



Georgia Board for Physician Workforce Fact Sheet on Georgia's Medical Schools February 2010

This fact sheet highlights key elements related to Georgia's medical schools and provides answers to the following questions:

- What are Georgia's medical schools doing to help meet the need for more physicians?
- How does the number of medical students being trained in Georgia compare to the southeast and national averages? How many more students would Georgia have to add to meet these targets?
- How much does it cost to attend medical school in Georgia today compared to five years ago? What proportion of medical students are Georgia residents?
- Are the graduates of Georgia's medical schools entering needed specialties?
- Do Georgia's medical school graduates stay in state to do their residency (GME) training?
- Are graduates of Georgia's medical schools practicing in Georgia?
- What impact will medical school expansion have on Georgia's physician workforce and where should the state focus its energy and resources in the future?

What are Georgia's medical schools doing to help meet the need for more physicians?

The Medical College of Georgia (MCG), Emory University School of Medicine, Mercer University School of Medicine, and Morehouse School of Medicine are all increasing medical student enrollment in response to the need for more physicians. Georgia will also benefit from the new osteopathic medical school, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM), Georgia Campus, which graduated its first class in May 2009.

Existing expansion plans by the private medical schools, as well as the partnership between MCG and UGA to establish a medical school campus in Athens, will significantly improve Georgia's undergraduate medical education training capacity.

Georgia's Medical Schools Past, Current, & Projected Enrollment 2000-2020				
Medical School	Past Enrollment: 2000/2001	Past Enrollment: 2006/2007	Current Enrollment: 2009/2010	Projected Enrollment: 2020
Emory	439	455	517	528
MCG (and new partnership campus at UGA)	711	734	762	1200
Mercer	212	246	311	366
Morehouse	153	210	213	300
Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Georgia Campus (PCOM)	0	168	341	360
TOTAL ENROLLMENT⁽¹⁾	1515	1813	2144	2754
Percentage Growth/Increase in Enrollment over the Previous Period		20%	18%	28.5%

(1) Enrollment figures provided by the medical schools.

How does the number of medical students being trained in Georgia compare to the southeast and national averages? How many more students would Georgia have to add to meet these targets?

- Tennessee is the only surrounding state that has a medical student to population ratio higher than Georgia's.
- To reach the southeast average of 22.8 medical students per 100,000 population, Georgia would have to add approximately 45 medical students.
- Nationally, Georgia ranks 30th among the 50 states in medical students per 100,000 population. Georgia's rate of 22.3 medical students per 100,000 population is below the national average of 30.1 medical students per 100,000.
- To meet the national average of 30.1 medical students per 100,000 population, Georgia would still have to increase total medical school enrollment by 750 students.
- Even with MCG's planned expansion and expansion efforts already underway at Georgia's private medical schools, the state will remain below the national average. If all plans are fully implemented, Georgia's ratio should improve to an estimated 25 medical students per 100,000 population.

Comparison of Georgia's UME Capacity Students Enrolled in LCME or AOA Accredited Medical Schools per 100,000 Population		
	Rate per 100,000	Rank
U.S.	30.1	
Southeast	22.8	
TN	33.8	17 th
GA	22.3	30th
SC	21.9	31 st
AL	21.8	34 th
NC	21.7	35 th
FL	20.5	36 th

Source: AAMC Center for Workforce Studies; 2009 State Physician Workforce Data Book; November 2009.

How much does it cost to attend medical school in Georgia today compared to five years ago? What proportion of medical students are Georgia residents?

The cost to obtain a medical education continues to rise.

Medical School	Tuition Only For Incoming Freshman Academic Year 2004-2005	Tuition Only For Incoming Freshmen Academic Year 2009-2010	% of Current Students who are GA Residents
Emory Univ. School of Medicine	\$34,205	\$42,000 (22.8% increase)	31.7%
Medical College of Georgia (MCG)	\$10,772	\$21,408 (98.7% increase)	98.8%
Mercer Univ. School of Medicine	\$27,876	\$38,885 (39.5% increase)	100.0%
Morehouse School of Medicine	\$22,500	\$29,484 (31.0% increase)	60.6%
Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (GA Campus)	Not Applicable	\$38,100	48.4%

Sources: Total enrollment and number of Georgia residents provided by the medical schools. Tuition for Georgia residents obtained from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Tuition and Student Fees Reports 2009-2010 and 2004-2005; fees are not included in the tuition totals. PCOM tuition figures were provided by the school.

Are the graduates of Georgia's medical schools entering needed specialties?

- Georgia's medical schools are producing graduates who enter primary care and other needed core specialties such as Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and General Surgery. However, the number of graduates entering these specialties is declining both in Georgia and nationally. Factors such as rising medical education debt continue to present a financial burden and may be prompting medical students to select subspecialties with higher incomes rather than a primary care field.
- The state has partnered with Mercer University School of Medicine and Morehouse School of Medicine as a cost effective way to train primary care physicians.

Do Georgia's medical school graduates stay in state to do their residency (GME) training?

- A collective average of 29.5% of graduates from MCG, Emory, Mercer, and Morehouse selected a Georgia residency training program over the last five years, even though a large portion of the medical students were Georgia residents.
- Mercer has the highest rate of graduates remaining in Georgia for residency training at 34.2% followed by Emory (32.3%), MCG (27.0%), and Morehouse (26.4%).
- Further study is needed to identify why nearly 2/3 of the state's medical school graduates go elsewhere for residency training. Reasons may include a lack of available residency positions in the graduates' desired specialty.

Medical School Graduates Remaining in Georgia for Residency (GME) Training by Medical School Fiscal Years 2005-2009

Medical School	% of Graduates Selecting a GA Residency Training Site
Emory	32.3%
MCG	27.0%
Mercer	34.2%
Morehouse	26.4%

Source: As reported by the medical schools; reflects selection for 1st year of residency training for those graduates entering GME.

Are graduates of Georgia's medical schools practicing in Georgia?

- The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) reported in its November 2009 State Physician Workforce Data Book that the average national retention rate for medical school graduates was 39%.
- Georgia's medical schools have a collective average retention rate of 49.0%. Retention rates by medical school are shown in the table.
- Mercer has the highest retention rate of graduates practicing in Georgia at 59.8% followed by MCG (52.0%), Morehouse (46.8%), and Emory (37.3%).

Physician Retention by Georgia Medical School as of July 2009

Medical School	% of M.D. Graduates Practicing in GA	% of M.D. Graduates Practicing in the Contiguous* States
Emory	37.3%	24.5%
MCG	52.0%	25.6%
Mercer	59.8%	24.1%
Morehouse	46.8%	18.1%

Source: AMA Directory of Physicians in the United States: 2009 CD-ROM. Contiguous states – North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, & Florida

What impact will medical school expansion have on Georgia's physician workforce and where should the state focus its energy and resources in the future?

- Expansion of undergraduate medical education (medical school enrollment) is needed and justified; however, the collective contributions of all the medical schools to Georgia's physician workforce must be considered in evaluating impact.
- The expansion efforts already underway at existing, established medical schools are of significant importance. Should these efforts be discontinued, there would be a serious long-term negative effect on the state's medical education infrastructure and Georgia's physician workforce.
- It is important for the state to maintain the commitment to undergraduate medical education.
- Expanding medical school enrollment alone will not meet Georgia's need for physicians.
- Georgia must also invest in expanding graduate medical education capacity (residency training positions). Research has shown that residency location may have a greater influence on a physician's choice of practice location (more than where they attended medical school). Source: National Conference of State Legislatures Physician Workforce Institute for Primary Care and Workforce Analysis. January 2003 report "Practice Location of Physician Graduates".