

EGHC Celebrates National Health Center Week 2005

By Herman Thompson

August 15, 2005



The U.S. Senate has unanimously passed a resolution commemorating August 7 – 13, 2005 as National Health Center Week (NHCW). The bill, which was co-sponsored by 30 Members, honors Community Health Centers for their “responsive and cost-effective health care,” and praises their **40-year record** of keeping communities healthy and disease-free.

Recognizing the importance and contributions of Georgia’s Community Health Centers that cover 57 counties in the state, Georgia Governor Perdue declared the week of August 7 – 13, 2005 as Health Center Week in Georgia.

The offices of 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 physicians,” Jennie Wren Denmark, CEO.

“Health centers are truly American’s healthcare safety net, and I am pleased that the Senate has recognized their importance,” said U.S. Senator Norm Coleman (R-MN), who sponsored the bipartisan resolution with U.S. Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL). “Our nationwide network of health centers provides vital services to millions of Americans each year, and they should be commended for the excellent job they do day in and day out. Raising awareness is an important step towards making sure the uninsured have access to quality healthcare.”

Observance of *National Health Center Week* comes as health centers celebrate their 40th anniversary. The federal health center program started out as a pilot project in President Lyndon Johnson's 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.

“Health Centers have compiled a solid record of success of caring for the medically underserved and uninsured for 40 years,” Dr. Sanjay Serrao, EGHC Medical Director. “*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 by \$304 million in his FY 2006 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