

EGHC Celebrates National Health Center Week 2007

The offices of East Georgia Healthcare Center joined similar agencies across the country the week of August 5th through the 11th to celebrate National Health Center Week and to increase awareness for greater access to proper health care.

East Georgia Healthcare Center (EGHC) celebrated this special week by presenting each patient in Swainsboro, Reidsville and Soperton with a beautiful rose. "Without our patients we would have no reason to be here. We thank them for placing their trust in the care of our talented physicians," Jennie Wren Denmark, CEO.



National Health Center Week is sponsored by the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC). NACHC represents the nation's network of more than 1,000 federally qualified health centers serving 15 million people through 5,000 sites. The goal of the NACHC is for 30 million people to have access to a health care home by the year 2015.

Community Health Centers (CHCs), also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), are local, nonprofit, community-owned and partially federally funded medical facilities. This year marks the 42nd anniversary of the community center movement.

The federal health center program started out as a pilot project when President Lyndon Johnson declared "War on Poverty" in 1965. Now health centers are the family doctor to 15 million people across America. No one is turned away for care, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay. Study after study documents the effectiveness of health centers in fighting chronic diseases-- such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and asthma-- by providing affordable and accessible health care. A recent study published in *Health Affairs* concluded that the President's initiative to double the number of people served by health centers will reduce national health disparities by improving both the quality and continuity of care.

Recognizing the importance and contributions of Georgia's Community Health Centers that cover 52 counties in the state, Georgia Governor Perdue declared the week of August 5 – 11, 2007 as Health Center Week in Georgia. In Georgia alone Community Health Centers serve over 239,000 people at 105 clinical sites throughout the state.

East Georgia Healthcare Center works to promote the health of the community, which includes residents of Emanuel, Treutlen, Tattnall and the surrounding counties, through its three comprehensive primary care sites. Staffed by Board Certified Physicians, the care provided by EGHC is directed to all ages and all kinds of illnesses and conditions from acute to chronic.

Without the facilities such as East Georgia Healthcare Center, families who lack insurance or those on Medicaid would likely seek health care services less frequently due to financial constraints. But with sliding scales, and patient assistance programs for medications, health centers make routine care, that might otherwise have been out of reach or unaffordable, possible.

"Health Centers have compiled a solid record of success of caring for the medically underserved and uninsured for 42 years," Dr. Muhammad Jamal, EGHC Chief Medical Officer. "National Health Center Week celebrates a health care tradition that keeps communities healthy and disease-free with affordable and good quality care."

The achievements of health centers have won support not only from Members of Congress of both parties, but also from President Bush, who increased funding for the Health Centers program in his FY 2007 budget request to Congress. The President has also pledged to put a health center "in every poor county in America."

East Georgia Healthcare Center, Inc. (EGHC) is a not-for-profit, community-based organization dedicated to improving the health and quality of life for all residents of Emanuel, Tattnall, and Treutlen Counties, regardless of their race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, veteran status, and/or ability to pay. EGHC has three locations in Southeast Georgia, Swainsboro, Reidsville and Soperton.

We invite you to make an appointment and visit one of our offices to see all that we have to offer. For more information you can also visit our website at www.eghc.org.

Swainsboro: 478-237-2638 / Reidsville: 912-557-3300 / Soperton: 912-529-5533