerships to enhance education and promotion of healthy nutrition, lifestyle, and exercise to reduce the prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, overweight, obesity, and cancer.



## 6. Need for enhanced access to non-emergency medical transportation services for persons with limited mobility and financial resources.

### Description of Need

Community representatives continue to report a need for enhanced access to non-emergency medical transportation to physician offices for individuals who live within the service area, but outside of Valdosta. Most of these visits are related to follow-up care or on-going physician office appointments for patients with chronic conditions. Target populations for non-emergency medical transportation services include the elderly, persons with limited income, and families of children with disabilities. In addition, veterans may need assistance in getting to the VA Hospital in Lake City for follow up care.

### Objectives for Addressing Need

- ❖ Continue to educate patients about existing resources to assist persons with limited mobility and financial resources in obtaining non-emergency medical transportation to physician offices.

### SGMC's Programs / Services Related to Need

SGMC does not provide non-emergency medical transportation services to physician offices for persons with limited mobility and financial resources. Due to the high cost of providing regional EMS services within the community, SGMC has no plans to provide non-emergency medical transportation services to physician offices for the targeted population groups.

### Other Programs / Services Related to Need

Georgia Medicaid provides non-emergency medical transportation services to eligible Medicaid recipients through a services contract with LogistiCare. Transportation services must be scheduled at least three days in advance of the non-emergency medical appointment.

**LogistiCare**



MIDS also provides limited non-emergency medical transportation for specific patient populations contracted through the state broker. MIDS operates ADA accessible vans serving Valdosta.

Valdosta On-Demand, in partnership with the City of Valdosta, provides access to affordable, efficient, and convenient public transit for all riders within the city limits.



### Progress in Addressing Need

There continues to be a need for enhanced access to non-emergency medical transportation services for persons with limited mobility and financial resources.

# Community Inventory – Healthcare Facilities & Resources Available to Respond to Community Health Needs

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## ACUTE HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

**South Georgia Medical Center** is a not-for-profit, DNV accredited, 285-bed general hospital providing a full range of acute care and outpatient medical services including:

- Advanced Diagnostic Imaging Center
- Ambulatory Surgery Center
- Birthplace
- Cancer Center
- Cardiology
- Cardiac Rehabilitation
- Cardiopulmonary Services
- Diabetes Management Center
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Endoscopy / Gastrointestinal Laboratory
- Emergency Department
- Intensive Care
- Laboratory
- Neonatal Intermediate Care
- Occupational & Industrial Medicine
- Open Heart Surgery
- Orthopedics and Spine Surgery
- Pediatrics
- Pharmacy
- Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapy
- Radiation Therapy
- Rehabilitation
- Sleep Disorders
- Stroke Program
- Surgical Services
- Urological Services
- Vascular Services
- Women's Services
- Wound Care & Hyperbaric Medicine

2501 North Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31602

(229) 433-1000

**SGMC Smith Northview Campus** is a fully accredited, 45-bed satellite campus of SGMC, with a 12-station emergency department and diverse outpatient healthcare services including ambulatory surgical services, diagnostic imaging, endoscopy/gastrointestinal laboratory, and an urgent care center on the campus.

4280 North Valdosta Road, Valdosta, GA 31602

(229) 433-8000

**SGMC Berrien Campus** is a not-for-profit, DNV accredited, 63-bed acute care hospital providing cardiopulmonary services, diagnostic imaging, emergency services, family medicine, hospital-based rehabilitation, laboratory, and SGMC Dogwood Senior Health Center - a 12-bed, secured geriatric psychiatric program providing behavioral health care for adults ages 55 and older.

1221 East McPherson Avenue, Nashville, GA 31639

(229) 433-8600

**SGMC Lanier Campus** is a not-for-profit, DNV accredited, 25-bed critical access hospital providing acute inpatient care, ambulance services, diagnostic imaging, emergency services, ECG, stress test and respiratory services, hospital-based and outpatient rehabilitation, physical, occupational and speech therapy, and skilled nursing swing beds.

116 West Thigpen Avenue, Lakeland, GA 31635

(229) 482-8440

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

**Legacy Behavioral Health Services** is the leading agency in providing mental health, substance abuse, intellectually and developmentally disabled services for over 20 years. An array of services to children, adults, and families are provided within 10 counties in south central Georgia including: Ben Hill, Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Tift, and Turner counties. Walk-in behavioral health and crisis intervention services are provided 24/7.

Health Crisis Center (24 crisis beds, 6 temporary observation beds)

3116 North Oak Street EXT, Valdosta, GA 31602	(229) 671-3500
3120 North Oak Street, Suite C, Valdosta, GA 31602	(229) 671-6100 Crisis 24/7: (800) 715-4225
1108 South Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31601	(229) 245-6410
325 West Savannah Avenue, Valdosta, GA 31601	(229) 333-5276
1905 South Hutchinson Avenue, Adel, GA 31620	(229) 896-4559

**Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities** provides treatment and support services to people with mental health challenges and substance use disorders and assists individuals who live with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DBHDD has six regional field offices across Georgia and each field office coordinates a community-based system of care through contracted providers. Valdosta and ten south central Georgia counties are in region-4, Community Service Area 22. Legacy Behavioral Health Services is the local Community Service Area Provider.

2 Peachtree Street NW, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor, Atlanta, GA 30303 (404) 657-2252

**Greenleaf Center** is a private, 103-bed acute care psychiatric hospital, open 24 hours per day, providing behavioral health and substance abuse treatment programs for adults and adolescents including: inpatient hospitalization, partial hospitalization, intensive outpatient, and traditional outpatient programs for children, teens, and adults struggling with depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, behavioral issues, mental health illnesses, and substance abuse.

2209 Pineview Drive, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 588-8215

**United2Prevent** is a local task force focusing on preventing suicide, bringing awareness to suicide and destigmatizing mental illness. United2Prevent's Mission is to increase the community's awareness, understanding, and knowledge of suicide so that people contemplating taking their own lives can be helped before they choose it as the solution to their suffering.

406-M Northside Drive, Valdosta, Georgia 31602 Dial 988 united2prevent@gmail.com

## DIABETES

**American Diabetes Association** is the leading organization heading the fight against the deadly consequences of diabetes. [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

233 Peachtree Street, Suite 2225, Atlanta, GA 30303 (404) 320-7100

**Georgia Diabetes Coalition** is a 501c3 membership organization that serves as a unified voice for those members dedicated to improving the quality of life for those with and affected by diabetes.

P.O. Box 162160, Atlanta GA 3032 (678) 310-4432

**Georgia Diabetes Prevention and Control Resource Guide** provides a general listing of services and resources for Georgians diagnosed with diabetes, prediabetes or gestational diabetes mellitus, their loved ones as well as healthcare and public health professionals providing care and support to them developed by the Georgia Department of Public Health Diabetes Prevention and Control Program.

[www.dph.ga.gov/diabetes-prevention](http://www.dph.ga.gov/diabetes-prevention)

**SGMC Diabetes Management Center** is a multi-disciplinary program that provides evaluation, treatment and education of diabetes and diabetes related conditions including Type 1 Diabetes, Type 2 Diabetes and Gestational Diabetes.

3018 North Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 249-4121

## END STAGE RENAL DIALYSIS CLINICS

**Kings Way Dialysis** is an 18-station end stage renal disease treatment center.  
4358 Kings Way, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 244-6923

**Oak Street Dialysis** is a 21-station end stage renal disease treatment center.  
2704 North Oak Street, Building H, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 247-4857

**US Renal Care Central Valdosta** is an 18-station end stage renal disease treatment center.  
506 North Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 219-0099

**US Renal Care South Georgia Dialysis** is a 21-station end stage renal disease treatment center.  
3564 North Crossing Circle Suite A, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 249-3222

**USRC Valdosta Home Program** is an in-home end stage renal disease treatment service.  
3564 North Crossing Circle Suite B, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 671-4298

**Valdosta Dialysis Clinic** is a 22-station end stage renal disease treatment center.  
1115 South Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 242-9610

## FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS

**Betty Dupree Health Center** is a federally qualified health center in Berrien County (26 miles).  
201 North Barton Street, Nashville, GA 31639 (229) 686-2774

**Madison Medical Center** is a federally qualified health center in Madison County (27 miles).  
235 SW Dade Street, Madison, FL 32340 (850) 948-2840

**Migrant Farmers Clinic** is a federally qualified health center in Lowndes County (15 miles).  
224 Frank Culpepper Road # J, Lake Park, GA 31636 (229) 259-4552

**Tri-County Family Health Center** is a federally qualified health center in Madison County (33 miles).  
193 NW US 221, Greenville, FL 32331 (850) 948-2840

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Georgia Medicaid** is a medical assistance program that provides low-income families with access to free and low-cost medical care. The Georgia Department of Community Health administers the Medicaid Program and PeachCare for Kids program, a comprehensive health care program for uninsured children living in Georgia. 2 Peachtree Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30303 (866)211-0950 [www.compass.ga.gov](http://www.compass.ga.gov)

Lowndes County DFCS  
206 South Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31603 (229) 219-1282

**HealthCare.gov** is the official site of the Affordable Care Act and site for the health insurance marketplace.

**PeachCare for Kids®** is a comprehensive health care program for uninsured children living in Georgia. The health benefits include primary, preventive, specialist, dental care, and vision care. PeachCare for Kids also covers hospitalization, emergency room services, prescription medications and mental health care. Each child in the program has a Georgia Families Care Management Organization (CMO) who is responsible for coordinating the child's care.  
[www.peachcare@dch.ga.gov](mailto:www.peachcare@dch.ga.gov)

2 Peachtree Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30303 (404)656-0386

## HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

**Eat Right** is a service of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics that provides easy web-based access to resources on food (nutrition, planning and preparation, vitamins, and supplements), health (lifestyle, weight loss, diseases and conditions, allergies and intolerances, wellness, pregnancy), and fitness (sports and performance, training and recovery, exercises) for kids, parents, men, women, and seniors.  
[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

**Fitness.gov** is the home of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition. The President's Council engages, educates, and empowers all Americans to adopt a healthy lifestyle that includes regular physical activity and good nutrition. It provides a wealth of programs and resources including physical activity and nutrition guidelines for all Americans.  
[www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov)

**Let's Move!** is a comprehensive initiative, dedicated to solving the challenge of childhood obesity within a generation, so that children born today will grow up healthier and be able to pursue their dreams. Combining comprehensive strategies with common sense, Let's Move is about putting children on the path to a healthy future during their earliest months and years. The program gives parents helpful information and fosters environments to support healthy choices. Providing healthier foods in our schools, ensuring that every family has access to healthy, affordable food and helping kids become more physically active is what it is all about.  
[www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov)

**Valdosta and Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority** strives to be the leading force in superior, affordable recreation services and facilities for all residents of Valdosta and Lowndes County. The Authority aims to promote a high quality of life for the entire population and support residents' values while growing a healthy, safe, and environmentally responsible community.  
[www.vlpra.com](http://www.vlpra.com)

**VSU Campus Wellness** is a service of Valdosta State University designed specifically for faculty, staff and students that provides easy access to multiple web-based resources and programs to assist you in developing a healthy lifestyle.  
[www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/campus-wellness/](http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/campus-wellness/)

**Wellness Council of America** is one of the nation's premier resources for workplace wellness, serving business leaders, workplace wellness practitioners, public health professionals and consultants of all kinds by promoting membership, producing leading-edge workplace wellness publications and health information, conducting trainings that help workplace wellness professionals create and sustain results-oriented wellness programs, and creating resources that promote healthier lifestyles for all working Americans.  
[www.welcoa.org](http://www.welcoa.org)

**What's on Your Plate** is a detailed resource guide for smart food choices for healthy aging that introduces the basic facts for making good food choices a part of your daily life and adjusting those choices as you grow older. What's on Your Plate was developed by the National Institute of Aging, National Institute of Health (NIH), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.  
[www.nia.nih.gov/sites/default/files/whats\\_on\\_your\\_plate.pdf](http://www.nia.nih.gov/sites/default/files/whats_on_your_plate.pdf)

**The YMCA** is a community-based, nonprofit organization established in 1844 with recreational programs and services for all ages.

Valdosta 2424 Gornto Road, Valdosta, GA 31602	(229) 244-4646	<a href="http://www.valdostaymca.org">www.valdostaymca.org</a>
Lake Park 5285 Mill Store Road, Lake Park, GA 31636	(229) 559-8886	<a href="http://www.valdostaymca.org">www.valdostaymca.org</a>

## HEART DISEASE / HYPERTENSION PREVENTION

**American Heart Association** works to help kids, families, and communities' live heart-healthy lives. It provides Healthy Living Information to help you get active and stay active for life including healthy eating, physical activity, healthy kids, weight management, stress management, quit smoking, and workplace health. [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

**Georgia Cardiovascular Health Initiative (CVHI)** works to refine and improve the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's four goal areas of the heart disease and stroke program: 1) prevention of risks factors associated with cardiovascular disease (CVD), 2) detection and treatment of CVD risk factors, 3) early identification and treatment of CVD, and 4) prevention and recurrent CVD events. As part of CVHI, the South Health District has initiated a Faith-Based Program of Excellence in the city of Valdosta that includes a faith network of churches that adopted formal wellness policies, a strategic plan for network members, and a faith-based Wellness Center that offers health screenings, exercise classes, chronic disease education classes, heart healthy and diabetic cooking classes, and a community garden for the local community. [www.dph.ga.gov](http://www.dph.ga.gov)

**Georgia Stroke and Heart Attack Prevention Program (SHAPP)** is an educational and direct-service program targeted to low-income Georgians with hypertension. Patient services are provided through county health departments and include screening, referral to doctors, diagnosis, and treatment. Of the more than 15,000 patients served by SHAPP, most are aged 30-69 and are African Americans who are not covered by either public or private health insurance.

**Go Red for Women**® is the American Heart Association's national movement to end heart disease and stroke in women. It provides resources targeted for women to live healthy including how to prevent heart disease, stress management, heart-healthy recipes, and heart-healthy exercise. [www.goredforwomen.org](http://www.goredforwomen.org)

**The Million Hearts Initiative**™ is a national initiative to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes over 5 years. Million Hearts™ is a public-private initiative that involves multiple federal agencies and key private organizations, including the American Heart Association, the American Pharmacists' Association, the YMCA, Walgreens, and United HealthCare, among others. Collectively, these partnerships will help leverage and advance existing investments in cardiovascular disease prevention. [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

**U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPTF)** is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine. The Task Force works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidenced-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications. All recommendations are published on the Task Force's website and /or in a peer-reviewed journal. The Task Force assigns each recommendation a letter grade (A, B, C, or D grade or I statement) based on the strength of the evidence and balance of benefits and harms of a preventive service. The recommendations apply only to people who have no signs or symptoms of the specific disease or condition under evaluation, and the recommendations address only services offered in the primary care setting or services referred by a primary care clinician. Since, 1998, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has been authorized by the U.S. Congress to convene the Task Force and to provide ongoing scientific, administrative, and dissemination support by the Task Force. [www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org](http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org)

## HOME HEALTH AGENCIES

**Amedisys Home Health of Valdosta** is a Medicare certified home health agency.  
2947 North Ashley Street Suite C, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 245-0646

**Georgia Home Health Services** is a Medicare certified home health agency.  
3404 Greystone Way, Valdosta, GA 31605 (229) 247-4663

**Intrepid USA Healthcare Services** is a Medicare certified home health agency.  
355 Northside Drive, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 247-7760

**Public Health Home Health** is a Medicare certified home health agency.  
3169 Inner Perimeter Road, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 253-1242

## HOSPICES

**Bethany Hospice** is an in-home hospice provider.  
2517 Bemiss Road, Suite D, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 249-8687

**Halcyon Hospice** is an in-home hospice provider.  
101 Northside Drive, Building E, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 333-5005

**Hospice of South Georgia & Langdale Hospice House** provides in-home and residential hospice services.  
2263 Pineview Drive, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229)249-4100 [www.hospiceofsouthgeorgia.org](http://www.hospiceofsouthgeorgia.org)

**UniHealth Source of Valdosta** is an in-home hospice provider.  
407 Cowart Avenue, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 241-8750

## MEDICARE CERTIFIED RURAL HEALTH CLINICS

**Brooks Medical Associates** is a Medicare certified rural health clinic in Brooks County.  
907 North Court Street, Quitman, GA 31643 (229) 263-4531

**Cook Primary Care** is a Medicare certified rural health clinic in Cook County.  
308 North Parrish Avenue, Adel, GA 31620 (229) 896-8134

**Cook Family Wellness Center** is a Medicare certified rural health clinic in Cook County.  
103 East James Street, Adel, GA 31620 (229) 896-3424

**North Florida Pediatrics** is a Medicare certified rural health clinic in Hamilton County.  
1117 US HWY 41 NW, Jasper, FL 32052 (904) 758-0003

## NURSING HOMES

**Crestwood Nursing Home** is a Medicare/Medicaid certified skilled nursing facility.  
415 Pendleton Place, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 242-6868

**Holly Hill Healthcare** is a Medicare/Medicaid certified skilled nursing facility.  
413 Pendleton Place, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 244-6968

**Lakehaven Health & Rehabilitation** is a Medicare/Medicaid certified skilled nursing facility.  
410 East Northside Drive, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 242-7368

**Heritage House Nursing Home** is a Medicare/Medicaid certified skilled nursing facility.  
2501 North Ashley Street, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229) 244-7368

## OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY

See "Healthy lifestyle"

## PRIMARY CARE (FREE OR LOW-COST ELIGIBILITY-BASED SERVICES)

**Partnership Health Center** is a free or low-cost primary healthcare facility staffed by volunteer physicians, nurse practitioners, physician extenders, nurses and administrative staff who serve the healthcare needs of the uninsured in Lowndes County. Services include non-emergency healthcare and referrals to specialists and labs. Proof of eligibility is required. Funding for the clinic is provided by donations and grants, including a generous donation from South Georgia Medical Center.

520 Griffin Avenue, Valdosta, GA 31601 (229) 245-0020 [www.pfhvaldosta.org](http://www.pfhvaldosta.org)

**Valdosta Community Based Outpatient –VA** provides a broad range of services for eligible Veterans. Primary Care services feature Preventive and Patient-Centered care approaches that offer a wide variety of specialty care services that include: Women's Clinic, Laboratory & Vaccinations, Wound Care, Mental Health Care (individual, group, couples), Nutrition & Weight Management, Pain Psychology, Social Work, Substance Abuse & Tobacco Cessation, and Telehealth Services for a wide-variety of medical issues. Veterans in need of other specialty services are referred to the Lake City VA Medical Center in Florida.

2841 North Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31602 (229)293-0132

## SICKLE CELL DISEASE

**Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta Sickle Cell Disease Program** is home to the country’s largest pediatric sickle cell disease program, caring for more than 1,800 children and young adults with a focus on prevention, treatment and follow-up care for sickle cell disease and its complications.

Children’s HealthCare of Atlanta

(404) 755-1112

[www.choa.org/sicklecell](http://www.choa.org/sicklecell)

**Georgia Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center at Grady Health System** is the world’s first 24-hour comprehensive primary care clinic for adult patients with sickle cell syndromes. Services include routine health care by appointment, newborn screening and genetic counseling, 24-hour acute care for adults ages 18 and older, chronic transfusion services, pain management, leg ulcer and hydra clinics, transition clinic – to ease the transition from pediatric to adult services, patient counseling, and sickle cell education and outreach.

[www.gradhealth.org/specialty/sickle-center](http://www.gradhealth.org/specialty/sickle-center)

Grady Health System

(404)616-3388

**Sickle Cell Foundation of Georgia (SCFG)** is one of the oldest sickle cell-focused institutions in the nation. Its mission is to reduce the incidence of sickle cell disease, to monitor the incidence of sickle cell, and to help improve the quality of life for persons afflicted with the disease. The Foundation sponsors educational programs, conducts testing, counsels’ families, supports healthcare providers, and coordinates activities that benefit patients throughout the year.

2391 Benjamin E Mays Jr Drive, Atlanta, GA 30311

(404)755-1641

[www.sicklega.org](http://www.sicklega.org)

## TRANSPORTATION

**Georgia Medicaid NET Program** is the non-emergency transportation program providing transportation for eligible Medicaid members who need access to medical care or services. This program only provides services to members when other transportation is not available, and eligibility is determined at the time of the contact. Eligible Medicaid members must contact the broker serving their county three days in advance of their appointment to schedule transportation. Urgent care situations can be arranged more quickly. Each broker has a toll-free number to schedule transportation and is available Monday through Friday from 7am to 6pm. LogistiCare is the broker providing Georgia Medicaid NET services in Berrien, Brooks, Clinch, Cook, Echols, Lanier, and Lowndes counties.

LogistiCare

(888) 224-7985

**Lowndes County Transit** has eight passenger vans, one of which is equipped with an ADA lift. This system provides rural public transportation services designed to allow convenient, dependable, accessible transportation for Lowndes County residents who, due to financial and/or physical burdens, do not have access to other means of transportation. Lowndes County Transit is operated by MIDS, Inc.

Lowndes County Transit

(229) 316-2153

**MIDS Inc.** operates a fully coordinated transportation system running a mixed fleet of DOT 5311 vehicles and company owned 15 passenger vans. MIDS Inc. performs DCH, DHS, GDOT (Public trips), vocational rehabilitation, workmen’s compensation, private pay contracts and transportation for special events. The NET trips are contracted and performed through the states broker. DHS trips are contracted with Regional Development Centers which in turn contracts with MIDS Inc. to perform the DHS trips within their region. MIDS Inc. contracts with Bacon, Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Lowndes, Turner, and Ware County to be the Third-Party Operator for the DOT 5311 Program in their area.

MIDS – 1610 River Street, Valdosta, GA 31601

(229)316-2153C

**Valdosta On-Demand** is a mobile app. Anyone within the City Limits of Valdosta can use this app to hail a vehicle directly from their smartphone to make trips to the store, school, to the doctor or other locations within the city. The service offers wheelchair-accessible vehicles and door to door service for those with limited mobility.

Valdosta On-Demand App

(229) 441-2940



South Georgia Medical Center is a not-for-profit medical system dedicated to being the leader in improving the health, wellness, and quality of life in the community.



2501 North Patterson Street  
Valdosta, Georgia 31602

[sgmc.org](http://sgmc.org)