

HEALTHCARE AND HOUSING (H²) SYSTEMS INTEGRATION INITIATIVE

ATHENS, GEORGIA

Medicaid Coverage and Other Health Care Resources

The information in this resource guide is intended primarily to provide people working in subsidized housing and homeless assistance systems basic information about available health care resources. It is also intended to provide context for a discussion on gaps in needed health care services and treatment. The following resources are covered:

- Federally Qualified Health Centers: Community Health Centers; Health Care for the Homeless
- Free Health Clinics
- Veterans Health
- Resources for the Uninsured
- Behavioral Health Services
- HIV/AIDS Health Services
- Managed Care Organizations
- Medical Homes
- Medicaid
- Additional Health Care Funding in Georgia

HEALTH CARE RESOURCES AND COVERAGE

A variety of health care resources for low-income people exist at the federal and state level. These resources can take the form of health care directly accessible by individuals or funding that flows through organizations that provide health care and related services. Accessing certain resources requires enrollment (and re-certification) in a program based on specific, documented eligibility criteria. As with housing resources, many health care resources are focused on particular populations, such as people experiencing homelessness, people living with HIV/AIDS, veterans, or people with disabilities.

The information presented here is intended primarily for housing agencies and providers to gain a basic understanding of the health care resources available in Georgia for people living with HIV/AIDS and people experiencing homelessness, the systems through which health care is delivered and funded, and the ways in which people living with HIV/AIDS and people experiencing homelessness can access the health care services they need.

HEALTH CARE SERVICE PROVIDERS

FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS (FQHC)¹

The Federal Health Center Program serves medically underserved populations or areas, works with special populations, and provides for enhanced Medicaid reimbursement. The four types of health centers are: (1) Community Health Centers; (2) Health Care for the Homeless; (3) Migrant Health Centers; and (4) Public Housing Primary Care Health Centers. According to the Georgia Association for Primary Health Care, Georgia has 32 FQHCs with 194 clinic sites in 106 counties across the state. There is one FQHC in Clarke County: the Athens Neighborhood Health Center, Inc, which operates 3 clinical sites in Athens-Clarke County.

¹ <http://www.gaphc.org/~gaphc819/health-centers>

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Community Health Centers²

Community Health Centers deliver comprehensive, high-quality preventative and primary health care to patients regardless of their ability to pay. They also provide oral health and behavioral health care tailored to the needs of the communities they serve. Community Health Centers offer a sliding fee discount to people who qualify based on income. According to the Georgia Association for Primary Health Care, there are 27 community health centers in Georgia. The Athens Neighborhood Health Center, Inc. is the sole community health center serving Clarke County.

Project Profile: Athens Neighborhood Health Center, Inc. (ANHC)³

The Mission of ANHC is to provide affordable, high quality primary healthcare to medically underserved individuals in Athens-Clarke County and surrounding areas. ANHC will make healthcare affordable to all people by assigning uninsured and under-insured persons to a sliding fee scale. The target populations to be served include children living in poverty, the working poor, elderly individuals on fixed incomes, homeless individuals, and persons with chronic illnesses.

In 2012, ANHC became an FQHC by meeting the stringent requirements of the Bureau of Primary Health Care within the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Services: ANHC provides comprehensive adult primary care, family medicine, pediatric care, acute care, chronic care, medication program services, laboratory services, and immunizations. Mental health services are provided through Advantage Behavioral Health Systems.

Health Care for the Homeless Programs⁴

Health Care for the Homeless Programs emphasize a multi-disciplinary approach to delivering care to homeless persons, combining aggressive street outreach with integrated systems of primary care, mental health and substance abuse services, case management, and clinical advocacy. Emphasis is placed on coordinating efforts with other community health providers and social service agencies.

There are four federally-funded Health Care for the Homeless Programs in Georgia: First Choice Primary Care in Macon, Four Corners Primary Care Center in Norcross, St. Joseph's Mercy Care Services, Inc. in Atlanta, and J.C. Lewis Health Care Center of Union Mission, Inc. in Savannah. There is no Health Care for the Homeless Program serving Athens-Clarke County at this time.

FREE CLINICS⁵

Free health and medical clinics offer services free of cost or for a nominal fee to persons who have limited income, no health insurance, or do not qualify for Medicaid or Medicare. According to the Athens Health Network, there are four free clinics in Athens-Clarke County: Mercy Health Center, Athens Nurses Clinic, and two clinics operated by the Athens-Clarke County Public Health Department (Teen Matters and the East Athens WIC Clinic).

² <http://www.gaphc.org/~gaphc819/health-centers>

³ <http://www.athensneighborhoodhealth.com/>

⁴ <https://www.nhchc.org/hchdirectory/ga>

⁵ [http://www.athenshealthnetwork.com/UserFiles/File/Find%20a%20Clinic\(2\).pdf](http://www.athenshealthnetwork.com/UserFiles/File/Find%20a%20Clinic(2).pdf)

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Healthcare for Homeless Veterans⁶

Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) programs initially served as a mechanism to contract with providers for community-based residential treatment for veterans experiencing homelessness. Now many HCHV programs serve as the hub for a myriad of housing and other services which provide the VA a way to outreach and assist homeless Veterans by offering them entry to VA care. The central goal is to reduce homelessness among veterans by conducting outreach to those who are the most vulnerable and are not currently receiving services and engaging them in treatment and rehabilitative programs. HCHV's Contract Residential Treatment Program ensures that Veterans with serious mental health diagnoses can be placed in community-based programs that provide quality housing and services.

As of July 2015, the HCHV program operates in two cities in Georgia: Atlanta and Augusta.

Athens Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)- Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center⁷

The VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) is a primary care program that allows the Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) to provide Veterans with primary and preventive care in a local setting. Services offered at the Athens CBOC include: scheduled lab appointments; scheduled nurse admit appointments for blood pressure checks, diabetes education, and immunizations; scheduled teleretinal diabetic eye screenings; scheduled EKG; scheduled preventative medicine; weight management program; blood pressure management program; medication management program; women's health; primary care; mental health services; audiology telehealth; and home based primary care (HBPC).

Resources for the Uninsured in Athens-Clarke County

Athens Nurses Clinic⁸

The Athens Nurses Clinic is a non-profit safety-net health care clinic providing free evaluation, treatment and education for acute and chronic medical and dental conditions to uninsured low-and-no income residents of Athens-Clarke County and the surrounding counties. The Athens Nurses Clinic offers acute care services, chronic disease management, laboratory services & blood work, health & education counseling, dentistry, women's health (once a month), and prescription assistance.

Mercy Health Center⁹

Mercy Health Center is a Christian health resource center that provides physical, emotional, and spiritual care for low-income uninsured people in the Athens area. To qualify for services, patients must be uninsured and at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. Services offered by Mercy Health Center include primary care, women's health, immunizations, STD and TB testing, pharmacy, dental, lab service, counseling, health education, cardiology, dermatology, ENT, general surgery, gastroenterology, gynecology, neurology, pharmacotherapy, physical medicine, physical therapy, urology, and vision services.

⁶ http://www.va.gov/homeless/docs/HCHV_Sites_ByState.pdf

⁷ <http://www.augusta.va.gov/locations/athens.asp>

⁸ <http://athensnursesclinic.org/wp/> and <http://www.athenshealthnetwork.com/Athens-Nurses-Clinic-v-23.html>

⁹ <http://mercyhealthcenter.net/> and <http://www.athenshealthnetwork.com/Mercy-Health-Center-v-24.html>

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Behavioral Health Services in Athens-Clarke County

Advantage Behavioral Health Systems¹⁰

Advantage Behavioral Health Systems is a publicly-funded provider of behavioral health, developmental disability, and addictive disease services for Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Madison, Morgan, Oconee, Oglethorpe, and Walton counties. Payments are based on a sliding fee scale determined by the Georgia Department of Human Services. Advantage Behavioral Health Systems also accepts Medicaid, Medicare, and some private insurance.

Advantage provides a range of mental health, behavioral health, and support services, including: crisis services; intensive community-based services; community support services; mental health day programs; supported employment; criminal justice/court services; outpatient clinic services, including counseling/therapy and medical services; mental health residential services; homeless services; and addictive disease/substance abuse treatment.

North Georgia Partnership for Behavioral Health (NoGAP)¹¹

The North Georgia Partnership for Behavioral Health (NoGAP) is a collaborative network of public safety net providers who offer a comprehensive system of care for individuals who have mental health, substance abuse, and/or co-occurring disorders. NoGAP is a newly formed network made up of 6 Community Services Boards including: Advantage Behavioral Health Systems, Avita Community Partners, Lookout Mountain CSB, Highland Rivers Health, Cobb/Douglas CSB, and Viewpoint Health. NoGAP aspires to systemically manage healthcare on a North Georgia regional basis while maintaining the personalized local care delivery systems within each community. It is the goal of NoGAP that this new delivery system provides value added services that create a robust recovery system for North Georgia's most vulnerable citizens burdened with chronic mental illness, substance abuse, developmental disabilities, and other co-morbid diseases.

HIV/AIDS Health Services in Athens-Clarke County

Clarke County Health Department Specialty Care Clinic¹²

The Specialty Care Clinic provides specialized outpatient primary care for HIV positive patients living within the Northeast Georgia Health District. The Specialty Care Clinic offers primary care medical services, medical and non-medical case management, pharmacy, nutrition, mental health, support services, and free HIV testing and counseling to individuals in Northeast Georgia living with HIV/AIDS. The Specialty Health Clinic also participates in the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), a state administered program that provides HIV/AIDS medications to lower income individuals living with HIV disease with no insurance coverage (except for Medicare).

AIDS Athens, Inc.¹³

The majority of AIDS Athens clients receive primary medical care through the Clarke County Specialty Care Clinic. AIDS Athens supports the medical care of its clients through the Primary Medical Care Assistance Program, which provides financial assistance to eligible clients to help them defer the high costs of insurance premiums and prescription drugs.

¹⁰ <http://www.athenshealthnetwork.com/Advantage-Behavioral-Health-Systems-v-20.html>

¹¹ <http://advantagebhs.org/grants-and-initiatives.cms> and <http://www.northgapartnership.org/about-nogap>

¹² <http://publichealthathens.com/wp/services/hivaids-testing-and-treatment/special-care-clinic>

¹³ <http://aidsathens.org/self-support/healthcare/>

HEALTHCARE AND HOUSING (H²) SYSTEMS INTEGRATION INITIATIVE ATHENS, GEORGIA

Medicaid Coverage and Other Health Care Resources GEORGIA HEALTH CARE FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT

*Managed Care in Georgia*¹⁴

- Georgia has a statewide Medicaid managed care system called **Georgia Families**.
 - Plans cover primary care, acute, and specialty services, including behavioral health, dental, and transportation.
 - Almost all Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids beneficiaries are required to enroll in Georgia Families, including low-income adults and children, foster care children, and pregnant women; however, individuals with disabilities or long term care needs are not eligible to enroll.
- Georgia operates an enhanced primary care case management program called **Service Options Using Resources in a Community Environment (SOURCE)**.
 - Allows frail elderly and disabled Medicaid beneficiaries who require a nursing home level of care to enroll with a primary care physician responsible for integrating primary care, specialty care, and home and community-based services.
- The state also operates a **Non-Emergency Transportation Brokerage Program** to extend transportation services on a mandatory basis to most Medicaid beneficiaries in the state, including those not enrolled in Georgia Families.
- Georgia contracts with three national, for-profit plans (WellCare, Peach State Health Plan, and Amerigroup Community Care) called **Care Management Organizations** to deliver services statewide.

*Medical Homes*¹⁵

A medical home is a coordinated care model focused on acute care for all populations. They are typically defined as physician-led primary care practices, which bring together a team of medical professionals (including nurses, nurse care managers, medical assistants, office support staff, and sometimes pharmacists and social workers) and coordinate and personalize medical care.

Georgia Medical Homes

Until recently, most medical home initiatives in the State of Georgia were supported through private partnerships. In 2010, the Georgia Academy of Family Physicians launched the Georgia Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) University to support primary care practices transforming to medical homes. The Georgia PCMH University hosts classes, which have guided more than 200 clinicians through the process of being recognized as a National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) medical home. The success of the PCMH University has encouraged a number of private payers to pledge their support to pay for PCMH care, including Amerigroup, Wellcare, Cigna and BCBS Georgia.

¹⁴ <http://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid-chip-program-information/by-topics/delivery-systems/managed-care/downloads/georgia-mcp.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://www.pcpc.org/initiatives/Georgia>

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Medicaid

State Medicaid Plan¹⁶

Overview: Historically, Medicaid eligibility was restricted to specific categories of low-income individuals, such as children, their parents, pregnant women, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities. In most states, adults without dependent children were ineligible for Medicaid, regardless of their income, and income limits for parents were very low. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) extended Medicaid to nearly all nonelderly adults with incomes at or below 138% of poverty (\$33,465 for a family of four).¹⁷ All states previously expanded eligibility for children to higher levels than adults through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). **Georgia has not implemented the Medicaid expansion, and thus Medicaid eligibility for adults remains very limited.**

Medicaid expansion seems unlikely in Georgia for the foreseeable future. Two laws designed to make expansion difficult were enacted during the 2014 legislative session: HB 990 prohibits Medicaid expansion without legislative approval, while HB 943 prohibits state and local employees from advocating for Medicaid expansion.

Medicaid Enrollees and Expenditures: As of May 2015, Medicaid and CHIP cover 1,746,310 Georgians. Approximately 200,000 people enrolled for Medicaid in Georgia during the first ACA open enrollment period, including 2,904 people from Clarke County. An estimated 974,000 additional people would be covered if Georgia implemented the Medicaid expansion. **More than 400,000 people are caught in the coverage gap, meaning they earn too much to qualify for Georgia's Medicaid program, but too little to qualify for subsidies that would help them purchase private insurance through the health insurance marketplace.**

How Care is Delivered in Georgia Medicaid: The Georgia Medicaid program is managed by the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH). A major trend in state Medicaid programs, including Georgia, has been the move from fee-for-service to managed care arrangements. It is estimated that about 90 percent of Medicaid beneficiaries are enrolled in managed care.

Georgia has elected not to set up a State-based Marketplace, making it one of 27 states for which the federal government has established and is running the Health Insurance Marketplace. Five insurers offered Qualified Health Plans (QHPs) in the Georgia individual Marketplace in 2014, although only one insurer offered plans statewide. Nine insurers in Georgia have proposed to offer plans in the Marketplace for 2015, including three with statewide options.

¹⁶ <https://www.healthinsurance.org/georgia-medicaid/>

¹⁷ The 2015 Federal Poverty Level guidelines are: \$11,770/year for an individual, \$15,930 for a 2-person family, \$20,090 for a 3-person family, \$24,250 for a 4-person family, etc.

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Medicaid Payments to Managed Care and Managed Care Enrollment, 2008¹⁸

	% of Medicaid Spending That Goes to Managed Care Premiums	% of Medicaid Enrollees in Comprehensive Managed Care Plans	% of Medicaid Enrollees in Behavioral Health Managed Care Plans
GA	33.1	58.0	0.0
U.S.A.	23.5	40.4	17.6

Georgia Home and Community Based Services Waiver Programs¹⁹

The waivers presented below may be relevant to certain subpopulations of people experiencing homelessness. Particularly since Georgia has not expanded Medicaid, it is important to consider whether any members of the homeless population may fit within one of the waiver populations.

Georgia has six Medicaid 1915(c) HCBS Waivers:

GA Elderly and Disabled (0112.R06.00)

Provides adult day health, out-of-home respite, personal support services/personal support extended/consumer directed personal support services, occupational therapy in adult day health care, physical therapy in adult day health care, speech therapy in adult day health care, alternative living services, emergency response, enhanced care management, financial management services, home delivered meals, home delivered services, and skilled nurses services for **aged individuals 65 and older**, and **physically disabled individuals ages 0 – 64**.

Georgia New Options Waiver (0175.R05.00)

Provides community living support, prevocational, respite, support coordination, supported employment, specialized medical equipment, specialized medical supplies, community guide, financial management services, adult dental, adult occupational therapy, adult physical therapy, adult speech/language therapy, behavioral supports consultation, behavioral support services, community access, environmental accessibility adaptation, individual directed goods and services, intensive support coordination, natural support training, skilled nursing services, transportation, and vehicle adaptation for **mental retardation/individuals with intellectual disability (MR/IID) of all ages**.

GA Pediatric Program (4116.R06.00)

Provides medically fragile daycare service (full day more than 5 hrs), medically fragile daycare service (less or equal to 5 hrs) for **medically fragile and technology dependent individuals ages 0-5**.

GA Community Based Alternatives for Youth (01.R02.00)

Provides behavioral assistance, care management, clinical consultative services, respite, support employment, community transition, customized goods and services, expressive clinical services,

¹⁸ SAMHSA, Analyses of MAX Claims: SAMHSA Fee-for Service Spending Estimates, Medicare-Medicaid Enrollee Analysis, and Managed Care Summary., <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content//SMA15-4908/SMA15-4908.pdf>.

¹⁹ For more information, see: <http://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid-chip-program-information/by-topics/delivery-systems/managed-care/downloads/georgia-mcp.pdf>

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family peer support, financial support, waiver transportation, and youth peer support for **individuals w/mental illness ages 18-21 and w/Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) ages 4-17.**

GA Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (0323.R03.00)

Provides community living support, prevocational services, respite, support coordination, supported employment, specialized medical equipment, specialized medical supplies, community guide, financial support services, adult dental, adult occupational therapy, adult physical therapy, adult speech and language therapy, behavioral supports consultation, behavioral support services, community access, community residential alternative, environmental accessibility adaptation, individual directed goods and services, intensive support coordination, natural support training, transportation, skilled nurses services, and vehicle adaptation for **individuals w/Intellectual Disability, Developmental Disability (ID, DD) of all ages.**

GA Independent Care Waiver Program (4170.R04.00)

Provides case management, adult day (full day/>5 hrs), adult day (half day/3-5 hrs), alternative living service, behavioral support, counseling, enhanced case management, environmental mods, FMS, personal emergency response installation, personal emergency response, personal support (consumer directed care), personal support (level 1 TBI), personal support (level 1), personal support (level 2 TBI), personal support (level 2), personal support (level 3 TBI), personal support (level 3), respite care (level I - 15 min), respite care (level I - full day), respite care (level I - TBI 15 min), respite care (level I - TBI full day), respite care (level II - 15 min), respite care (level II - full day), respite care (level II - TBI 15 min), respite care (level II - TBI full day), respite care (level III - 15 min), respite care (level III - full day), respite care (level III - TBI 15 min), respite care (level III - TBI full day), skilled nursing, specialized medical equipment (TBI), specialized medical equipment, and vehicle adaptation

Additional Georgia Health Care Funds

Healthcare Georgia Foundation²⁰

Healthcare Georgia Foundation is a statewide, private independent foundation located in Atlanta, Georgia. Established in 1999, the Foundation's mission is to advance the health of all Georgians and to expand access to affordable, quality healthcare for underserved individuals and communities.

Within this broad, statewide focus, the specific goals of the Foundation are:

- To protect and promote the health of individuals, families, and communities
- To improve the availability, quality, appropriateness and financing of healthcare services
- To integrate and coordinate efforts to improve health and healthcare services

The Healthcare Georgia Foundation has four grant-making priorities: 1) Addressing health disparities, 2) Expanding access to affordable quality health care services, 3) Promoting health and preventing diseases, and 4) Strengthening and sustaining health nonprofit organizations, programs, and workforce.

2015 grantees include AIDS Athens, Inc., (\$50,000 to support development of a strategic marketing and communications plan, provide professional development training to staff, and purchase an electronic document management system) and University of Georgia Foundation (\$12,000 to support the 2015 State of Public Health Conference).

²⁰ <http://www.healthcaregeorgia.org/about-us/our-history.cfm>

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Current funding opportunities offered by the Foundation are available at:
<http://www.healthcaregeorgia.org/grantmaking/current-funding-opportunities.cfm>.

Indigent Care Trust Fund²¹

The Indigent Care Trust Fund (ICTF) was established in 1990 to expand Medicaid eligibility and services, support rural and other health care providers, primarily hospitals, which serve the medically indigent, and provide primary health care services to medically indigent Georgians. With ICTF funding, even uninsured people who do not qualify for Medicaid may receive health care from participating hospitals.

- **The Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) Program** is a federal program that seeks to increase health care access for the medically indigent. DSH payments are distributed based upon each hospital's uncompensated cost of services provided to Medicaid patients and the uninsured. More than 100 Georgia hospitals qualify annually for DSH payments, **including St. Mary's and Athens Regional Medical Center.**
- **The Hospital Medicaid Financing Program.** The DCH Board of Community Health assesses a provider fee on hospital net patient revenue, and then uses those assessments to match Federal Medicaid funds to support Georgia's Medicaid program.
- **The Nursing Home Provider Fee Program** establishes a nursing home provider fee that DCH uses to match federal Medicaid funds. The combined total of federal funds and provider fees is paid back to nursing home providers who disproportionately serve the medically indigent. This is accomplished through an increase in Medicaid benefit reimbursements to the nursing home.
- **Breast Cancer Automobile Tag Fees** are used to fund cancer screening and treatment-related programs for those people who are medically indigent and who have or may have breast cancer.
- **Ambulance Licensing Fees** are assessed by the Board of Public Health for all ambulance services in the state. DCH draws down the fees deposited into the ICTF to match additional federal Medicaid dollars to fund Medicaid benefit payments for ambulance services.

²¹ <https://dch.georgia.gov/indigent-care-trust-fund> and https://dch.georgia.gov/sites/dch.georgia.gov/files/IndigentCareTrustFund_FY14_Final.pdf