



Georgia has approximately 1.3 million citizens remaining uninsured.

Patients are disproportionately affected by barriers to coverage because of insufficient number of providers as well as very high prevalence of chronic illnesses. The Georgia Charitable Care Network provides service and support to a crucial safety net for Georgians who otherwise would have no access to health care services.

Our most vulnerable citizens need access to high quality, affordable health care.

Charity clinics are an alternative for cost-efficient health care, a savings for taxpayers. Each clinic is different because no two communities are alike in their needs, assets and resources. Guaranteed sustainability is largely a myth; every health care organization and provider operating today must continue to work hard and adapt

their financing/funding and delivery systems to an ever-changing health care and consumer landscape. These clinics thrive because of their entrepreneurial spirit and innovative approach to serving their community.

AN ALTERNATIVE, COST EFFICIENT SOLUTION: CHARITABLE CLINICS

We know that access to care for vulnerable populations is a profound challenge not yet adequately addressed. Georgia's 90+ free and charitable clinics and health centers provide health services to state's uninsured and underserved, across all regions of the state.

Charitable Clinics provide health services to Georgia's **uninsured** and **underserved**. In 2019, **253,511** unique patients were served, with total patient visits equaling **581,421**.

95%

of patients are uninsured

74%

are employed, sometimes holding more than one job

62%

of patients served are living at <100% FPL

EVERY \$1 SPENT IN SUPPORT OF CHARITY CARE PROVIDES \$10 IN SERVICES.

\$82 million

Value of prescriptions provided

\$236 million

In uncompensated care

\$77.1 million

Value of specialty care visits provided

\$126.82

Average cost, 1 yr. of patient care

18%

Non-urgent ER usage reduction

342,012 hours

Contributed by volunteers

visit www.charitablecarenetwork.org

contact info@georgiacharitablecarenetwork.org

call 678.389.3333

HOW IS STATE FUNDING IN GEORGIA BEING USED?



Existing clinics are strengthening their capacity and bolstering sustainability to serve more patients. Funds have enhanced their ability to provide care by hiring mid-level staff or adding additional specialty care or dental services. Clinics must continue to increase capacity to respond to system changes and transformation of the wider health care delivery system in Georgia.

GCCN clinics are grateful for the support – it makes a difference in the lives of patients served.

100% ► access and outreach

- Provide access to a medical home for indigent, uninsured patients
- Hire mid-level providers to increase numbers of patients treated
- Establish services for specialty medicine
- Develop, expand or enhance services to patients (oral health, behavioral health, wellness services)

Since FY 2016, the Georgia Legislature appropriated \$500,000 **each year** in the Department of Community Health budget to the Georgia Charitable Care Network. DCH contracted with GCCN to serve as the fiscal agent for the distribution and reporting of state funds appropriated for the free and charitable clinics.

GCCN allocated 100% of the state funds in the form of grants to free and charitable clinics that met specific criteria. The grants process was voluntary. Grant allocations balanced the severity of need, based on percentage of uninsured adult residents (data source: County Health Rankings), with clinic capacity, based on number of medical, dental, and behavioral health visits reported in the previous year.

In order to leverage continued private and local support and to ensure that state funds represent an appropriate but not excessive portion of a clinic's budget, grant allocations of state funds could not exceed 15% of a clinic's annual operating budget, or \$50,000.00. An independent review committee comprised of experts in health policy, health finance, and the free and charity clinic sector reviewed and scored each application, and made recommendations on funding allocations. These recommendations were provided to DCH, State Office of Rural Health for review, and then submitted to the GCCN Board for approval.

Charitable Clinics provide **high-quality care** that emphasizes **prevention**.

88% of patients have one or more chronic illnesses.

The most common diagnosis is hypertension, followed by diabetes and COPD.

95% of clinics provide primary care services that emphasize prevention

88% of clinics provide health education services

IMPROVED HEALTH OUTCOMES AND COST SAVINGS – according to a 2015 study, *The Impact of the Georgia Charitable Care Network on Cost Savings from Lowering Blood Pressure and Emergency Department Use*, conducted by the College of Public Health, University of Georgia.

RESULTS: Patients with an initial diagnosis of hypertension or prehypertension experienced average reductions of 10.27 mmHg and 6.32 mmHg in systolic and diastolic blood pressure, respectively, during their follow-up visits. These changes were associated with 32.0 percent and 44.3 percent reductions in the relative risk of CHD and stroke, respectively. The savings from this reduction in blood pressure and avoided emergency department visits for 1661 hypertensive patients produced a positive net benefits of more than \$400,000 and a benefit-cost ratio of 1.6, in 2013 US\$.

CONCLUSIONS: For every dollar invested in GCCN clinics for hypertension screening and management, there is a benefit to the healthcare system through **reduced costs of \$1.60**. GCCN clinics are a cost-saving delivery model for underserved communities with poor health status and high emergency department usage.