



Georgia Department of Public Health

Georgia Volunteer Health Care Program

Presentation to: Georgia Charitable Care Network

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We Protect Lives.

GVHCP: Mission, Goal, Objectives

- The mission is to increase and promote access to quality health care by providing sovereign immunity protection to health care professionals donating services to eligible clients.
- The goal is to develop access points for all Georgia counties through clinic development and expansion, and private provider recruitment.
- The objectives are to:
 - Expand services in underserved counties
 - Increase partnerships with individuals, local and statewide organizations
 - Maintain program integrity and minimize risk of liability



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GVHCP: The Need

Population of Georgia:	9,587,400
Number of uninsured Georgians:	1,870,200
Percentage of uninsured Georgians :	20%
National average is:	16%

(Data from www.statehealthfacts.org accessed 4.18.13)



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GVHCP: The Need



- Emergency Departments used as primary care clinics
- Health care delayed until conditions worsen
- Chronic health conditions go untreated



GVHCP: The Protection

- **Sovereign Immunity** - A contracted health care provider operating within the scope of practice is considered a state officer or employee and therefore immune from liability and suit pursuant to OCGA 50-21-25
- **Federal Tort** - Provides protection against allegations of medical malpractice for volunteer free clinic health professionals, board members, officers, employees and/or individuals who have been deemed to be PHS employees. Other free clinic personnel and the free clinic entity or corporation are not eligible to be covered under FTCA. Credentialing must be done by the clinic and clinic must be approved.
- **Good Samaritan** - Any person... who in good faith renders emergency care shall not be liable for any civil damages (OCGA 51-1-29)



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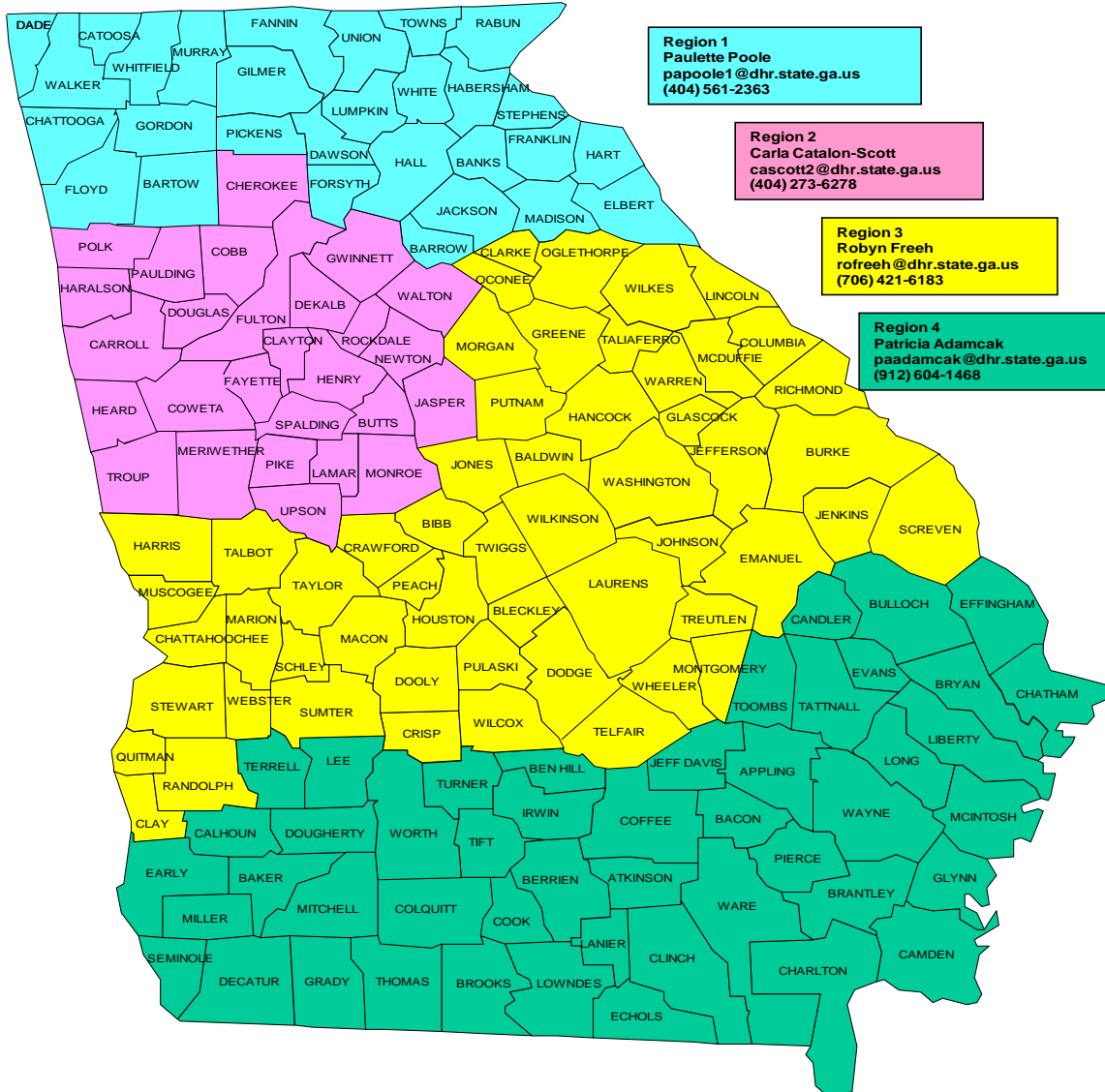
GVHCP: Program Structure

- Georgia Department of Public Health
Division of Health Protection
Volunteer Program
- GeorgiaResponds.org
- 4 Regional Coordinators:
 - Responsible for volunteer recruitment, clinic development, program integrity and ongoing program support
 - Located in regional offices



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Georgia Volunteer Health Care Program Regional Map



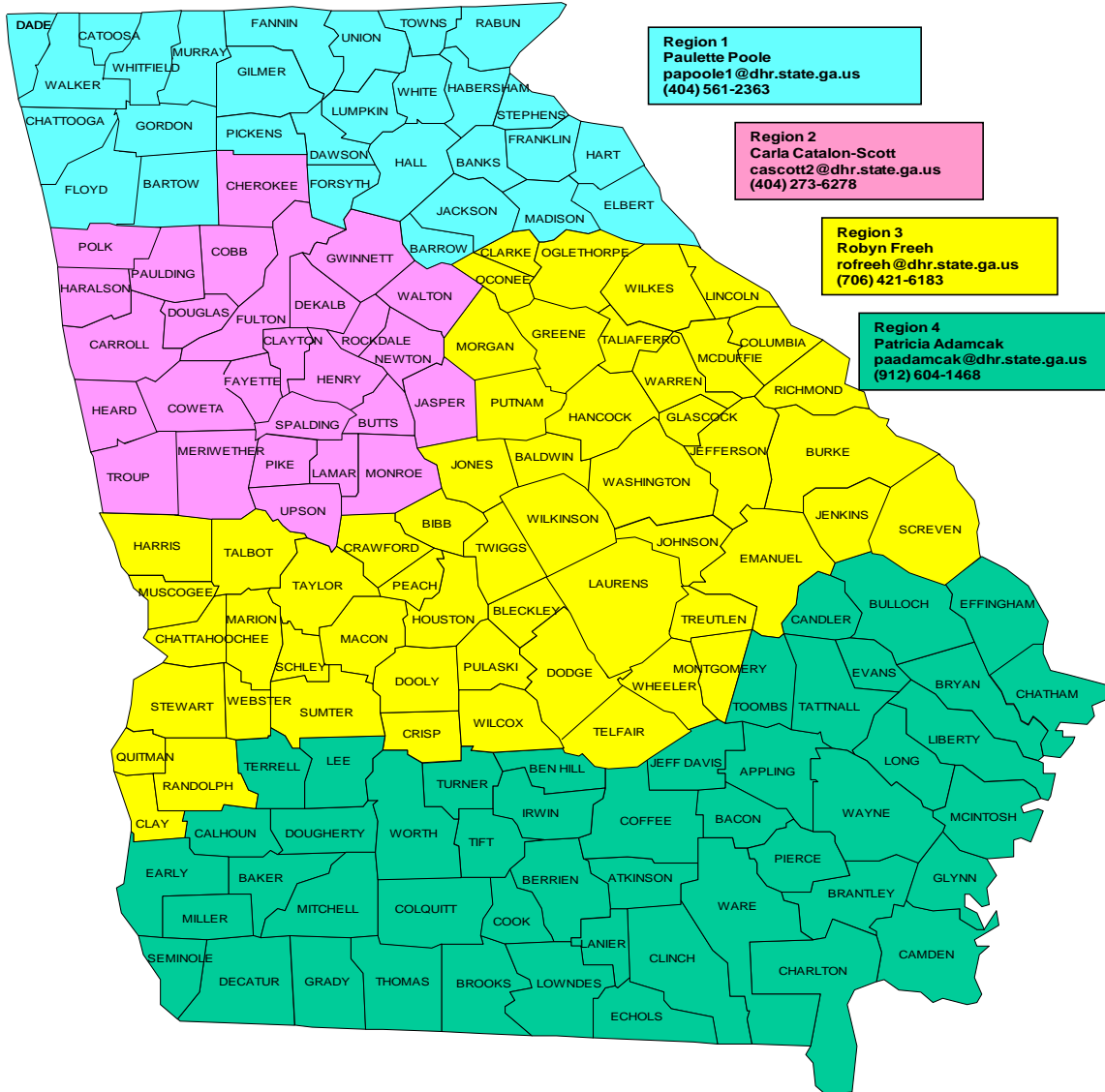
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GVHCP: Opportunities

- Volunteer in an existing partnering free clinic
- Start a free clinic to serve your community
- Provide volunteer services in the comfort of your own office/private practice/through telemedicine



GVHCP: By the Numbers

- Over 90 clinics participating statewide in 67 participating counties
- Approximately 3,300 licensed health care providers under contract
- Approximately 1,700 non-licensed eligibility specialists statewide
- On-going campaign to expand provider participation in all Georgia's counties



GVHCP: The Fine Print

Program Requirements- Providers

- A health care professional is protected under this liability protection as long as:
 - Active license (not provisional, limited, restricted, or probationary) with no board orders
 - Act within scope of practice
 - Treat patients determined eligible per GVHCP standards by a designated/trained DPH volunteer.

The liability protection will be in place whether the provider volunteers in a clinic setting or at their own practice.



GVHCP: The Fine Print

Program Requirements - Patients

- To be eligible, patients must :
 - Be uninsured or under-insured (insurance does not cover treatment being sought)
 - Have a family income at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
 - Complete required paperwork with approved volunteer
 - Clinics may add additional eligibility criteria, such as proof of income, residence, citizenship, etc.



GVHCP Statewide Impact

- 148,000 patient visits conducted FY 2012 at partnering clinics
- 88,000 hours contributed by licensed health care providers
- \$27,000,000 in donated health care services
- \$816,000 in services performed by non-licensed volunteers
- Increased access to affordable, quality health care in communities across the state
- Improved health outcomes as a result of timely access to care and prevention of disease progression



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GVHCP Contact Information

Visit us at:

www.georgiaresponds.org

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GVHCP Contact Information

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GVHCP: From our Volunteers

"I have seen first hand the benefits this endeavor (the clinic) has provided the local community. I am impressed by the altruism and concern manifested by the volunteers. True concern is evident on the faces of the caretakers...it is almost as if one is transported to an earlier time in our country's history where caring for others was a calling rather than a job. Certainly this endeavor (of volunteerism) is in keeping with our nation needs at this time."

Lawrence Zottoli, M.D.

Medical Director of Employee's Medical Center of Savannah
and Good Samaritan Clinic Savannah, GA-Chatham
County



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