



Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2021



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The Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce strives to identify and meet the health care workforce needs of Georgia communities through the support and development of medical education programs.

Introduction

The Board members and staff are pleased to present the 2021 Annual Report of the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce (Board or GBHCW).

Among this year's highlights, most notably would be updating the GBHCW's online data visualization tool with newer data to more accurately display the supply and distribution of Georgia's actively practicing health care workforce, which includes physicians, physician assistants, and nurses.

Mrs. LaSharn Hughes, who served as the GBHCW's executive director over the past five years, passed away in October 2021. The Board is grateful for her service to the State of Georgia and her leadership while with the Board.

In this annual report, it is my great pleasure to recognize the hard work of the Board members, as well as the members of the Board's advisory committees. These men and women work tirelessly and without compensation to fulfill our mission. Their contribution of time represents no small sacrifice, and our state is fortunate to have these individuals as public servants. I must also thank the dedicated staff of the Board, who are determined to give excellent service to their fellow citizens. I am honored and humbled to serve with this group of committed individuals.

Would you or someone you know want to know more about the GBHCW and the important work we do to improve the health care needs of rural Georgia? Then, please visit us online at <https://healthcareworkforce.georgia.gov/>. The website is an invaluable resource for both health care professionals and interested consumers.



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Interim Executive Director

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GBHCW staff holding up Christmas presents they bought for DFCS children through the 2019 Clark's Christmas Kids campaign.

About the Board

The Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce works to see Georgia communities, especially in medically underserved areas, have improved access to needed physicians and other health care practitioners, thereby enhancing the health and well-being of Georgia's citizens. It fulfills this vision by identifying and meeting the health care workforce needs of Georgia communities through the support and development of medical education programs.

The GBHCW is administratively attached to the Georgia Department of Community Health for certain functions such as budget and human resources. The Board meets quarterly to address the challenges presented above. Although meetings times and location may vary, most meetings are held at the Board's office in Atlanta. Agendas, minutes, and additional meeting information can be found on the Board's website.

Originally started in 1978 as the Joint Board of Family Practice, the Board changed its name to the Georgia Board for Physician Workforce in 1999. In 2011, the powers and duties of the State Medical Education Board were transferred to the GBPW. Then, loan repayment programs for dentists were added to the Board in 2016, and programs for physician assistants (PA) and advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) were officially added under the Board's jurisdiction in 2017. To reflect its more inclusive nature of other health care professions, the Board's name changed to the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce in 2019.

Members of the Board

The Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce is comprised of 15 members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate. The composition of the Board includes a mix of physicians, dentists, PAs, APRNs, hospital/health system executives, and consumer members. Of the 15-member board, there is also representation from both rural and non-rural areas.

Terri McFadden-Garden, M.D.
Fulton County (Chair)

Lily Jung Henson, M.D.
Greene County

James Barber, M.D.
Coffee County (Vice Chair)

B. Indran Indrakrishnan, M.D.
Gwinnett County

William R. Kemp
Lowndes County (Secretary/Treasurer)

George M. McCluskey, III, M.D.
Muscogee County

Garrett Bennett, M.D.
Early County

Amy Reeves, PA-C
Cobb County

W. Scott Bohlke, M.D.
Bulloch County

Antonio Rios, M.D.
Hall County

Carolyn Clevenger, DNP
Gwinnett County

James Lofton Smith, Jr., M.D.
Gwinnett County

Steven Gautney, MSHA
Crisp County

Joseph L. Walker, M.D.
Seminole County

Michael J. Groover, D.M.D.
Chatham County

Note: This list of Board members is current as of December 2021.

Fiscal Overview

The Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce operates with a budget appropriated by the General Assembly. All state funding for medical education, with the exception of money appropriated through the Board of Regents, is administered by the GBHCW.

In FY 2021, the Board’s appropriated budget was **\$82,337,084**, which is used to enhance the health and well-being of Georgia’s citizens through its various medical education and health care workforce programming.

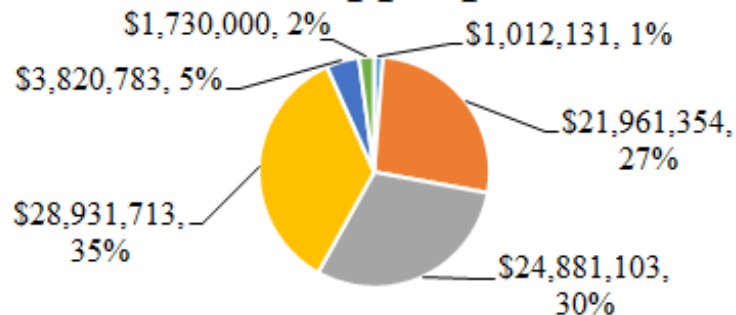
The Board’s budget contains six programs:

- Administration
- Graduate Medical Education
- Mercer School of Medicine Grant
- Morehouse School of Medicine Grant
- Physicians for Rural Areas Assistance
- Undergraduate Medical Education

Appropriation Figures Breakdown

Program	FY 2021	AFY 2021
Administration	\$1,012,131	\$1,018,590
Graduate Medical Education	\$21,961,354	\$21,961,354
Mercer S.O.M. Grant	\$24,881,103	\$24,881,103
Morehouse S.O.M. Grant	\$28,931,713	\$28,931,713
Physicians for Rural Areas	\$3,820,783	\$3,820,783
Undergraduate Medical Education	\$1,730,000	\$1,730,000
Total	\$82,337,084	\$82,343,543

FY 2021 Appropriation



- Administration
- Graduate Medical Education
- Mercer S.O.M. Operating Grant
- Morehouse S.O.M. Operating Grant
- Undergraduate Medical Education
- Physicians for Rural Areas



A recruiter with Northeast Georgia Health System chats with a resident physician from Emory School of Medicine at one of the Board's practice opportunity fairs in Atlanta in 2019.

Notable Accomplishments

The Board and its staff work diligently to carry out the GBHCW's mission. Below are a few highlights of the Board's work in 2021.

- Updated workforce data for the GBHCW's online data visualization tools, further bolstering information readily available on Georgia's growing health care workforce
- Surveyed medical school graduates from Emory, MCG, Mercer, Morehouse and PCOM-GA Campus to determine factors that influence specialty choice and residency selection/location, and then produced Georgia Medical School Graduate Survey Report
- Surveyed graduates of all Georgia graduate medical education programs and produced a GME Exit Survey Report to inform the medical education community and state health care workforce planners about the experiences of graduates and demand for new physicians in Georgia
- Met with Georgia-based GME program coordinators to ensure resident physicians completing programs have the resources they need to effectively transition into practice and obtain a Georgia medical license
- Held four quarterly Board meetings to discuss Board business and other health care workforce matters
- Published quarterly newsletters to keep the public informed of important Board news and updates
- Awarded 100 recipients through the Board's loan repayment programs for physicians, dentists, physician assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses, which will help improve health care workforce recruitment and retention in rural areas of Georgia

Undergraduate Medical Education

State funding for undergraduate medical education helps ensure an adequate supply of primary care and other needed physician specialists through public/private partnerships with four of Georgia’s private medical schools.

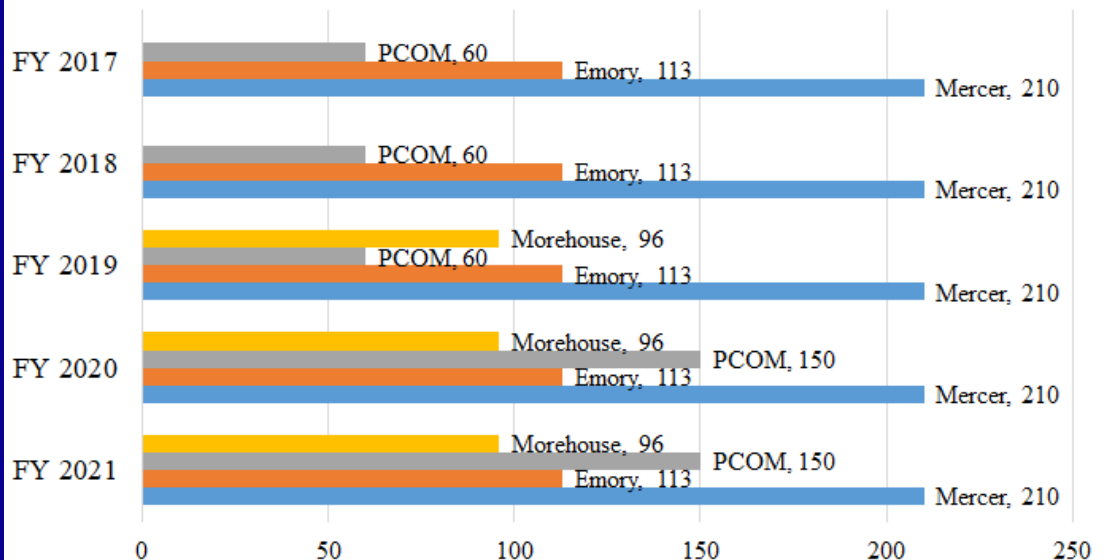
The Medical Student Capitation Program provides funding to Emory University School of Medicine, Mercer University School of Medicine, Morehouse School of Medicine, and Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (Georgia campuses) for a designated number of Georgia residents enrolled in each medical school. The level of funding is determined by the General Assembly, and in FY 2021, the funding for up to **569** students (Mercer – 210; Emory – 113; Morehouse – 96; and PCOM – 150). The capitation rate was about **\$6,363** per student certified as a resident of Georgia, which is a similar payment rate from the past few fiscal years. The contracts stipulate that at least 50 percent of the medical schools’ graduates must enter a primary care or core specialty. Over the last five years, the rate of graduates entering primary care and core specialties for the participating schools combined was **73.05** percent.

The GBHCW considers seven specialties as “primary care and core specialties,” which are: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology, emergency medicine, general surgery and psychiatry.

History of Medical School Graduate Match Results

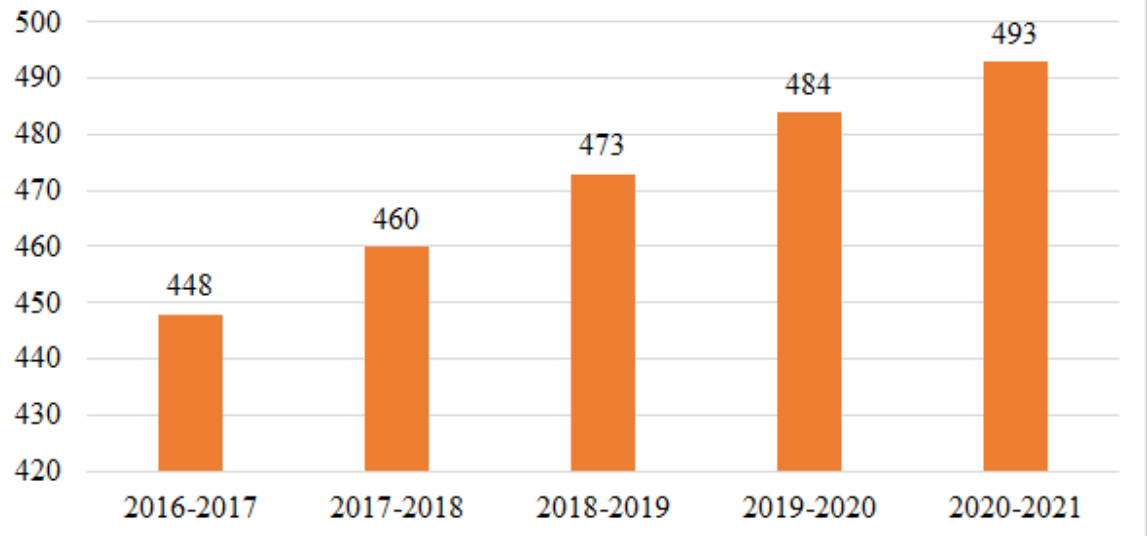
Grads Entering Core Specialties / Total Grads Entering Residency					
	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Emory	87 / 130	82 / 143	90 / 123	98 / 139	78 / 122
Mercer	71 / 106	74 / 102	81 / 108	86 / 114	106 / 126
Morehouse	45 / 57	59 / 76	55 / 73	69 / 87	64 / 79
PCOM	79 / 111	95 / 122	91 / 122	104 / 120	97 / 129
Totals	282 / 404	310 / 443	317 / 426	357 / 460	345 / 456

Number of Medical Students Funded



Mercer SOM Operating Grant

Number of Medical Students Enrolled at Mercer University School of Medicine



Snapshot of Graduates Now

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Percentage of graduates entering core specialties	67.00%	72.50%	75.00%	75.44%	84.13%
Percentage of graduates now practicing in Georgia	63.40%	53.23%	59.64%	56.91%	57.95%

The purpose of the Mercer University School of Medicine Operating Grant is to educate physicians and health professionals to meet the primary care and health care needs of rural and medically underserved areas of Georgia.

With **493** total students (**ALL** of whom are Georgia residents), Mercer University School of Medicine is spread over three campuses in Georgia:

- Macon, which houses the school's traditional campus;
- Savannah, which started as a clinical campus and is now a four-year campus; and
- Columbus, which also started as a clinical campus but has recently transitioned into a four-year campus.

This operating grant helps to fund several initiatives at the school, including clinical rotations for students at rural practice locations and an expansion of its Primary Care Accelerated Track program which condenses medical school to three years and transitions graduates into a residency program at Memorial Health University Medical Center in Savannah.

Morehouse SOM Operating Grant

The purpose of the Morehouse School of Medicine operating grant is to educate physicians and other health professionals to address primary healthcare needs with an emphasis on people of color and the underserved urban and rural populations throughout Georgia.

With **434** total students (**260** of whom are Georgia residents), Morehouse School of Medicine’s campus is located in Atlanta.

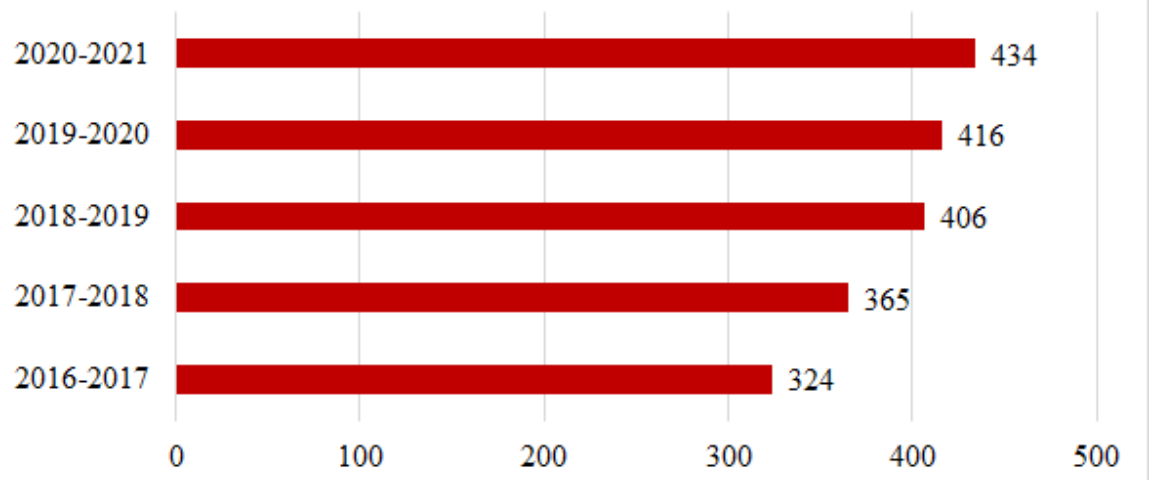
This investment from the state through the operating grant allows the school to continue increasing the enrollment of the medical school and its residency programs even more, as well as ensure increased access to innovative and critical health services for the citizens of our state. In 2018, Morehouse SOM welcomed an incoming class of 100 medical students, a first in its 40+ year existence, and continues to grow accepting 112 students into the first-year class in 2021.

Also, the operating grant provides funding for upgrades to the equipment and simulation labs, which provide hands-on learning opportunities for medical students to start developing their clinical skills.

Snapshot of Graduates Now

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Percentage of graduates entering core specialties	78.90 %	77.60%	75.30%	79.31%	81.01%
Percentage of graduates practicing in Georgia	46.00%	43.44%	43.00%	43.04%	42.00%

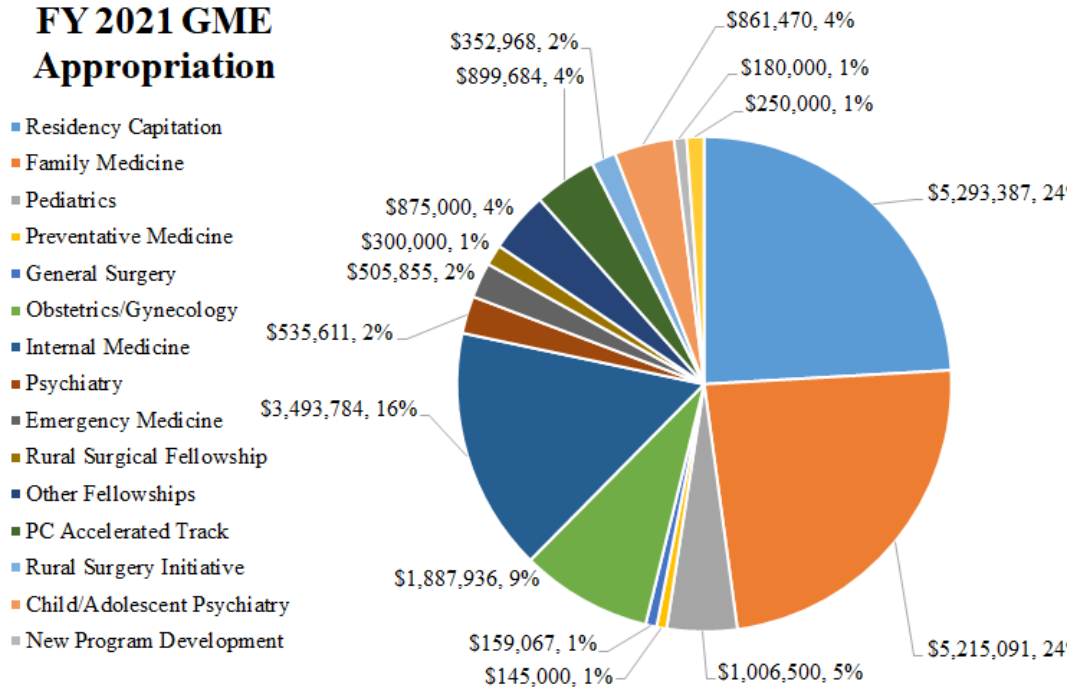
Number of Medical Students Enrolled at Morehouse School of Medicine



Graduate Medical Education

Specialty	Number of Residents Under Contract in FY2021
Family Medicine	271
Pediatrics	61
Residency Capitation	1,626
Preventive Medicine	10
General Surgery	10
OB/GYN	120
Internal Medicine	227
Psychiatry	36
Emergency Medicine	34
Rural Surgical Fellowship	2
Fellowships (Vision, Cancer, and Neurology)	7

FY 2021 GME Appropriation



The Graduate Medical Education Program helps ensure an adequate supply of primary care and other needed physician specialists through partnerships with the state’s designated teaching hospitals and graduate medical education (GME) programs, also known as “residency.” The Board provides state funding to help offset the cost of training physicians in some of the state’s teaching hospitals.

Since research shows that resident physicians are more likely to practice within a 100-mile radius of where they complete their GME training, the State of Georgia sees investing in GME programs as a way to strengthen the state’s physician workforce.

In FY 2021, the Board provided **\$21,961,354** to **24** institutions, which will enhance Georgia’s medical education efforts and bolster the physician workforce.

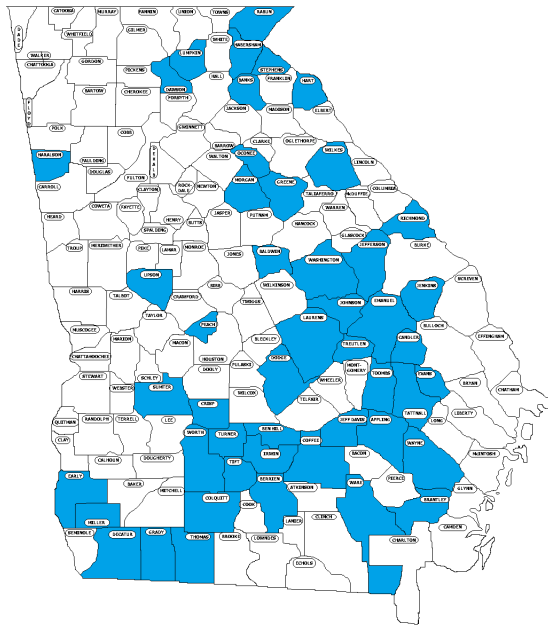
Physicians for Rural Areas

The GBHCW administers service-cancelable loan repayment programs for physicians, dentists, physician assistants and advanced practice registered nurses that assist in paying debt incurred for tuition, fees, and other expenses associated with the completion of the aforementioned degrees. Practitioners must agree to practice at least 40 hours per week in an underserved, rural county in Georgia with a population of 50,000 or less.

The Physicians for Rural Areas Assistance and Georgia Physician Loan Repayment Programs provide up to \$25,000 a year in student loan repayment in return for a 12-month commitment to practice in a rural community. Recipients may receive a maximum of four loans and a maximum total student loan repayment of \$100,000. The Dentists for Rural Area Assistance program offers the same contract to dentists in return for their rural dental practice.

Since 1990, this program has proven to retain talent here in Georgia. About **88.94** percent of the program’s participants remained in Georgia to practice after completing their obligation. Additionally, around **72.25** percent of former program participants in Georgia continue to practice in a qualifying county.

In 2017, the Board implemented the Physician Assistant and Advanced Practice Registered Nurse loan repayment programs, which are the PA and APRN versions of the PRAA and are similar in program structure and requirements to the PRAA offering \$10,000 per year, for a maximum of \$40,000 over four years.



Recipients of all loan repayment programs provided **48** rural Georgia counties with improved access to care.

Some recipients are practicing in the same county as other recipients.

Also, some counties may not be “rural” but are Board-approved.

Program	Number of recipients
Physicians for Rural Areas Assistance	37
Georgia Physician Loan Repayment	7
Dentists for Rural Areas Assistance	12
Physician Assistant Loan Repayment	22
APRN Loan Repayment	22
Total	135

Outlook for FY 2022

The Board has been hard at work toward initiatives and goals for FY 2022 – some of which include:

- Continue monitoring the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on Georgia’s health care workforce
- Keep working with the Governor’s Office, General Assembly, health care organizations and medical trade associations to address Georgia’s health care workforce needs
- Collaborate with Georgia Technology Authority and its Digital Services team to improve the Board’s website and further develop the online data visualization tools for the state’s health care workforce information
- Update data gathering techniques with the Georgia Composite Medical Board to ensure information collected from renewal surveys accurately reflects workforce trends
- Continue working with the Georgia Board of Nursing to identify areas of need for advanced practice registered nurses in Georgia
- Engage more with residency programs and medical schools to strengthen relationships with physicians earlier in the medical education pipeline

The Board’s website contains a wealth of information on health care workforce needs in Georgia. Copies of any report published by the Board, including previous annual reports, are accessible on the Board’s website.



Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce

Questions?

Comments?

Concerns?

Feel free to reach out!

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