



Case Statement

Southwest Georgia Regional Medical Center - Cuthbert, Georgia

Southwest Georgia Regional Medical Center (SGRMC) is a Critical Access Hospital located in the rural community of Cuthbert, Georgia. The sole provider for health services in the predominantly agriculture-driven area, SGRMC is among the last remaining county hospitals in South Georgia following closures in neighboring counties. Despite a threatened future due to an unstable financial outlook, the hospital's mission remains optimistic - to be the community leader providing quality acute, preventive and long-term health care for our patients, residents, and community by continuing our tradition of, "large enough to serve, small enough to care!"

The original four bed community hospital was established as Patterson Hospital in 1916 as the very first in this rural section of Georgia and has held a long history of providing quality healthcare services. The now 25-bed facility opened in 1947 and provides emergency care, inpatient medical care, primary healthcare and long term skilled nursing services in the primary service area of Randolph County. A largely agricultural community in Southwest Georgia, Randolph County – population 7,719 – is rich in history and has ranked as the top wheat and sorghum grower in the state. Still, roughly 24 percent of its families live below the poverty line with a household median income of \$26,194. The population, boasting over 12,000 in 1980, continues to decrease.

In FY2016, SGRMC provided over \$3.7 million in uncompensated care.

SGRMC's existence is threatened by not only an unequal burden of health and economic disparities in the community it serves, but also by other financial hardships. Due to changes in reimbursement and the pressure of an increasing cost structure, operational cash is unavailable for necessary investments needed to keep operations relevant and thriving. The facility infrastructure suffers as any available cash has been directed to investing in technology required through government mandates. And the ability to grow the operations and recruit/retain necessary care providers, including both qualified staff and physicians, has been a challenge due to our inability to generate positive cash flow. Also challenging the future of the operations is the recent closure of two hospital operations within neighboring counties. These county's hospitals served communities much like the Randolph County communities and these hospitals were unable to overcome the financial challenges.

Donations received will enhance the operational stability and sustainability and will be used to remodel and renovate the aging campus buildings, invest in equipment upgrades, such as telemedicine to address access to specialty care issues, and to recruit and retain qualified staff and physicians.

Who we are:

SGRMC has a longstanding commitment to serve its community by providing inpatient and post-acute care hospital services, 24/7 Emergency Care services, physical and occupational therapy, speech therapy, surgical services, radiology services, and laboratory services. In the last year, the hospital provided access to care to more than 5,000 emergency department visitors and over 300 admitted patients, which included post-acute care patients requiring additional IV, physical, or occupational therapy. Primary care is offered at two rural health clinics located in Cuthbert and in neighboring Shellman. These clinics see over 12,000 patients annually. In addition, SGRMC offers long-term care through an 80 bed, skilled care nursing home.

