



THREE YEARS LATER

WELLSTAR HEALTH SYSTEM'S RESPONSE TO THE 2019 CHNA



Wellstar

More than healthcare.

PEOPLECARE



At Wellstar, we have moved beyond IRS requirements – from compliance to strategic alignment – which allows the system to improve community health and demonstrate return on investment for Community Benefit activities. Maintaining efforts beyond the three-year Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) cycle will help Wellstar address persistent community health issues and ensure continuity from one Implementation Plan to the next.

This report shares how Wellstar Health System has continued building and aligning for health equity.



PEOPLE-CENTRIC CARE

DRIVING LASTING CHANGE

SUPPORTING HEALTH EQUITY

In 2019, Wellstar Health System expanded its understanding and use of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). In addition to identifying priority health needs and aligning partners and resources to address community needs, CHNAs are a vital tool for informing health equity strategies. The 2019 CHNA provided valuable data to direct resources toward high-risk populations, identify opportunities to enhance care delivery, inform patient care initiatives and direct overall strategic planning.

Launch of Wellstar Center for Health Equity

In 2019, Wellstar Center for Health Equity (WCHE) – an extension of Wellstar’s long history of community engagement and allyship to provide people-centric care – was formed to drive lasting change at a grassroots level. The six areas of focus were informed by Wellstar’s triennial CHNA of 2019: Access to Primary Care, Behavioral Health, Food Insecurity, Suicide, Cancer and Women’s Health. Each of these strategic domains connects to Wellstar medical service lines to bring to bear the deep expertise and broad bench of resources needed to identify pertinent needs, relevant partnerships and viable programs. A key programmatic function of WCHE is the Wellstar Community Health Department, which was established in June 2020. This Department leads the implementation of community-based programs that address health inequities.

<p>HEALTH FACTORS</p> <p>Social Determinants of Health</p> <p>Wellstar’s Community Health Needs Assessment highlights factors that impact our community’s health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>WELLSTAR STRATEGIES</p> <p>Strategic Alignment</p> <p>Six strategic domains guide the Center’s programs, policies and systems in addressing health disparities for our communities.</p>	<p>WELLSTAR TACTICS</p> <p>PeopleCare in Action</p> <p>Wellstar is committed to a multidisciplinary approach to address deeply entrenched inequities that inform health disparities.</p>	<p>WELLSTAR GOAL</p> <p>Health Equity</p> <p>Health equity is the attainment of the highest level of health for all people.</p> <p>Wellstar’s Center for Health Equity activates system-wide strategies, initiatives and programs that are addressing health disparities. Driven by a cross-functional team; the Center leverages Wellstar’s diverse leadership and expertise so we can show up for our community when and where they need us most.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to Healthcare Education Food Insecurity Income Social Support Systemic Racism & Discrimination Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to Primary Care Behavioral Health Cancer Food Insecurity Suicide Women’s Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data-Driven Community Health Strategies Clinical Integration Strategic Partnerships Thought Leadership Public Policy & Advocacy 	<p>Strategic Partnerships</p> <p>Through internal and external strategic partnerships, the Center is better positioned to implement multi-disciplinary approaches to address factors that drive deeply entrenched health inequities.</p>
<p>Wellstar Center for Health Equity</p> <p>Learn more about the Wellstar Center for Health Equity by going to wellstar.org/centerforhealthequity Want to join our listserv to receive up-to-date information? Email us at CenterforHealthEquity@Wellstar.org</p>			

Community Health Dashboard

To build capacity for evaluating Wellstar's impact across its equity initiatives, Community Health partnered with social scientists to design a tool for data collection and reporting. Wellstar first developed key descriptions of equity programs and their anticipated outcomes. Wellstar also held focused conversations with staff to understand data collection challenges and needs. Afterwards, technology professionals built prototypes for testing.

The resulting Community Health dashboard allows near-real time program performance monitoring and reporting, including data visualizations. The process and outcome data are shared with senior leadership and other stakeholders as desired. Data reports help leadership assess the effectiveness of existing programs, identify gaps, and build upon successful program models. Key data indicators include populations and locations served, level of engagement with community-based partners, staff contributions and program participant social determinants of health. For example, dashboard data from the Wellstar Mobile Market highlights participant demographics and food insecurity screening responses (*see page 20*).

Wellstar Foundation

The Wellstar Foundation plays a crucial role in improving the health of our communities by actively pursuing community partnerships and philanthropic support that will transform the future of healthcare and improve access for every person within our service area. 100% of all contributions are thoughtfully reinvested in programs, services, and equipment that meaningfully impact people's lives and wellness. The strategic pillars of focus include: Health Equity, Innovation and Technology, Behavioral Health and Workforce Development.

Examples of programs include:

- Mobile market program serving 700 families across Georgia each month to address food insecurity.
- Free mammograms and diagnostic services for high-risk communities, as well as lung cancer screenings offered to service members provide peace of mind and life-saving treatment to individuals in need.
- Resources and behavioral health services for individuals experiencing homelessness and those struggling with substance addiction.

Health Inequities and Cognitive Blind Spots Training

There are large number of factors that contribute to health inequities across the globe. One that has received a lot of attention is individual decision-making. It is widely acknowledged that all of us are impacted by the cognitive blind spots that exist in our thought processes and often without our awareness of them. At the request of numerous stakeholders, the Ethics team designed a Cognitive Blindspots education which has been provided to over 100+ team members at Wellstar. This interactive and dynamic training focused on the conscious and unconscious cognitive processes used by our brains in decision-making. The goal of this education was to bring awareness of these cognitive blindspots to team members and to provide them with resources for overcoming both the automatic and reflective challenges our brains encounter during decision making. The training used a variety of learning methods to engage team members, including didactic sessions over TEAMS, book clubs discussions, movie events, podcasts and many others.



Access to Healthcare

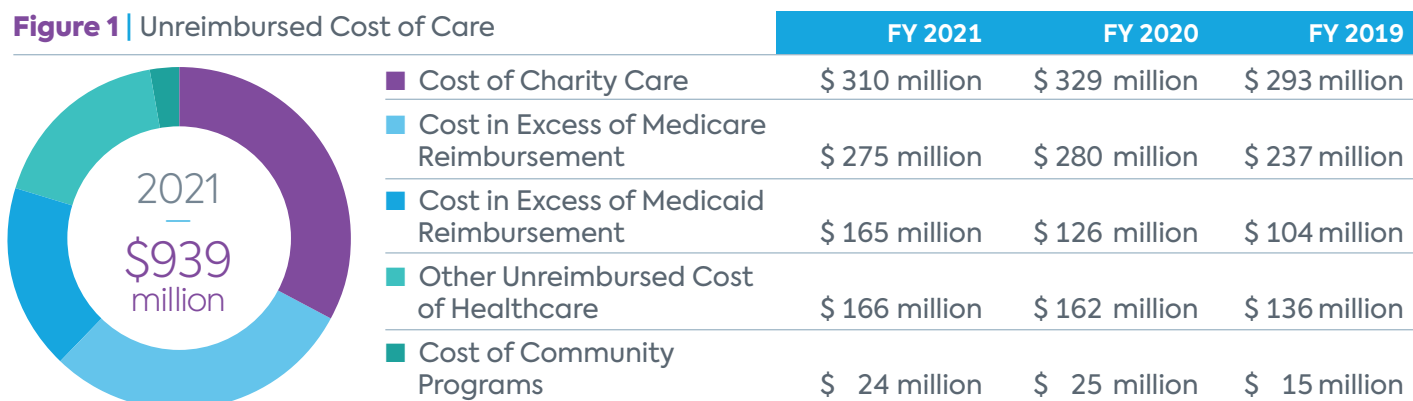
At Wellstar, people are at the center of everything we do. By listening actively to what people want, need and expect from their healthcare, Wellstar is able to provide “More than Healthcare. PeopleCare.” — at every age and stage.

Nationally ranked and locally recognized for our personal, high-quality care, inclusive culture, and exceptional doctors and team members, Wellstar provides access to compassionate, high-quality care through our 11 hospitals, 300+ medical office locations, 9 cancer centers, 74 rehabilitation centers, 3 hospice facilities, 1 retirement village, 34 imaging centers, 17 urgent care locations and 5 health parks.

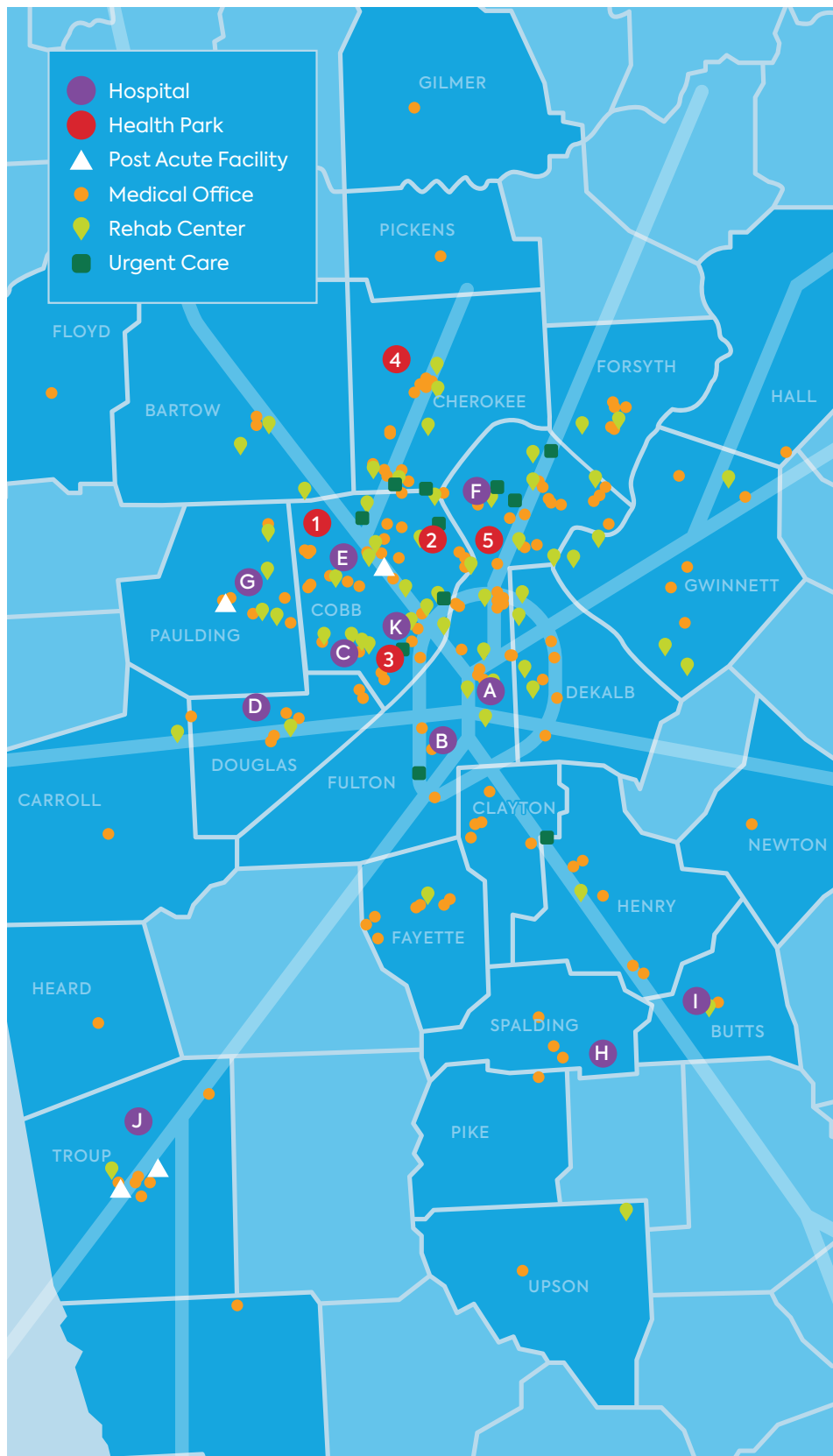


As one of the largest and most integrated healthcare systems in Georgia, Wellstar is growing our services, footprint, capabilities and ability to meet evolving patient needs. Our passion for people extends into the communities we serve. As a not-for-profit health system, we thoughtfully reinvest annually in prevention and wellness programs, as well as charity care for eligible patients. Wellstar reinvests 100% of our savings back into the communities we serve. This includes investments in our team and services, health screenings, charity care programs and prevention and wellness initiatives. In fiscal year 2021, Wellstar provided \$939 million in unreimbursed care (Figure 1).

Figure 1 | Unreimbursed Cost of Care



When we talk about serving the community, we mean it. Wellstar hospitals, health parks, medical offices and other facilities are conveniently located in communities across Georgia.




11 inpatient hospitals

- A Wellstar Atlanta Medical Center
- B Wellstar Atlanta Medical Center South
- C Wellstar Cobb Hospital
- D Wellstar Douglas Hospital
- E Wellstar Kennestone Hospital
- F Wellstar North Fulton Hospital
- G Wellstar Paulding Hospital
- H Wellstar Spalding Regional Hospital
- I Wellstar Sylvan Grove Hospital
- J Wellstar West Georgia Medical Center
- K Wellstar Windy Hill Hospital



5 health parks

- 1 Acworth Health Park
- 2 East Cobb Health Park
- 3 Vinings Health Park
- 4 Cherokee Health Park
- 5 Avalon Health Park

Congregational Health Network

Wellstar's Congregational Health Network (CHN) serves as a bridge between our healthcare system and faith communities. Coordinated by a full-time registered nurse who specializes in faith community nursing, Wellstar's program is designed to assist congregations of all faiths to develop or support volunteer or paid health ministries. With more than 100 congregations and 1,500 spiritual care partners, CHN serves as a key to Wellstar's successful implementation of equity-centered programs. Through this network, Wellstar can diffuse information, implement programs at trusted neighborhood-based sites and strengthen the organizations to provide whole-person support.

Community Clinic Network

According to the 2019 CHNA access to care indicators, many members of Wellstar's community have care access challenges in large part due to insurance constraints and provider access shortages. According to Healthy People 2020, "Access to comprehensive, quality health care services is important for promoting and maintaining health, preventing and managing disease, reducing unnecessary disability and premature death, and achieving health equity."¹ Wellstar is committed to serving our community's most vulnerable and under-resourced populations. In 2016, Wellstar 4-1 Care was created to increase access to care and the capacity of partnering community clinics by providing reduced-cost outpatient medical services. Research has shown that when healthcare systems like Wellstar partner with community safety-net clinics, the following can occur.^{2,3}

- Reduction in emergency department visits
- Reduction in avoidable readmissions
- Increase in patient satisfaction scores
- Prevent illness by promoting healthy behaviors in people without risk factors (e.g., diet and exercise counseling)
- Prevent illness by providing protection to those at risk (e.g., childhood vaccinations)
- Identify and treat people with no symptoms, but who have risk factors, before the clinical illness develops (e.g., screening for hypertension or diabetes)

Evolution of Wellstar 4-1 Care to the Community Clinic Network

The Community Clinic Network evolved to advance Wellstar's ability to support community access to care and social support services. As Wellstar's geographical footprint has expanded, Wellstar is also committed to forging new partnerships with community clinics (i.e., Community Safety-Net Clinics, Community Health Centers and Federally Qualified Health Centers)



Centers and Federally Qualified Health Centers) to more collectively achieve optimal outcomes for more medically underserved and uninsured residents.

In addition, the Community Clinic Network evolved to include community benefit support of Wellstar's three Community Clinics—Wellstar AMC Sheffield Community Clinic, Wellstar Kennestone Community Clinic and

1 *Healthy People 2020 (n.d.). Access to Health Services. Retrieved from <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/Access-to-Health-Services>*

2 *Health Research & Educational Trust. (2016, August). Creating effective hospital-community partnerships to build a Culture of Health. Chicago, IL: Health Research & Educational Trust. <http://www.hpoe.org/Reports-HPOE/2016/creating-effective-hospital-community-partnerships.pdf>*

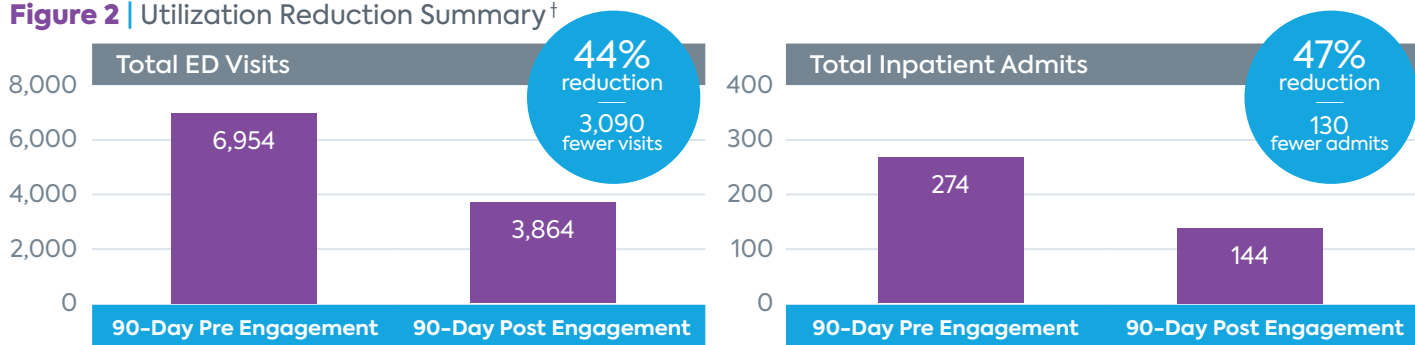
3 *Parker, Amanda, "A Program Evaluation of a Peri-Urban, Multi-Location Care Coordination Program in Georgia and Comparative Analysis of Other United States Care Coordination Programs for Uninsured, High-Risk Patients to Develop Promising Practice Recommendations." Georgia State University, 2017. Retrieved https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/iph_capstone/44*

Wellstar West Georgia Community Service Clinic. In alignment with Wellstar’s Financial Assistance Program (FAP), these community-based clinics provide charitable discounted or free care based on socioeconomic factors like a patient’s household income, insurance status and/or family size. These clinics help some of Wellstar’s most under-resourced and vulnerable community members receive medical services like chronic disease management, wellness exams, vaccinations and medication counseling. In partnership with physician leadership, Graduate Medical Education (GME) residents serve patients at the Sheffield and Kennestone clinics. To support these Wellstar GME residents, structured education has been provided to help residents better understand health disparities, health equity and community health priorities. Through the Community Clinic Network, Wellstar will continue to leverage the fact that community-based clinics are long recognized for their ability to effectively improve and expand patient access to medical, dental and mental health services.

Screening for Social Determinants of Health

Wellstar Atlanta Medical Center and Wellstar Atlanta Medical Center South (AMC/AMCS) have high uninsured and underinsured patient populations who utilize the ER and hospitals for care that potentially can be provided in other, more impactful settings. Additionally, many of these patients lack the necessary guidance and support with navigating the current health system and community resources/support systems that may be in place to better help them manage/prevent the avoidable conditions they experience. Wellstar has had great success with employing a Population Health (PH) Strategy to manage the members of the Accountable Care Organization (ACO) and has built strong competencies surrounding this work through the Population Health Team. Employing these resources and skill sets to some of the vulnerable, high-risk populations in the AMC market has significantly improved the care and lives of the under-resourced populations.

Figure 2 | Utilization Reduction Summary †



† Utilization data includes 1,949 episodes that 1) ended 90+ days ago, 2) did not end because the patient declined, and 3) did not end because the patient was unreachable.

Throughout 2019, a social determinants of health program in the South Fulton market was implemented. The South Fulton market is a small market for Wellstar but poses some unique challenges. For example, there were 84 patients who generated 766 OP ED visits between July 2018 to September 2018. There were 16 patients who generated 50 admissions during the same time frame. After analyzing the population, most of the high utilizer patients have a mental health condition like schizophrenia, have an underlying drug/alcohol/opioid use, and/or are homeless. Social workers and nurses were embedded into the EDs in the two hospitals in this market. The care team reached out to the community resources in the region. Each high utilizer patient is initially assessed, a care plan is developed and the care team helps coordinate the transition to community resources that can help address the non-clinical triggers. There have been more than 3,284 individuals in the past two years supported by the program. There has been a 44% reduction in emergency department utilization and a 47% reduction in inpatient utilization.

Community Transformation Program

Enabling technology-driven community health transformation

Wellstar Center for Health Equity launched a year-long initiative to enhance access to medical care via technology with leading community partners.

Access to health care impacts an individual's ability to obtain and maintain adequate physical, social and mental health status. Wellstar's 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment identified both the need for access to health care and social support as leading health concerns for disparate and underserved communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these same communities increasingly experienced health disparities and gaps in support; community-based organizations experienced need for reliable and sustainable solutions for offering virtual care. Wellstar Center for Health Equity's Community Transformation Program provides a scalable solution for improving access to care in partnership with trusted community assets.

2,228

people were served
by the Community
Transformation Program

In 2020, Wellstar aimed to fund initiatives that leveraged technology to produce long-term, sustainable changes in the communities we serve. Initiatives were expected to be tailored to a community need and align with each partner's mission. At the end of 12 months, partners were expected to demonstrate improvements in:

- Access to Health Care so that residents receive timely, high-quality and culturally appropriate medical care when they need it; or,
- Access to Social Determinants of Health Support Services so that residents receive timely, high-quality food, employment, housing, transportation, education and legal resources to improve daily living when they need it.

To identify strong-suited partners, Wellstar recruited a cohort of internal subject matter experts to review candidate applications through a two-step Web-based submission process. Candidate applications featured funding requests, project descriptions, budgets, descriptions of past community health improvement performance, and project sustainability plans. At the completion of the review process, these five initiatives were funded:

Healthy Mothers, Healthy
Babies Coalition of Georgia –
Pickles and Ice Cream Georgia



Good Samaritan Health
Center of Cobb, Inc. –
Patient Portal



Bethesda Community Clinic
– Telehealth Healthy Lifestyle
Program



MUST Ministries –
MUST Healthcare Access



Empowerment Resource
Center – LifeStrides Program



Healthy Mothers Health Babies Coalition of Georgia (HMHBCGA) Pickles and Ice Cream (P&I) Georgia

HMHBCGA champions improved healthcare access and outcomes for Georgia mothers and babies through utilization of advocacy, education and access to vital resources. It focuses on the full spectrum of maternal and child health concerns from premature births to maternal mortality through:

- a Web-based perinatal education program designed to tackle the most persistent gaps in current perinatal education offerings throughout the state,
- addressing racial/ethnic, regional and insurance coverage disparities present in Georgia's maternal and infant health outcomes, and
- a platform comprised of evidence-based content, including mom-friendly videos, articles and interactive quizzes.

Wellstar funding utilization: Search engine optimization (SEO) costs, content creation, establish appropriate technologies for message board and online class interactions and follow-up requests.

Good Samaritan Health Center of Cobb, Inc. Patient Portal

This medical and dental healthcare provider in Marietta, Georgia, is committed to providing accessible quality healthcare to community members, primarily those who are uninsured or under-insured, low income and/or indigent. Services offered include primary care, preventative care, prescription assistance and health education programs. This Patient Portal is:

- aimed at creating greater access for patients to receive needed care, manage health records, check test results and medications, and communicate effectively with providers, and
- makes the online patient portal accessible from the primary Good Samaritan Health Center website.

Wellstar funding utilization: Contracting with Tilt Technology to purchase and install necessary software and training staff to utilize the platform and to troubleshoot potential issues.

Bethesda Community Clinic Telehealth Healthy Lifestyle Program

Bethesda provides low-cost and free healthcare to anyone who is uninsured or under-insured in the Cherokee County and surrounding areas of Georgia. Services provided include primary care, women's health and pediatric care. This program is a technology-based health education platform to:

- help patients effectively manage and reduce risk of chronic illness, and
- allow patients to upload pictures of meals and receive personalized feedback from Health Educators, and
- enable providers to offer recommendations for diet adjustments and exercise routines.

Wellstar funding utilization: Costs associated with usage of the platform, including image recognition software.

MUST Ministries MUST Healthcare Access

The largest human services safety net in north-metro Atlanta serves individuals experiencing poverty, lack of housing and other crises by meeting basic needs for housing, food, healthcare and clothing. MUST provides resources and training for long-term self sufficiency through workforce development programs, operates the Elizabeth Inn Emergency Shelter in Marietta, as well as a Permanent Supportive Housing Program in Cobb and Cherokee counties. The MUST Healthcare Access program:

- aims to provide MUST Ministries' Permanent Supportive Housing Program and Elizabeth Inn Emergency Shelter clients with remote access to behavioral health services, and
- facilities will be equipped with laptops and routers to be utilized by clients to access remote mental health evaluation and counseling.

Wellstar funding utilization: Purchasing laptops and routers to be utilized in the two MUST Ministries housing facilities.

Empowerment Resource Center (ERC) LifeStrides Program

ERC provides health-related programs and services aimed at improving quality of life. Services offered include HIV and STI prevention education, family planning counseling, substance abuse treatment and recovery services, and mental health therapy. Operational resources include the Comprehensive Intervention Clinic and Behavioral Health and Outreach services. The LifeStrides program:

- provides immediate online and mobile access to and availability of ERC's current substance abuse (SA) treatment and recovery support services,
- provides users access to substance abuse screenings, assessments, and individualized and group counseling services, and
- bridges behavioral health services gaps primarily through its prioritization of underserved urban populations in areas that lack specialized health care providers and resources.

Wellstar funding utilization: Implementing, integrating and maintaining the telehealth technology into the ERC's already existing electronic health record system.



One of our longtime patients, “Kristina,” has been pre-diabetic for many years and has trouble staying motivated and encouraged. She really has enjoyed our Zoom classes as a reminder of the risk of developing diabetes, but also an outlet where she can share her experiences and gain support from others. She enjoyed participating in them so much that she has asked to continue to participate in the program as a peer leader. We will be implementing top performing participants as peer leaders to continue to support one another via social media and in Zoom classes moving forward.

“Roy” was a client experiencing homelessness and struggle. The trauma of a car accident had exacerbated his underlying mental health issues, and he had not been able to access care. After a mental health evaluation, he was diagnosed with Bipolar 1, anxiety and chronic pain. The telehealth evaluation made it possible for Roy to receive care he would not have been able to get otherwise during the pandemic. MUST’s grant-funded prescription voucher program allowed Roy to fill his prescriptions. He qualified for MUST’s Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program. Using the Wi-Fi and laptop purchased through the Wellstar grant, Roy was able to successfully complete a three-month Trauma Recovery program at MUST-PSH. He continues to do well in our program and is working on sustaining housing stability.



Behavioral Health and Suicide

To address the behavioral needs of community members and mitigate the role of mental health stigma, Wellstar launched an initiative called Soul Support, which includes three evidence-based programs to provide mental health education and support. Wellstar partnered with congregations to provide these workshops, including Bethany Christian Church (Paulding County), First Baptist – Fannin Street (Troup County), East Cobb UMC (Cobb County), Rivers of Hope (Cobb County) and Tabernacle of Praise Church International (Henry and Spalding counties).

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

A 6-week virtual program focused on giving support and resources to those caring for others

Wellstar is partnering with Atlanta Regional Commission’s Healthy Aging Division to provide “Powerful Tools for Caregivers” – this is a six-week series specifically designed to help caregivers learn to take better care of themselves. Powerful Tools is presented by certified lay leaders and started the week of October 11th, 2021. The workshop uses an evidence-based curriculum that has been found to have significant positive results for participants. There is an enhancement in self-care behaviors, as seen through increased exercise, relaxation and medical checkups. Another area of improvement is emotion management, demonstrated through reports of reduced guilt, anger and depression. Self confidence in coping with caregiving demands and increased use of local community resources are also benefits achieved through these workshops.



QPR training

A suicide prevention program for the community

Starting in January 2022, Wellstar will provide 2-hour suicide prevention courses to anyone 18 years of age and older. Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR) Institute started as a joint effort with a Washington state mental health center and their mission is to “save lives and reduce suicidal behaviors by providing

innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training.” The primary objectives are to train participants to understand the nature and range of suicidal communications and how to intervene on behalf of suicidal and in-crisis people, providing local mental health resources as well. QPR is used to help save lives from suicide by training individuals how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to “question, persuade and refer someone to help.”



Mental Health First Aid classes

A longer more comprehensive course that destigmatizes mental health and gives resources to help someone in need

In the early Spring of 2022, through a partnership with NAMI and Humana, we will offer Mental Health First Aid training to faith-based leaders in our community. Mental Health First Aid is a 2-day, in-depth course that teaches how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders. The Mental Health First Aid Training program was designed as a public education program “that can help communities understand mental illnesses, seek timely intervention, and save lives.” By providing education surrounding mental illness as well as resources available in their area, faith-based leaders will be more knowledgeable in ways to support their congregants. It was developed in 2001 with the goal of providing participants with the tools needed to start a conversation about mental health and substance use problems as well as resources available.



Cancer

Cancer incidence and mortality is disproportionately greater among men and among minority and medically underserved populations. Black men in Georgia are 14% more likely to be diagnosed with cancer and 31% more likely to die from the disease than white men. Black men are almost three times more likely to die from prostate cancer than white men. While white women have a higher incidence of breast cancer than Black women, Black women are more likely to die of breast cancer. Black men and Black women have a higher incidence of colorectal cancer and higher mortality rates from colorectal cancer than white men and white women. Men living in rural areas are more likely to die from lung cancer than men in more urban parts of the state which follows.

These disparities may be explained by patterns of screening, access to care, poverty patterns of tobacco use, and the absence of protections from secondhand smoke.

Colorectal Cancer

Wellstar Center for Health Equity has established a new partnership with BLKHLTH, a non-profit organization whose mission is to reduce the impact of racism through education and action. One of their current initiatives is a collaboration with Cottonelle on the #GoodDownThere Campaign. This national program is designed to reduce stigma surrounding colorectal care by providing equity-centric access for colorectal cancer to Black Americans. Colorectal cancer, also called colon or rectal cancer, is the third most common cancer in the United States and the second most common cancer-related death. Through their collaboration with Cottonelle, BLKHLTH has provided Wellstar with 500 complimentary colorectal cancer screening kits to be distributed across our service area from October–December 2021. Members of Wellstar’s Congregational Health Network have been asked to serve as ambassadors to distribute the screening kits within their communities. Our goal is to bring education and access to individuals who have not been screened due to fear, lack of health insurance or lack of knowledge.

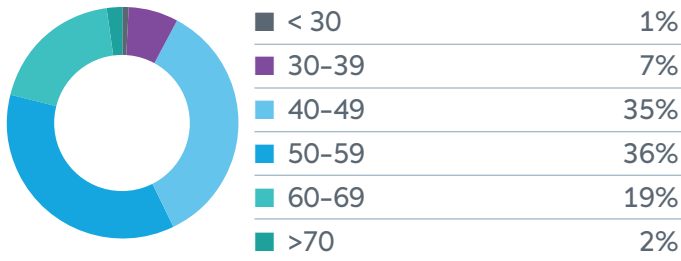
Breast Cancer

For the past ten years, Wellstar has provided breast screening and diagnostic services to individuals who lack access to or are unable to afford these life-saving services within Wellstar’s service areas. By providing these services at no cost to those in need, we seek to eliminate existing breast cancer disparities and decrease the number of late-stage breast cancer diagnoses by providing access to healthcare within the communities we serve. This program increases the number of regular mammogram screenings and diagnostic services provided, particularly within high-risk communities, enabling Wellstar healthcare providers to detect breast cancer at an earlier stage and resulting in better treatment options and improved outcomes for our community members.

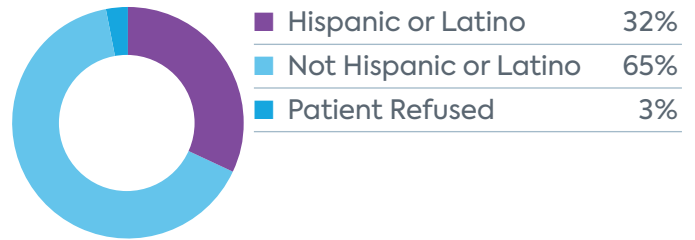
Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths for women in Georgia (Georgia Department of Public Health) and the leading cause of cancer death for Black women in Georgia (American Cancer Society). According to The Komen Atlanta 2015 Community Profile, Black women in the greater Atlanta area are 30% more likely than white women to have breast cancer diagnosed at a later stage and are 45% more likely to die of breast cancer. We also know that Latina women and women in rural communities are less likely to be screened for breast cancer, increasing the risk for late-stage diagnosis. As one of the largest providers of care in Georgia serving diverse urban, suburban and rural communities, Wellstar is committed to addressing the damaging health disparities that impact our communities.

Figure 3 | FY 2021 Data on Mammogram Program

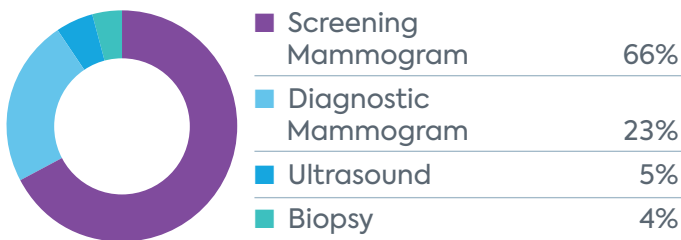
Age Ranges



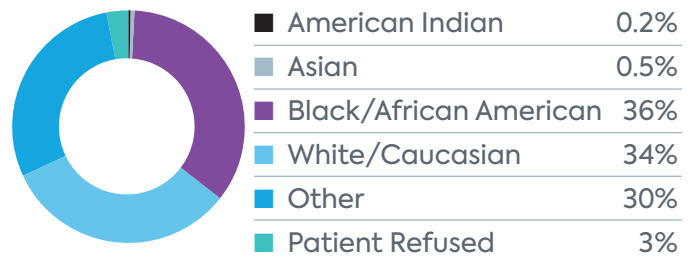
Patient Ethnic Group



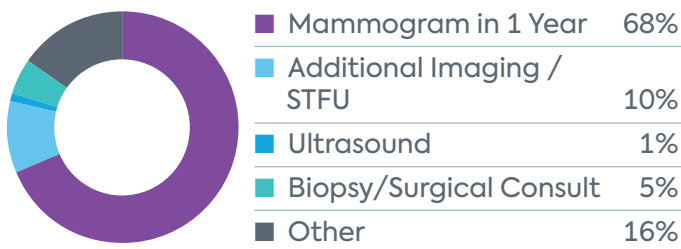
Exam



Patient Race



Recommendation



To identify patients who need access to these services most, we partner with local health departments, community clinics, a congregational nurse network and a robust list of other trusted community organizations. The Wellstar physician liaison team and Wellstar Clinical Partners team also works with 3,000+ Wellstar Medical Group physicians and partner physicians throughout our service area to generate referrals to the program.

Many of our community members rely on this program for their annual mammogram, and we continue to reach new patients through new methods of outreach and community and physician partnerships. Last year, this program funded 1,371 screening mammograms and diagnostic procedures system wide.

This program is fully funded by community partners and individual donors, including It's the Journey, National Breast Cancer Foundation, Susan G. Komen and Wellstar Team Member Giving donors.

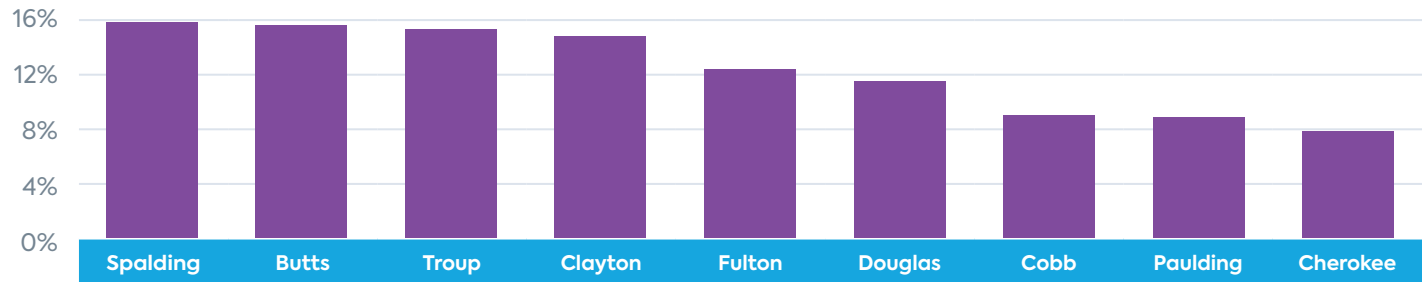
Food Insecurity

In the Wellstar 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment, Wellstar identified food insecurity and hunger as a key social determinant of health that is impacting the health of communities served. Food insecurity is defined as a household’s inability to provide enough food for every person to live an active, healthy life. Some of the most common, yet complex, effects of food insecurity include health complications, especially when families are forced to choose between spending money on food and medicine or medical care, and damage to a child’s ability to learn and grow.

Populations at greatest risk of experiencing food insecurity include:

- Children
- Rural communities
- African-American communities
- Hispanic/Latinx communities
- Senior adults

Figure 4 | Food Insecurity in Wellstar Service Areas †



† Source: Feeding America Map the Meal Gap dataset

Community Partnerships

Working with a variety of community partners is essential to successfully address hunger in communities served.

Atlanta Community Food Bank	Feeding the Valley	Local Health Departments	Wholesome Wave Georgia	Second Helpings Atlanta
Goodr	Food Well Alliance	Wellstar Foundation	Master Gardener Volunteers	Open Hand Atlanta

Wellstar Food Insecurity Strategy Framework

The Wellstar Food Insecurity Strategy Framework is based on the Feeding America Addressing Food Insecurity in Health Care Settings Framework and advisement with community leaders like the Atlanta Community Food Bank. This framework emphasizes a multi-pronged approach, which is reflective of the need for a diversified approach to address food insecurity and hunger in Georgia:

Figure 5 | Wellstar Food Insecurity Strategy Framework

	Focus Area	Tactical Programming	Primary Community Partner
Wellstar Health System	Healthy Food Access	Mobile Market Program	Goodr
	Eliminate Food Waste	Food Rescue Partnership	Goodr Second Helpings Atlanta
	Food Resource Referrals	Food Resource Connection Program	Open Hand Atlanta Wholesome Wave
	Food Ecosystem Support	Day of Service Community Organization Partnerships	Atlanta Community Food Bank Feeding the Valley

Mobile Market Program

In 2020, Wellstar launched a Mobile Market program to feed more than 700 metro Atlanta at-risk families across six Georgia counties. In collaboration with Goodr, the joint initiative addresses food access for vulnerable communities in Wellstar’s service areas. The spring-summer Mobile Market program included seven community-based locations that provided free, fresh and healthy food options monthly to 100 families in need at each location. Through Wellstar Foundation and vital community funding, Goodr provided food and staffing support for this program, registered participants and provided impact reporting each month. Wellstar provided program logistical support, participant incentives and nutrition education. New community partners helped recruit volunteers and set up food distribution sites in key service areas, including Cobb, Troup, Fulton, Spalding, Paulding and Douglas counties.

Wellstar selected 2021 Mobile Market community partners with the designated service area include:

<p>Goodr</p> 	<p>McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church (Cobb)</p> 	<p>Calumet Park Neighborhood Association (Troup)</p> 	<p>Carelink of Northwest Georgia, Inc. (Paulding)</p> 
<p>Center for Helping Obesity in Children End Successfully Inc. (Fulton)</p> 	<p>First Presbyterian Church of Douglasville (Douglas)</p> 	<p>New Mercy Partner Services (Spalding)</p> 	<p>Roswell Organization for Community Development (Fulton)</p> 

Figure 6 | Wellstar Mobile Market in Partnership with Goodr†

Location	FY21 Events	Street Address	County	Number of Household Contact Points*
Wellstar Development Center (Pilot Location Only)	1	2000 South Park Place NW, Atlanta, GA 30339	Cobb	176
Calumet Park Neighborhood Association	5	106 Union Street, LaGrange, GA 30241	Troup	477
CareLink of Northwest Georgia	4	625 W. Memorial Drive, Dallas, GA 30132	Paulding	355
C.H.O.I.C.E.S.	4	105 Courtland Street NE, Atlanta, GA 30303	Fulton	370
First Presbyterian Church of Douglasville	4	9190 Campbellton Street, Douglasville, GA 30134	Douglas	369
New Mercy Community Services	4	742 Park Road, Griffin, GA 30224	Spalding	374
McEachern United Methodist Church	4	4075 Macland Road, Powder Springs, GA 30127	Cobb	380
Roswell Organization for Community Development	4	888 Zion Circle, Roswell, GA 30075	Fulton	389
Total Contact Points:				2,890

† A contact point is defined as an interaction between a Community Health program and a community resident. Community residents may be represented more than once if they have attended more than one program.

Participating Mobile Market households demonstrate high food access need. Wellstar’s Mobile Market represents a cost-efficient method for meeting that need.

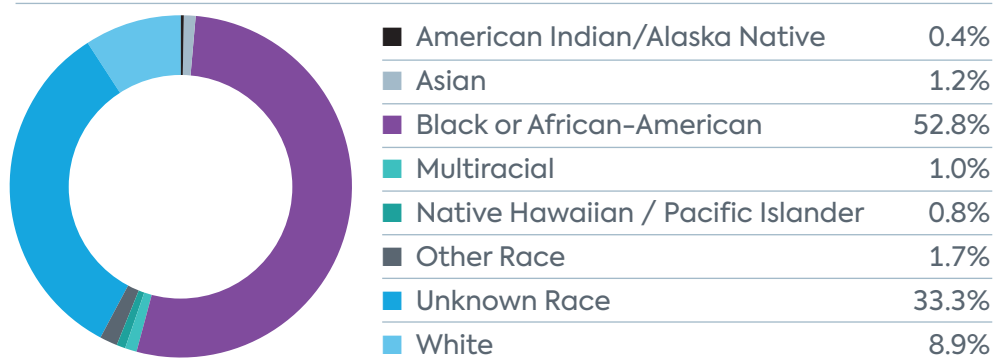
93.7%

The percentage of Mobile Market registrants who affirm that within the past 12 months they worried that household food would run out and/or that bought food didn’t last and there wasn’t money to get more.

\$9.40

The amount Wellstar invests per person to feed an average four-person household for three to five days.

Figure 7 | Self-reported Racial Identification of Mobile Market Registrants



More than 50% of registrants identified as Black or African-American at the program’s start; approximately 10% of registrants indicated Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.*

* Race and ethnicity were collected using one question. However, participants who indicate Hispanic or Latino ethnic identification may also identify as a distinct race.



Food Rescue Program

In Georgia, food residuals make up 12% of landfill waste annually. That’s nearly 151 pounds of food per Georgian every year, a total of 1.6 billion pounds of trash annually in Georgia. This amount of food waste also wastes \$1.92 billion each year.

In 2021, the Community Health team in partnership with Second Helpings Atlanta launched a food rescue pilot program at the Wellstar Corporate Office (WCO). Through this program, high-quality and nutritious food from WCO is picked up and taken to the James T. Anderson Boys and Girls Club and Feed Marietta. In 2021, Wellstar WCO to date has rescued 1,182 pounds of food and produced an estimated 985 meals for families. In September, this program expanded to Wellstar Cobb Hospital Food and Nutrition Service and in November to Windy Hill Hospital in partnership with Goodr. The rescue from these two hospitals to date have provided 2,281 meals to local organizations like Atlanta Mission: My Sisters House, Making a Way Housing, Operation Peace, The Covenant House, Solomon’s Temple, Coping Place Foundation, The Center for Young Children and Adults, and Ser Familia. The rescue from these 2 hospitals have also diverted 2,737 pounds from our landfills and prevented 1,486 pounds of Carbon Dioxide Emissions.

By recapturing fresh food that might otherwise be discarded, we reduce food waste while guaranteeing access to fresh produce and healthy meals for emergency food programs and individuals in need. The team is currently in talks to expand this program to other hospitals. The goal is to become a zero food waste healthcare system in the next ten years.

1,182

pounds of food rescued by WCO in 2021, representing an estimated 985 meals

2,737

pounds of food diverted from landfill by Wellstar Cobb Hospital and Wellstar Windy Hill

1,486

pounds of carbon dioxide emissions prevented

Food Resource Connection

In 2022, Wellstar will launch a new partnership with Wholesome Wave Georgia and the Wellstar Foundation. Through this partnership, Wellstar will increase the capacity to provide on-site, real-time referrals and registration for SNAP/EBT and other food resources at this conjunction with programs at the Mobile Market, Community Clinic Network and Congregational Health Network. In addition, Wholesome Wave will offer a Train the Trainer program that educates Wellstar team members to assist patients who have food access needs.



Wellstar Day of Service

In 2019, Wellstar launched an annual Day of Service that created volunteer opportunities for Wellstar team members to support local community-based organizations addressing social determinants of health. During the Day of Service month, Wellstar employees donated healthy food items to local agencies. On June 25, more than 400 Wellstar employees volunteered their time to improve access to healthy foods across the region. Some of the unique community service activities included hosting a pop-up food market at the West End MARTA station and a mobile food pantry at Collins Memorial United Methodist Church. Post-COVID-19, Day of Service will continue to support partners by supporting volunteer opportunities that focus on the following:

- Food access agencies
- Food pantries/warehouses
- Community gardens
- Nutrition education
- Hunger awareness



CommunityCare

In 2020, Wellstar team members gave so much of themselves during the pandemic. For team members who wanted to go above and beyond their role at Wellstar serving our neighbors, Wellstar introduced CommunityCare.

CommunityCare is an opportunity for all Wellstar team members to volunteer with community partners who are focused on food insecurity and homelessness. Team members participated by volunteering individually or in very small groups in their personal time, or by organizing and contributing to a collection of goods within their department, office or small group. Participation in CommunityCare was optional, but it made a significant difference to our community partners.

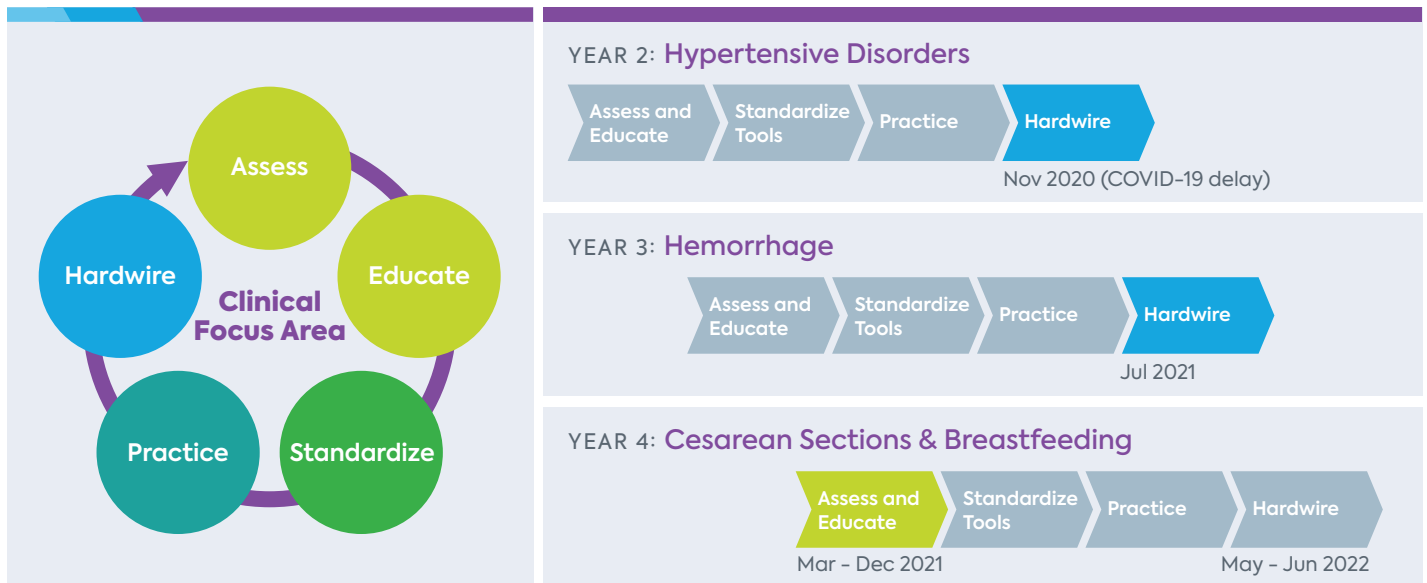
<p>Atlanta Community Food Bank</p> 	<p>Covenant House</p> 	<p>The Drake House</p> 
<p>Feeding the Valley</p> 	<p>Five Loaves Two Fish Food Pantry</p> 	<p>Food Well Alliance</p> 
<p>MUST Ministries</p> 	<p>Never Alone Food Pantry</p> 	<p>North Fulton Community Charities</p> 
<p>Open Hand</p> 	<p>Our Giving Garden</p> 	<p>The Salvation Army</p> 
<p>Sweetwater Mission</p> 	<p>Wellstar Foundation</p> 	<p>Warehouse of Hope Food Bank</p> 

Women's Health

Wellstar's Women's Alliance for Healthier Outcomes (WAHOO) team has been hard at work ensuring our continued dedication to ensuring healthier outcomes for every woman, every time, throughout Wellstar and Georgia.

The alliance's strategic plan focuses on improving outcomes related to one or two high-risk clinical areas each fiscal year utilizing a process improvement cycle-based framework (Figure 8). Once we reach the hardwiring phase of the annual cycle, we work to sustain and drive continual improvements in the focus area, while simultaneously beginning to work on the next year's clinical focus area.

Figure 8 | Process Improvement Cycle-Based Framework



The alliance continued to focus on hardwiring efforts from year 2's focus on hypertensive disorders in pregnancy through the utilization of daily huddles and new WAHOO visual management lanes focused on unit-level drivers and performance around key leading and lagging metrics. To date these efforts have improved the timely initiation of best practice hypertensive treatments by 52% system-wide! We were also able to kick-off an exciting partnership with the Cardiovascular Service Line to establish Wellstar's first perinatal cardiology clinic, facilitating and streamlining best practice prenatal and postpartum co-management for cardiac-related conditions.



As part of year 3's focus on obstetric hemorrhage, all alliance members and units competed in a Race to the 80's as the final stage of standardization and initial practice efforts to drive the scientific quantification of blood loss during at least 80% of vaginal deliveries. Every team crossed the finish line far exceeding our goal, with team Douglas Hospital earning first place thanks to a 100% completion rate.

Noelle, our pregnancy simulation mannequin, also labored and delivered nearly 50 times across all Wellstar maternity units and the development center from April through June. With each delivery she experienced a quantified blood loss and postpartum hemorrhage as part of custom-designed, on-site practice drills, providing more than 240 multidisciplinary perinatal team members with the opportunity to practice everything they learned and standardized this year.

Finally, FY22 marks year 4 of the alliance and our focus year on cesarean sections and breastfeeding! The assess and educate phase of our cycle has already kicked off with individualized assessments and education for more than 750 perinatal caregivers, including physicians, certified nurse midwives and registered nurses, on key concepts and best practices for the safe reduction of primary cesarean sections.

Recognizing the vital role of patient education and support services in improving the patient experience and health outcomes, the Women's Health Service Line has also worked tirelessly to evolve numerous offerings and programs to promote social distancing. For the first time within Wellstar, perinatal patient classes are being offered in three different formats: virtual self-paced, virtual live interactive and in-person live. This has been highly utilized and appreciated by our community, allowing women to choose the patient education options most convenient and safe for them. The team also continued to develop and share a comprehensive public list of all community resources available for our patients and team members, and strengthened our continued partnerships with Cobb Douglas Public Health, the Center for Black Women's Wellness and the Georgia Perinatal Quality Collaborative.

To take these offerings to the next level, the team wrote, designed, and implemented My Wellstar Pregnancy Journey, a custom interactive 15-part patient education series for all pregnant women across all Wellstar Medical Group practices and hospitals. This program now includes supplemental patient education for women with common additional conditions or complications, as well as a series of publicly available videos highlighting key patient education and unit tours of all Wellstar birthing sites for women and their families to access 24/7 on wellstar.org. In FY22 this custom, inclusive and patient-friendly education will expand to cover gynecologic and well woman care, including breast health.



Black Maternal Health: Reducing Inequities Through Community Collaboration in Atlanta

Wellstar Health System joined a collaborative of Atlanta organizations participating in the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Better Maternal Outcomes Birth Equity Lab: "Redesigning Systems with Black Women Project." This important work was housed at the Center for Black Women's Wellness in Atlanta. Other key stakeholders included the Center for Reproductive Rights, Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health, First TEAM America, Georgia Department of Public Health, Grady Memorial Hospital, Healthcare Georgia Foundation, March of Dimes, Morehouse School of Medicine, GA OBGYN Society and the United Way of Greater Atlanta.

This 3-year initiative aimed to improve outcomes and reduce racial disparities for Black birth givers through facilitating locally driven improvement projects in four major cities – Atlanta, Detroit, New Orleans and Washington, DC. The project targeted health care delivery, experiences of Black birth givers and community support systems using an Equity Action Lab model. This model offered a Community Solutions Framework that provided structured activities, bringing together diverse stakeholders to create an equitable co-design process for creating goals and development of innovative ideas.



The Atlanta team focused on three key drivers in accomplishing the project aims: 1. Respectful Care, 2. Shared Awareness & Leadership and 3. Supporting Women Across Silos. These primary drivers created a space to facilitate empowerment of women to expect and demand respectful care, strategizing for system change and data expansion, and strengthening connections between hospitals and community organizations. From this project, the Atlanta team recognizes that continued engagement with care system leadership and health care providers is necessary to evoke change. Ongoing efforts will include discussion on Black maternal morbidity and mortality, implementing respectful care policies and simulations and trainings for providers, patients and communities on optimizing support of Black birth givers.

Quality Improvement around Hypertensive Disorders of Pregnancy: A System-wide Approach

International maternal mortality has been decreasing over the last two decades, while trending upward in the United States¹. Severe maternal morbidities, or unintended perinatal outcomes with significant consequences to a woman's health that are considered near-miss events for maternal mortality, are also steadily increasing in the United States². Most of these deaths and complications are preventable³. Georgia's women are disproportionately impacted by both severe maternal morbidities and mortality. Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy are a leading clinical cause of poor outcomes in Georgia⁴. Robust quality improvement (QI) programs have been proven effective in some settings⁵.

Our team has successfully completed a system-wide strategic QI effort that has benefitted patients in our system and can be used as a state and national model for improving perinatal outcomes. Specifically, we planned and formed an internal quality alliance that leads targeted QI around an annual focus area, focusing first on hypertensive disorders of pregnancy. We utilize a modified Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle for each focus area where we Assess, Educate, Standardize, Practice and Hardwire best practices with the goal of sustainment and involving frontline caregivers at every level.

After obtaining buy-in and planning our alliance's structure, we did an assessment of current practices and team education compared with best practice recommendations. Then, we engaged all obstetric caregivers through robust individualized education on current best practices. Next, we standardized our tools and processes to facilitate best practices. We practiced the comprehensive integration and utilization of these education and standardization efforts through system-wide in-situ drills. Finally, we hardwired these changes into practice through the collection, analysis and transparent sharing of specific data metrics with all team members to demonstrate both progress and opportunities in hypertensive disorders of pregnancy.

1 Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 2020

2 American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), 2016

3 ACOG, 2016; CDC, 2020

4 Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH), 2016

5 ACOG, 2019; GDPH, 1016

To study the impact of these changes, we utilized and monitored key metrics at every step. We integrated standard reporting and chart audit tools to communicate compliance with best practices and opportunities with all frontline teams through visual management lanes. Studying our results throughout the process helped us change the culture surrounding education and drills participation, understanding best practice guidelines, and reviewing outcome metrics consistently.

As a result of our actions, these practice changes have been successfully enacted throughout the system. We successfully achieved our goals of assessing all current systems, educating over 90% of our obstetric caregivers on OB hypertension best practices, implementing all elements of a standardized national patient safety bundle, standardizing patient education for 100% of our patients and practicing in-situ drills with at least 20% of our obstetric caregivers. Following the implementation of our changes, the timely treatment of OB patients with severe range pressures has increased by over 40%, blood pressure retakes within 15 minutes have increased to over 65%, and the utilization of magnesium sulfate has risen to 89%. We are working to continue to hardwire and sustain these initiatives within our system and implement new QI initiatives using the same model.

40% increase

in timely treatment of OB patients with severe range pressures

65% increase

in blood pressure retakes within 15 minutes

89%

utilization rate of magnesium sulfate

Perinatal Kit Program with Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies

To address the maternal health crisis through an equity lens, Wellstar Community Health (WCH) and The Wellstar Center for Health Equity has partnered with Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia (HMHBGA). HMHBGA has impacted the health and wellbeing of women, children, and families for the past 40 years by supporting the community through direct services, advocacy, and community education. Wellstar Community Health (WCH) has partnered with HMHBGA to help expand the organization's Perinatal Care Package Project (PCP). This program provides support to pregnant and postpartum birth givers and encourages positive maternal health and wellness by providing vital resources and education. As a partner, WCH will contribute COVID-19 safety kits, to include cloth masks, hand sanitizers and education, as an additional vital resource to the care packages. Beginning January 2022 this partnership will aim to reach 75 birth givers a month who reside in Georgia's most vulnerable communities.





SAFEHANDS-ONCARE

PROVIDING TRUSTED, QUALITY CARE

COVID-19 RESPONSE AND SUPPORT

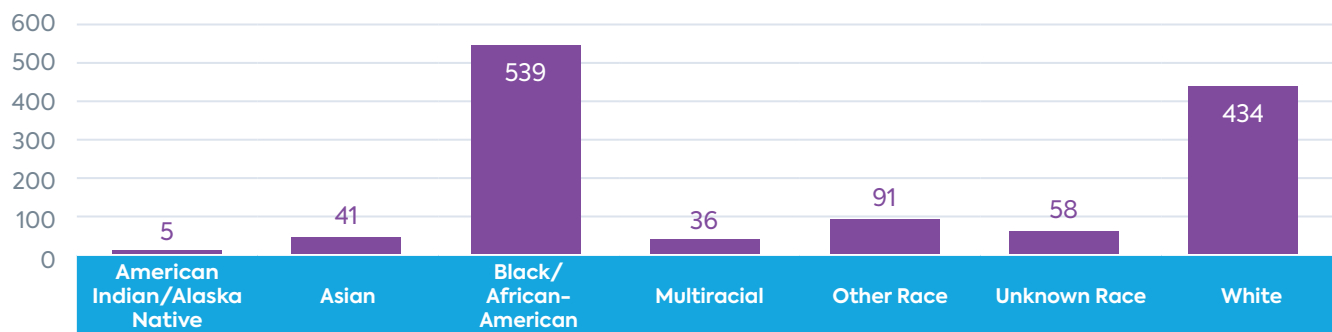
Wellstar led an all-hands-on-deck effort to protect the communities that needed us the most through a historic pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an unprecedented time for our community, state and nation. Amid the pandemic, Wellstar has been collaborating and working to keep our community members safe.

Testing Clinics

With the support of community partners, Wellstar conducted free walk-up, pop-up family testing at churches and school lunch pick-up sites, and distributed safety kits in English and Spanish. To date, WCHE has orchestrated 29 pop-up testing sites, administered more than 3,600 COVID-19 tests and distributed more than 51,000 wellness kits with culturally and linguistically appropriate safety information.

Wellstar also partnered with Ser Familia to launch a Promotora Program to leverage the use of Latinx community members who received specialized training to provide basic health education in the community.

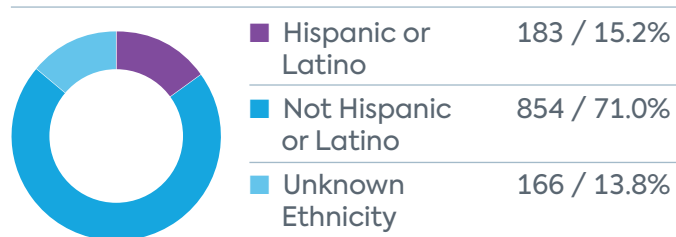
Figure 9 | Number of Testing Participants by Self-Reported Racial Identification †



† Wellstar Community Health COVID-19 Testing, Cobb and Douglas counties (June 27 - Sept. 26, 2020). Race and ethnicity were collected using two distinct questions. Participants who indicate Hispanic or Latino ethnic identification may also identify as a distinct race.

Wellstar Community Health completed 3,635 COVID-19 tests among residents of high-risk neighborhoods. Among a sample of pop-up testing events, 44.8% of participants identified as Black or African-American (Figure 9). 15.2% of participants identified as Hispanic or Latino (Figure 10).

Figure 10 | COVID-19 Testing Participants by Self-Reported Ethnic Identification

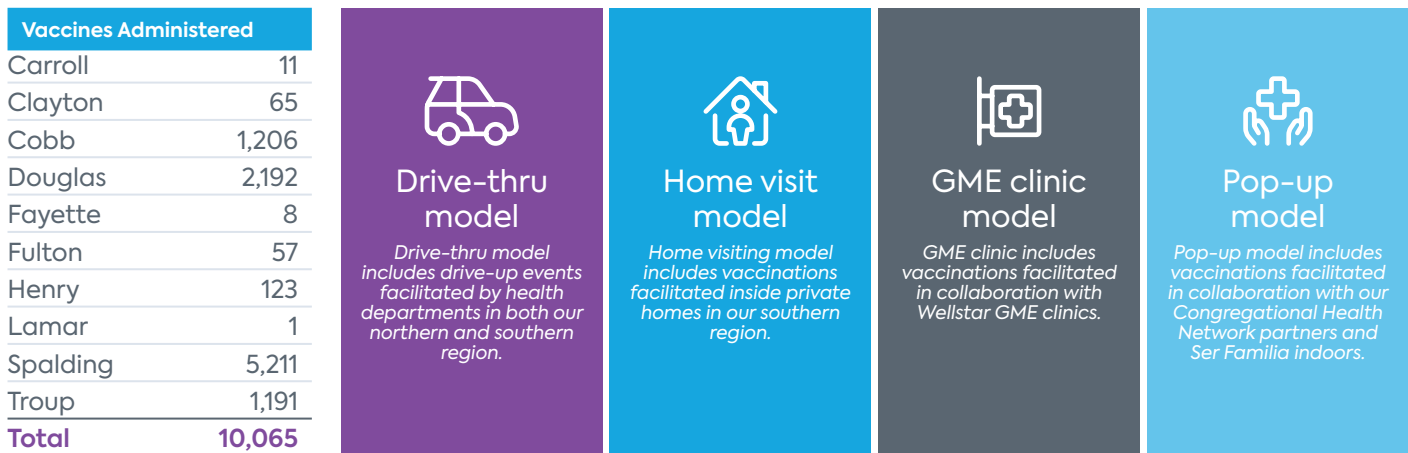




Vaccine Clinics

Once available, the Community Health team pivoted to increase COVID-19 vaccination accessibility in Black, Latinx and/or rural communities. Through partnerships with Cobb/Douglas Public Health, District 4 Public Health, Wellstar Congregational Health Network (CHN) and Wellstar Pharmacy Department, we provided pop-up vaccine clinics to support under-served communities. These vaccine clinics were hosted at trusted neighborhood-based sites where community members felt safe.

Figure 11 | 2021 Vaccinations Administered by County



Wellstar Community Health administered 10,065 COVID-19 vaccinations between February 1, 2021 and June 30, 2021 (Figure 11). Among a sample of events, 29.8% of participants indicated seeing a Wellstar doctor within the past 36 months (Figure 12). 62.6% of participants required translation services delivered by our Promotora (Figure 13).

Figure 12 | Self-Reported Wellstar Doctor Visitation within the Past 36 Months[†]

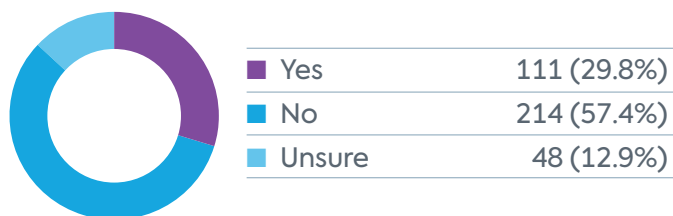


Figure 13 | Participants Requiring Spanish-Language Translation Services[†]



[†] From February 1, 2021 and June 30, 2021. Pop-up model includes vaccinations facilitated in collaboration with our Congregational Health Network partners and Ser Familia.

Promoting Education

One of the most critical barriers to health during the pandemic has been community access to reliable, science-based, culturally appropriate and native language information resources. Through a litany of partnerships, Wellstar disseminated valuable and reliable information to reach community members.

Wellstar Community Health facilitated 1,190 educational contact points with participants through a Health Equity Webinar Series, COVID-19 Community Briefings, and COVID-19 Townhalls (Figure 14). A special event in collaboration with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., generated 14,000 contact points.

Figure 14 | Contact Points Generated by Health Education Events[†]

Health Education Event	Partner Organization	Description	Contact Points
“Achieving Health Equity in Georgia” (6 events)	Georgia Health Policy Center	A health equity webinar series centering Leadership, Disparities, Behavioral Health, Maternal and Child Health, HIV/AIDS and Cancer	672
Community Briefings (11 events)		A COVID-19 information webinar series for congregation leaders and the public	235
Congregational Health Network Town Hall (1 event)	Morehouse School of Medicine	A COVID-19 informational town hall centered on reaching the African-American community	226
Vacuna del COVID-19 Town Hall (1 event)	Ser Familia	A Spanish-language COVID-19 informational townhall centered on reaching the Hispanic/Latino community	57
COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall: My Why (1 event)	Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.	A COVID-19 informational townhall centered on reaching the African-American community	14,000*

[†] A contact point is defined as an interaction between a Community Health program and a community resident. Community residents may be represented more than once if they have attended more than one program.

* This figure is not included in the count of Wellstar Community Health’s overall contact points with community residents in our service area.

Wellstar Partners with Morehouse School of Medicine to Support At-Risk Populations

Wellstar Health System has joined the Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) National COVID-19 Resiliency Network (NCRN) of partners to further inform community-driven response, recovery and resiliency strategies for addressing the impact of COVID-19 on communities.

In response to the needs of at-risk communities across the health system’s service areas, Wellstar has partnered with the MSM-NCRN and its 40 network partners across the U.S. to collaborate on offering COVID-19-related services to disproportionately impacted communities. Wellstar was the first Georgia-based health system to become a national partner in this important new initiative.

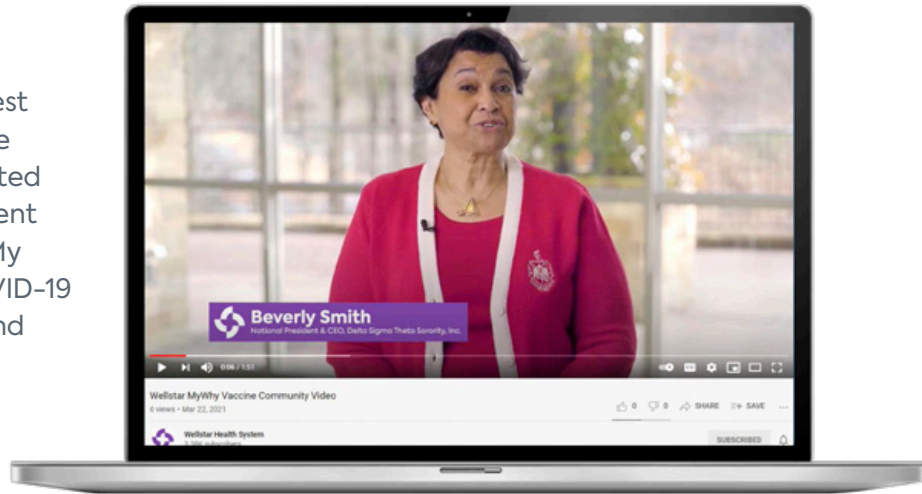
The MSM-NCRN coordinates a strategic and structured national network of national, state/territorial/tribal and local public and community-based organizations that, together, will work to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on racial and ethnic minority and rural populations. The network helps to provide awareness of culturally appropriate health education information and linkage to care, helping organizations and families recover from pandemic difficulties. In addition to educational and informational resources in at least 10 languages to accommodate cultural competency, initiatives will include COVID-19 testing, vaccinations following phases directed by DPH and training opportunities for community leaders.

Reaching Faith-based Congregants with Vital COVID-19 Information

WCHE hosted a series of community town halls to debunk myths about COVID-19 in partnership with the Wellstar Congregational Health Network. During these townhalls and briefings, Wellstar addressed community questions and launched a series of equity-centric and language-proficient COVID-19 testing and vaccination clinics. These clinics were done in partnership with local Public Health Districts and focused on high-risk populations that did not have access to these services.

'My Why' Partnership with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority

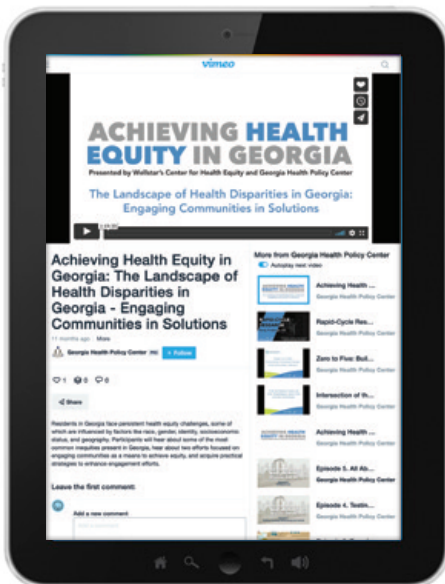
Wellstar and Delta Sigma Theta, Inc., the largest African-American women's organization in the world with more than 350,000 college-educated members, have united to reach vaccine-reticent populations in Georgia by sharing personal "My Why" stories and reasons for receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. Beverly E. Smith, National President and CEO of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., joined Wellstar team members in sharing a personal reflection about receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. A recent poll found that Black voters in Georgia are less sure about vaccine safety than any other racial or ethnic group, with 36% reporting that they are unsure if the vaccine is safe or not. The video aimed to tackle these concerns and offer hope for the future as more Georgians become fully vaccinated.



Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., National President and CEO Beverly E. Smith joined Wellstar team members in sharing a personal reflection about receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

Achieving Health Equity in Georgia: Presented by Wellstar's Center for Health Equity and GHPC

Wellstar Health System's Center for Health Equity and the Georgia Health Policy Center hosted a webinar series that focused on achieving equity in Georgia, in partnership with the Atlanta Regional Collaboration for Health Improvement and the Partnership for Southern Equity. This series engaged community, clinical and other partners in building a community-level understanding of health equity by exploring the root causes of common and persistent inequities and providing evidence-informed practical tips and tools to address these inequities in Georgia. Each session explored a specific equity challenge and offered examples from the field of efforts to achieve equity.



Wellstar Foundation launches Innovation Series

In 2021, Wellstar Foundation launched a series of virtual roundtable discussions with local leaders in the philanthropy and corporate communities to discuss and address pertinent community health and well-being issues. The series aims to facilitate conversation and collaboration that will lead to meaningful action and a pathway to transforming healthcare in Georgia. The first Innovation Series event, “Bridging the Gap: A Collaborative Approach to Health Equity,” took place on March 29 featuring experts from across Wellstar, with a keynote presentation from Dr. Gail C. Christopher, executive director of National Collaborative for Health Equity. More than 100 participants attended the inaugural event and engaged in discussion about how to enhance health equity. Future topics include digital health innovation, behavioral health and wellness, women’s health and pediatrics, and workforce planning.

Predictable Modeling: Caring for Vulnerable Patients’ Medical and Social Needs Pilot Program

When the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that 80% of COVID-19 patients in eight Georgia areas were Black people, Wellstar’s Population Health team jumped into action. In partnership with the South Fulton Graduate Medical Education (GME) Community Clinic, Population Health identified patients by creating a risk-based model based on evidence-based studies to identify patients at increased risk for COVID-19 diagnosis, complications and hospitalization.

During the program, 612 individuals were supported. Patient needs were assessed by a registered nurse and, where applicable, the following support was provided: chronic disease management, mental health, social needs consult, pharmacy consult and meal delivery. Patients were monitored for COVID-19 symptoms and, if needed, were connected to COVID-19 testing and care.

Figure 15 | Risk Stratification Predictors

Category	Indicator
Demographics	Age, gender and race
Pre-existing conditions and health behavior	Diabetes, obesity, hypertension and smoking status
Social determinants of health	Payor source (Medicaid, Medicaid CMO or self-pay), community need index score for zip codes and community clinic care setting

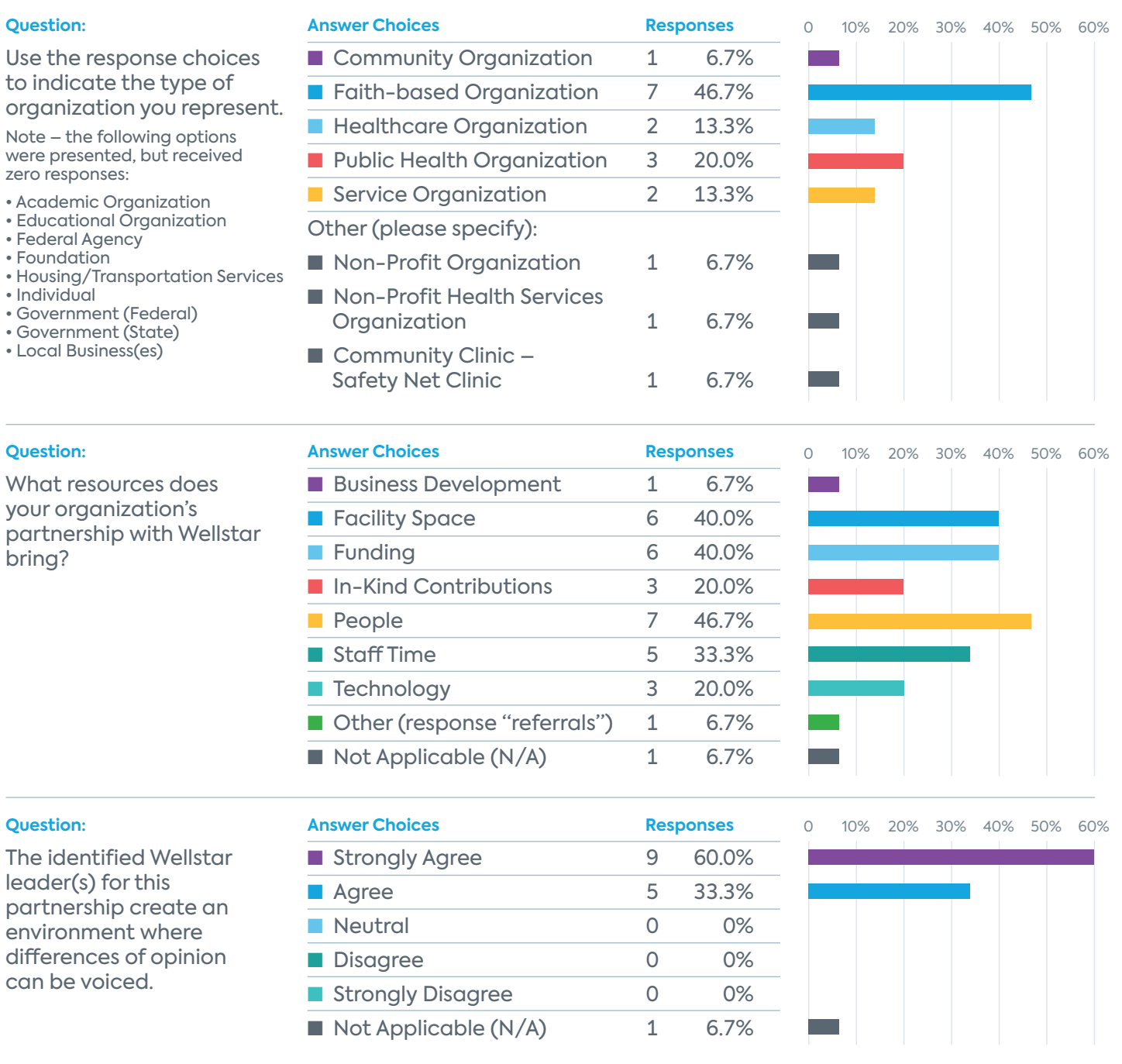
Community Partnership Assessment

Moving meaningfully towards healthy communities means that health care providers, public health agencies and community-based organizations need to effectively coordinate their efforts. Yet how can these efforts go beyond basic assessment to active collaboration? What are those key ingredients to begin successful cross-sector community health efforts?

A partnership assessment tool is a component of a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) that focuses on ensuring organizations are working together to maximize the impact of their partnership. Wellstar Center for Health Equity (WCHE) and Community Health (WCH) have strategic partnerships with faith-based, healthcare, public health and service organizations. Between May and August of 2021, WCHE and WCH developed a survey tool, analyzed data and engaged partners.

Asked to complete an assessment in June 2021 were 49 organizations that had a partnership greater than six months. The assessment consisted of scale-based questions and comment sections. The assessment was administered through Survey Monkey and questions were formulated to assess leadership, communication, efficiency and structure, implementation and participation, resources and partnership accountability. The survey provided partners with the opportunity to provide meaningful feedback (see Figure 16) to spark productive conversations on how to enhance or improve the partnership for future growth and collaboration. Wellstar was honored to receive a rating of 9.5 stars (out of 10) for overall satisfaction with Wellstar as a community health partner with organizations.

Figure 16 | 2021 Community Health Partnership Assessment





Wellstar
HEALTH SYSTEM

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