



Georgia Obstetrical
and Gynecological
Society, Inc.

JUNE 2023 | VOLUME 17, NUMBER 3

OBGYN NEWS

Promoting Excellence In
Women's Healthcare In Georgia



**Georgia Obstetrical and Gynecological Society
and Georgia Section ACOG**

72nd Annual Educational Meeting

August 24 - 27 at The Westin Spa and Resort, Hilton Head Island, SC
Jointly provided by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

I would like to welcome everyone to attend the 2023 Georgia OB/Gyn Society Annual Educational Meeting! This Society has been devoted to its mission of education, advocacy, and support for its members for the past seventy years. In those seven decades, we have continued to strive to serve as the touchstone for all OB/GYN physicians in Georgia, serving and

supporting this dedicated group so that they may better serve and care for our patients.

This event, held in conjunction with the Ga Section ACOG, features evidence-based, scientific lectures delivered by distinguished specialty leaders. Exhibitors are bringing amazing new products and services for display. Our Simulation Lab offers hands on



of registration, all in-person attendees must submit a COVID VACCINE ATTESTATION for themselves and their spouse, guest(s) (including children who are eligible) that will be attending the meeting and participating in GOGS events. We will continue to remain vigilant and will uphold all standards, mandates, and regulations in place at that time and will consider the local

context to maximize the safety of our attendees, guests, exhibitors, and hotel staff. We request your flexibility and cooperation with the safety measures deemed appropriate at the time. We remain vigilant in our mission to promote the highest standard of health and safety during our meeting.

We expect over 175 obstetricians and gynecologists and related sub-specialists from throughout Georgia to attend this event at The Westin Spa & Resort at Hilton Head Island, SC. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing

Medical Education (ACCME), has accredited this meeting for a maximum of 16 Category 1 College Cognate Credits. We look forward to seeing our colleagues for a weekend filled with fellowship, learning, relaxation, and enjoyment this August at the Westin in Hilton Head. Use the QR code to book your room for this event as rooms fill quickly!

PCW

Padmashree "Champa"
Chaudhury Woodham,
MD, FACOG
President

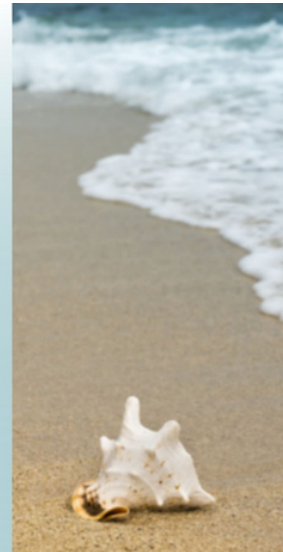
Georgia Obstetrical and Gynecological Society and Georgia Section ACOG
Jointly Provided with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

2023 Annual Educational Meeting

August 24 - 27, 2023

The Westin Spa & Resort
Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

Both In-Person and Virtual
Attendance Options Available



experiences that will help you prepare for challenging procedures in your office and in the operating room. And make sure to join us for several social events throughout the weekend to enjoy the camaraderie that is so unique to GOGS.

For this in-person gathering and in an effort to provide a safe and comfortable experience, we have a few important requests for each of our attendees and their guests. We ask that all in-person attendees and guests (including children who are eligible) be able to provide evidence of FULL vaccination (including appropriate booster status) for COVID-19. At the time



Meeting
Registration



<https://events.resultsathand.com/gogs2023/2015/>

Hotel
Reservations



<https://book.passkey.com/event/50359452/owner/49229302/home>



IN-PERSON ATTENDEES:

ACCME Accreditation

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)[™]

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists designates this live activity for a maximum of **16 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits[™]**. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

College Cognate Credit(s)

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists designates this live activity for a maximum of 16 Category 1 College Cognate Credits. The College has a reciprocity agreement with the AMA that allows **AMA PRA Category 1 Credits[™]** to be equivalent to College Cognate Credits.



MOC Part IV Credit

The ABOG MOC standards now allow participation in ABO-approved Simulation Courses to meet the annual improvement in Medical Practice (Part IV) MOC requirement. This course has been approved to meet ABOG Improvement in Medical requirements for 2023.

Educational Credits

Faculty & Topics



AKINNIRAN ABISOGUN, MD

A Proactive Strategy for Reducing Cardiac-Related Maternal Deaths

Dr. Abisogun is board certified in internal medicine, cardiovascular disease, interventional cardiology, and adult comprehensive echocardiography and is a registered physician in vascular interpretation. He is a member of The Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions and the American College of Cardiology. Dr. Abisogun specializes in high-risk coronary interventions, peripheral vascular disease, and care delivery to underserved populations.



SLADE EDWARDS, JD

Examples of Malpractice Cases in OBGyn

Mr. Edwards is a partner with Moody Legal Counsel, where he represents plaintiffs on various personal injury cases, including plaintiffs who have been victims of medical malpractice and nursing home neglect.



ANDY BOWE, DO, MS, FAAP

The Evolution of Periviability and its Impact on Extremely Premature Infants

Dr. Andy Bowe is a Neonatologist with Pediatrix Medical Group of South Carolina, P.C., Spartanburg Regional Health. He is the Clinical Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the Medical University of South Carolina and the Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine - Carolinas in Spartanburg, SC.



LISA FLOWERS, MD, MPH, FACOG

ASCCP Risk-Based Management Guidelines and its Clinical Application

Lisa Flowers, MD, MPH, is the 2022-2023 President of The American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology Colposcopy Standards. She is a Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Fellowship Director of the Lower Anogenital Screening and Treatment Fellowship, Director of the Colposcopy and Anoscopy clinics at the Grady Cancer Center of Excellence, Emory University Healthcare Systems, and the Ponce Infectious Disease Center. Dr. Flowers specializes in treating women with abnormal pap tests, HPV-related diseases, and pre-cancerous gynecologic conditions.



KELLI BRAUN, MD

Advances in Simulation Training for the Practitioner

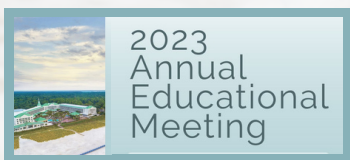
Dr. Braun is the Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Director of Simulation and Virtual Education, and the Associate Dean of Admissions at the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University.



MELISSA KOTTKE, MD, MPH, MBA

The Impact of H.B. 481 on Clinical Care in Georgia

Dr. Melissa Kottke is a Professor in the Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. She completed a Fellowship in Complex Family Planning and is the Medical Director of the Teen Services and Family Planning Clinic at Grady Memorial Hospital. She is the Director of the Jane Fonda Center at Emory, which is involved in research and program development focused on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health. Current research areas include Dual Protection, over-the-counter contraception, and ways to improve sexual health for teens. She also serves as the Medical Consultant for the State of Georgia's Family Planning Program and the Maternal Co-Chair for the Georgia Perinatal Quality Collaborative.





VIRTUAL ATTENDEES:

ACCME Accreditation

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.



AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™:

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists designates this other activity (hybrid: enduring and live learning) for a maximum of 10 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

College Cognate Credit(s):

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists designates this other activity (hybrid: enduring and live learning) for a maximum of 10 Category 1 College Cognate Credits. The College has a reciprocity agreement with the AMA that allows AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™ to be equivalent to College Cognate Credits.

Faculty & Topics



BARTLEY MILLER

An Insurers Perspective on Malpractice Litigation

Bartley offers insurance solutions for professionals, general commercial businesses, individuals, and employee benefits. He has a particular interest and expertise in the Healthcare arena.



PAUL NYIRJESY, MD

Managing Chronic Vulvovaginal Diseases: Lessons Learned from a Tertiary Care Center

Dr. Paul Nyirjesy is a Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Sidney Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In addition, he is Co-director of the Jefferson Vulvovaginal Health Center and Interim Division Chief, Division of GYN Surgical Specialties.



CYRIL SPANN, MD

Incision Decisions for Gynecologic Surgery

Dr. Spann is the Chief of Emory Inpatient Gynecologic Oncology Service at Grady Healthcare System and the Chief of Gynecologic Oncology Service at the Crawford W. Long Hospital of Emory University. He also serves as a Professor in the Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics, Division of Gynecologic Oncology at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia.



METHODIUS TUULI, MD, MPH, MBA

** Luella Klein Lecture Series **

Iron Deficiency Anemia in Pregnancy: Can We Do Better?

Dr. Tuuli will provide the 4th annual Luella Klein lecture. Dr. Tuuli is the Chace-Joukowsky Professor and Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University and Chief of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Women & Infants Hospital. A board-certified Maternal-Fetal Medicine physician-scientist, his research is focused on predicting and preventing adverse obstetric outcomes, including preventing surgical site infection after cesarean delivery, managing labor, and optimizing management of medical complications in pregnancy. His top priority is to improve the quality of maternal care and eliminate disparities in perinatal outcomes.



LUELLA KLEIN LECTURESHIP SERIES

Dr. Klein was a life-long passionate advocate for women, their babies and the providers who take care of them. In 2018, the Georgia OB/Gyn Foundation established the Luella Klein Lectureship in honor of her contributions.

Dr. Luella Klein graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Iowa with a BA degree in 1946 and received her medical degree in 1949. She completed training in Internal Medicine and General Surgery prior to completing Residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH in 1955. After residency, she was elected a US Senior Fulbright Scholar and studied at the University of London in London, England.

In 1986, Dr. Klein became the very first female department Chair at Emory School of Medicine and she would later hold the title of Charles Howard Candler Professor. Dr. Klein's sub-specialty in Maternal-Fetal Medicine served as the foundation for her works as the Director of the Maternal and Infant Care project located at the Grady Memorial Hospital, which continues its service to this day.

Throughout her 60-year career, Dr. Klein championed equality in health care for adolescent, low-income and incarcerated women of color, women with disabilities, women with HIV, and other underserved populations. She was noted for her teaching abilities and her excellent clinical judgment. Dr. Luella Klein has numerous other accolades including: being the first female president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and she was the 25th president of the Georgia Obstetrical and Gynecological Society.



Accommodations

Relax at the Westin's oceanfront resort in Hilton Head Island, SC. Located on a lively, vibrant stretch of the Atlantic Ocean, The Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa is a stimulating experience for guests in South Carolina. This oceanfront resort in Hilton Head is committed to your well-being, from the soothing coastal colors of their restaurants to the beachy décor of their modern rooms.

Fuel your day with "farm & sea to table" dining at their restaurants or enjoy a refreshing cocktail by one of the three outdoor pools. Guests will be able to enjoy oceanfront resort terraces and Chef-curated catering menus.

You are just steps away from the beach and rejuvenating treatments at Heavenly Spa by Westin™, not to mention Hilton Head Island's world-famous golf courses. Feel renewed after a fun, full and fulfilling day with your sun-filled guest room with a Heavenly Bed® and private balcony. The Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa leaves you feeling better than when you arrived.

The Society has negotiated special room rates at \$240/night, which available until **Saturday, July 22nd**, or until room block is filled.

To make your reservation in our room block at The Westin, click or scan the QR code below or call The Westin at 888.236.2427 and ask for the Georgia OBGyn Annual Meeting.



Bring the Kids!

Guests enjoy the array of inspired amenities available at The Westin Hilton Head Island resort, including private beach access, three beautiful swimming pools and four on-site restaurants. Children love spending time at the Westin Family Kids Club, while parents escape to the Heavenly Spa by Westin™ for a rejuvenating massage. The Westin also offer hotel guests access to the adjacent Port Royal Golf & Racquet Club for championship golf and tennis.

Kid's Night Out is available to children of the adults that attend the Awards Banquet on Saturday evening. Be sure to add this option when registering.



Hotel Reservations

<https://book.passkey.com/event/50359452/owner/49229302/home>

Westin's Digital Resort Guide

<https://tinyurl.com/WestinDigitalResortGuide>



Distinguished Service Award

Dr. Michael Lindsay is a senior maternal-fetal medicine clinician and chief of Emory service for obstetrics and gynecology at Grady, with more than three decades of clinical experience in managing high-risk pregnancies.

His clinical research in the late 1980s was instrumental in establishing routine voluntary prenatal HIV testing for all patients, not just those with risk factors. Lindsay's long career is guided by two things: teaching up-and-coming



Michael Lindsay,
MD, MPH

2023 Georgia OBGyn
Society Distinguished
Service Award

physicians and hopefully making a difference.

Lindsay received a bachelor of science degree from Morehouse College in 1975, his medical degree from Yale School of Medicine in 1979, and a master of public health from Emory University School of Public Health in 1991.

Please join us at the Awards Banquet on Saturday, August 26th, where Dr. Lindsay will be presented the 2023 Georgia OBGyn Society Distinguished Service Award

Pre-registration to the Awards Banquet is required - see option upon registration



Simulation Lab

On Day 1 - Thursday afternoon, August 24th, we will hold a simulation/surgical lab (SIM Lab) from 1:00 pm – 5:30 pm. This will be prior to the opening of the regular exhibit hall on Friday. The focus will be hands-on training products for OBGYN surgery and usage:

- ✓ Hands On Training
- ✓ Live Model Training
- ✓ Simulation Labs
- ✓ Surgery Skill Practice
- ✓ Skills Updates

Physicians will rotate between stations in the simulation room. We plan a limited number of training stations in this room so that physicians can spend focused time at each station. In addition, this year, we will have a “Spotlight” area. Each SIM Lab exhibitor will have approximately 7-8 minutes to feature their product during their assigned time.

We look forward to seeing you at the SIM Lab on Thursday!



Padmashree “Champa”
Chaudhury Woodham,
MD, FACOG
Simulation Lab
Director



Bunja Jane Rungruang,
MD, FACOG
Simulation Lab
Associate Director



Important Dates

June 22, 2023

Last date room block is available or until room block is full

July 30, 2023

Early bird pricing ends

August 7, 2023

Registration ends for *In-Person* Attendees

**All In-Person Attendees and their Guests MUST Pre-Register.
(NO registrations will be taken on site)**

August 18, 2023

Registration ends for *Virtual* Attendees

DON'T MISS!

REGISTER TODAY!



<https://events.resultsathand.com/gogs2023/2015/>

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If you would like to send a letter to the editor,
please email letter to president@gaobgyn.org
or mail it to the Society's office

www.gaobgyn.org

QUICK LINKS



AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

FOR THE MONTHS OF

June and July

June



NATIONAL HIV TESTING DAY (6/27)

National #HIVTestingDay is June 27 & this year's theme is "Let's Stop HIV Together." Taking an HIV test is taking care of you. Knowing your status gives you powerful information to help stay healthy. Learn more about HIV testing options:

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/awareness/testingday.html>

#HIVTestingDay #StopHIVTogether



NATIONAL CONGENITAL CMV AWARENESS MONTH

National Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Awareness Month is an annual observance held in June to increase awareness of CMV the most common infectious cause of birth defects. CMV is the most common infectious cause of birth defects in the United States. About 1 out of 5 babies with congenital CMV infection will have birth defects or other long-term health problems, such as hearing loss. Learn more at

the CMV Resource Center:

<https://www.cdc.gov/cmv/awareness-month.html>

July

FIBROID AWARENESS MONTH

For the past few years, The White Dress Project has been using their platform to break down the walls of silence. This year, they are empowering their warriors to blossom by creating spaces for them to own their voices, share their stories, and enact change to fight the fibroid epidemic. They are hosting events and all throughout the month of July in support of those managing life with fibroids. Learn more at:

<https://www.thewhitedressproject.org/fam>



CORD BLOOD AWARENESS MONTH

Cord Blood Awareness Month every July, serves the purpose of educating people and raising awareness regarding the importance of cord blood. Doctors have realized how essential this blood is over the years. Learn more at:

<https://www.cb-association.org/>



INTERNATIONAL GROUP B STREP AWARENESS MONTH

Group B Streptococcus (group B strep, GBS) are bacteria that come and go naturally in the body. Most of the time the bacteria are not harmful, but they can cause serious illness in People of all ages. In fact, group B strep disease is a common cause of severe infection in newborns. While GBS disease can be deadly, there are steps pregnant women can take to help protect their babies. Learn more at the CDC Resource Center:

<https://www.cdc.gov/groupbstrep/about/index.html>



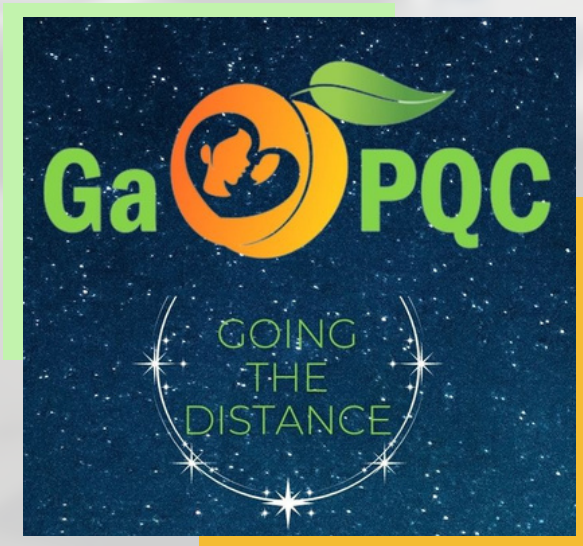
The 3rd Annual Georgia Perinatal Quality Collaborative Conference occurred at the Emory Conference Center on April 13 - 14, 2023. The conference, titled "Going the Distance," provided attendees with evidence-based lectures aimed at improving health outcomes and providing equitable care for mothers and babies throughout Georgia. The 2-day event presented current and best practices on several topics, including social determinants of health, optimizing newborn nutrition, the impact of COVID-19 on maternal mortality, and cardiac initiatives. More than 100 providers, including physicians, midwives, nurses, and community partners, attended both in-person and virtually. Attendees are eligible for 10.0 AMA PRA Category 1.0 credit.

The GaPQC leadership team presented several awards to hospitals and individuals who have consistently gone above and beyond in their commitment to Georgia mothers and infants. The 'Spotlight on Equity' was awarded to Jennifer Boland for her dedication to advancing racial justice and health equity by educating staff with the SPEAK UP modules and Champion education; and translating knowledge into action by implementing the

hospital-specific action plan in clinical practice and the health system. Judy Layden, Rachel Wright, and Heather Wyrick were awarded the 'Spirit of Excellence Regional Outreach' award for their dedication to develop, implement, and evaluate outreach education programs for hospitals within their region, and support other RPCs across the state, with the expressed goal of improving outcome for mothers and infants. Several hospitals including; Atrium Health Navicent, Liberty Regional Medical Center, Northeast Georgia Health System (Braselton & Gainesville), Grady Health System, Augusta University Medical Center, Northside Hospital (Atlanta, Cherokee, Forsyth, Gwinnett), Memorial Health University Medical Center, Wellstar Kennestone Hospital and Emory School of Medicine were awarded the 'Big Bang Team Award'

for demonstrating a distinct dedication to improving maternal and neonatal health outcomes in Georgia through their leadership and early adopter spirit across all GaPQC initiatives.

The 'Shining Star Team' award for hospitals that demonstrated a sustained commitment and dedication to the GaPQC maternal and neonatal initiatives through active engagement (e.g., sharing successes, webinar attendance, committee participation, improvement coaching, consistent data submission) was granted to Grady Health System, Upson Regional, Northside Cherokee, and Northeast Georgia Health System. Congratulations to this year's winners!



The highlight of the conference was when Dr. David Levine was recognized for his service as the GaPQC Founder and Neonatal Chair from 2012-2023. Thank you Dr. Levine for your service and vision of GaPQC!

The Georgia OB/Gyn Society in partnership with the Department of Public Health produced the meeting logistics including the audio visual recordings. All lectures were recorded and are available online on the GOGS YouTube channel which can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@georgiaobgynsociety3174/videos>

Attendees are eligible for 10.0 AMA PRA Category 1.0 credits.



Drs. Teresa Byrd, David Levine, and Melissa Kottke



The Georgia OB/Gyn Society
along with the Patient-Centered Physicians Coalition
invites you to attend a webinar from
The Department of Community Health

Medicaid Redetermination

"The End of Continuous Enrollment - What You and Your Patients Need to Know"

Tuesday, June 27th
12:00 pm

no pre-registration needed | follow link below

Webinar Link

Georgia OB/Gyn
GEORGIA OBSTETRICAL AND GYNECOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Stay Informed.
Stay Covered.

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH

Georgia OB/Gyn Residency Programs Spotlight: Wellstar Kennestone

Teresa Byrd, MD - GOGS Educational Committee Member



Q : What year did your residency year begin?

A : 2016

Q : How many residency slots?

A : 4 per year (16)

Q : What are you most proud of about your program?

A : Proud that we have a 100% written board pass rate. Our residents are outstanding robotic surgeons. And our residents are committed to health equity and significantly decreasing maternal mortality in Georgia.



Q : Who are the key contacts for your program?

A : Program Director -
Teresa Byrd, MD

Associate Program Director -
Eduardo Estrella, MD

Program Manager -
Jarrell Benton

For more information, click on icons below or visit on-line:

<https://gme.wellstar.org/kennestone/obgyn/>

www.instagram.com/wellstarobgyn/

FUN FACTS ABOUT OUR PROGRAM:

- ① We have residents from all 4 medical schools in Georgia: Emory, MCG, Mercer & Morehouse
- ② Some of our residents have delivered the babies of their co-residents

A Roadmap for Restoring Access to Maternity Care in Rural Georgia

Hugh Smith, MD, FACOG and Keisha Callins, MD, MPH



In the September 2021 issue of *Transforming Care*, Martha Hostetter & Sarah Klein wrote an article ["Restoring Access to Maternity Care in Rural America"](#) presenting data and extensive discussion about maternity care deserts in over half of rural U.S. counties, and about regional partnerships working to rebuild access to maternity care. This summary will share excerpts from that article and highlight efforts here at home to improve outcomes for pregnant and parenting people.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and other government agencies define "rural" as a county having less than 50,000 or less in population. The Georgia Rural Health Association identifies 108 [rural counties](#) in our state. In 2022, Georgia Public Policy Foundation, released an article, "Addressing Georgia's Healthcare Shortage" which outlined that out of 159 counties, [82 have no obstetrician/gynecologist](#).

CREATING NETWORKS OF OBSTETRIC PROVIDERS:

In response to worsening access to maternity services in rural areas, the federal Office of Rural Health Policy created the [RMOMS](#) (Rural Maternity and Obstetrics Management Strategies) grant program in 2019. The goal is to encourage a range of health care providers — primary care clinicians, obstetricians, and maternal-fetal

medicine specialists as well as mental health clinicians, home visiting staff, and others — to form regional networks that can fill gaps in the maternity care continuum. The participants are using similar strategies to build rural providers' capacity, help patients navigate services, and implement telehealth to connect people across distances. Crucially, the grantees must involve their state Medicaid agencies to make their work sustainable beyond the four-year grant period. Medicaid programs [cover half of all rural births](#).

- [Georgia: Rural Maternity and Obstetrics Management](#)

HELPING RURAL PROVIDERS MANAGE HIGH RISK PREGNANCY:

Having support from specialists can help providers in rural communities feel less isolated and gain comfort in handling patients with more complicated conditions. Across the U.S., interest in telematernity platforms and virtual visits *has increased* as a means of protecting patients and providers during the pandemic. In efforts to educate rural maternity care providers in best practices for treating people with high-risk pregnancies, some states offer videoconferences focused on topics suggested by university clinicians or participants.

- [Georgia: Maternal Health Echo](#)

EXPANDING THE RURAL MATERNITY WORKFORCE:

Strategies that can help to expand the rural maternity workforce include:

1. Preparing Rural Nurses.

Leaders in the field including John Cullen, M.D., a board member of the American Academy of Family Practice and a family physician in Valdez, Alaska, have called for the development of training programs for rural nurses.

- [Georgia: Georgia College's New Grant Encourages Nurses to Work in Rural Area](#)

2. Enlisting Nonclinical Partners.

Medicaid agencies in at least five states (Indiana, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, and Oregon) pay for doula services. A recent study of state Medicaid programs found that Medicaid beneficiaries who received doula support had lower rates of cesarean sections and preterm births, compared with other pregnant women enrolled in Medicaid.

- [Georgia: Medicaid Doula Pilot Findings 2022-2023](#)

3. Training Rural Obstetricians.

Giving OB/GYN residents an opportunity to gain confidence in working in rural environments can also be part of rebuilding services.

- [Georgia: How Rural Residency Programs for Doctors Can Help Solve the Health Care Shortage](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Policies that would support efforts to create and sustain regional networks of maternity care include:

*"We need leaders who first care enough.
We need leaders who learn enough.
We need leaders who do enough.
We need leaders who will
persevere until the job is done"*

Dr. David Satcher,
Satcher Health Leadership Institute

1. Creating equitable telemedicine policies.

The pandemic-era lifting of restrictions for how and when telemedicine platforms can be used appears to have made maternity care more accessible for more people.

- [Georgia: Using Telehealth to Improve Maternal and Child Health Outcomes in Georgia](#)

2. Expanding Medicaid coverage.

Research has shown that in states that have expanded eligibility for their Medicaid programs, women of childbearing age have better access to preventive care and fewer adverse health outcomes before, during, and after pregnancies. In addition to expanding access to Medicaid, it is important to ensure Medicaid reimbursements for maternity care are adequate. On average, Medicaid pays just half of what commercial insurers do for deliveries, making it hard for rural hospitals to cover their fixed costs with relatively few deliveries.

- [Georgia: Postpartum Medicaid Expansion](#)

3. Investing in nurse midwives.

Nurse midwives could help fill the gaps in rural communities, reduce overreliance on medical interventions, and bring down costs. One study found that states such as Washington that have done a better job of integrating midwives into maternity care tend to have better outcomes for parents and babies.

- [Georgia: Nurse-Midwives for Georgia: Value for Georgia Citizens](#)

4. Investing in nonmedical services.

Medicaid programs could consider paying for low-cost, nonclinical services that could yield substantial returns for rural communities. These could include rides to clinics, doula services, navigation, and other services that can create a continuum of support for pregnant and parenting people before, during, and after childbirth.

- [Georgia: Strengthening Community Health Worker Civic Engagement Strategy to Promote a Culture of Health in Georgia](#)

SCIENTIFIC SUMMARY PROVIDED BY:

Hugh Smith, MD, FACOG
GOGS Board Member
GOGS Rural Health Chair
GOGS 2017-2018 President
Emeritus

Keisha Callins, MD, MPH
GOGS Board Member
GOGS Breastfeeding
Committee Chair
Board Certified General
Obstetrician and Gynecologist,
Community Health Care Systems
(Twiggs/Jones County)

To view the complete article,
click [HERE](#) or visit:



<https://tinyurl.com/MatCareRuralAmArticle>

REMINDER

RENEW YOUR 2023 DUES!

<http://tinyurl.com/GOGS2023Dues>



A Community of Care. Close to Home.

We're proud to be your community of care close to home. Our top experts use innovative methods guided by compassionate care and personalized treatment for every patient. Northside is proud to lead the way to healthier lives.

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Congenital Syphilis Rate In Georgia and SB 46

Letter and Information from DPH Commissioner, Kathleen Toomey, MD, MPH



Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner

Brian Kemp, Governor

2 Peachtree Street, NW, 15th Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3142

dph.ga.gov

June 2023

Dear Colleague:

Georgia's congenital syphilis rate is at its highest level since record-keeping began in 1998. The rate has increased every year since 2016. Congenital syphilis is preventable. It is my firm belief that each case is one too many when adequate prenatal care, syphilis testing, and early treatment can save lives.

This year the Georgia General Assembly passed Senate Bill 46. This legislation revises current STD testing requirements for pregnant women by requiring healthcare providers who care for a woman during pregnancy to perform HIV and syphilis testing **at the first prenatal visit, 28-32 weeks gestation, and upon delivery**. This law will go into effect July 1, 2023.

Syphilis treatment (benzathine penicillin G only) initiated at least 30 days before birth has proven effective at decreasing the chances that a baby is born with congenital syphilis. Treatment for HIV should be initiated immediately. HIV antiretroviral therapy during pregnancy, at the time of delivery, and prophylaxis to the newborn dramatically reduce perinatal transmission of HIV.

In addition to the new requirements put in place under Senate Bill 46, Georgia law also requires all Georgia physicians, laboratories, and other healthcare providers to report patients with syphilis infections to the Georgia Department of Public Health (Georgia Code OCGA §31-12-2). Both laboratory-confirmed and clinical diagnoses are reportable within the specified time intervals.

As commissioner and as a physician, I urge you to test pregnant women for syphilis at the first prenatal visit, 28-32 weeks gestation, and upon delivery as part of your routine prenatal care – not just because it is the law, but for the health and well-being of every mother and infant in Georgia. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact your district health office or call the Georgia Department of Public Health at 1-866-PUB-HLTH (1-866-782-4584).

Thank you for all you do to help protect the lives of all Georgians.

Sincerely,

Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner and State Health Officer

PDF available by clicking on the "Download Now" button below or go to: <https://tinyurl.com/CDC-SyphLtrJune2023>



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Ruchi Garg, M.D.
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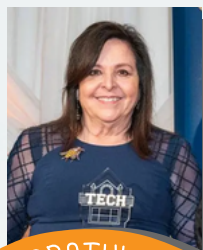


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CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to fellow GOGS Member and Board Member, Anne Patterson, MD was presented with the Georgia Tech - Academy of Distinguished Engineering Alumni award on April 29, 2023. The award recognizes alumni who have provided distinguished contributions to the institute, profession, field, or society at large. Candidates are highly placed executives and are actively involved in engineering, management, industry, academia, or government.

After becoming the 8th woman to graduate from Georgia Tech with an A.E. bachelor's degree, Anne worked at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and was one of two engineers responsible for the propulsion systems in the Small Astronomy Satellites (SAS) 2 and 3. SAS 2 gave the first detailed look at the gamma-ray sky and established the high-energy component of celestial radiation. SAS 3 identified neutron star binary systems and discovered the first quasar. While earning her AE master's degree, Anne simultaneously fulfilled her pre-med requirements. That would lead to medical school at Emory University and, eventually, a faculty position. She went on to establish a

maternal-fetal medicine practice in Atlanta.

In 2010, Anne wanted to care for women and children in small and underserved communities. She started a new and innovative company, Women's Telehealth, to provide state of the art maternal fetal telemedicine. The venture provides high-resolution ultrasound studies that remotely examine the fetal heart and blood flow in the fetal brain in real time. The company has provided more than 100,000 patient visits and studies to women with high-risk pregnancies in urban, rural, and underserved communities.

Dr. Patterson was the 2014-2015 President of the Georgia OBGyn Society. For more information on Dr. Patterson's award, click on the following link:
<https://tinyurl.com/DrPatterson23Award>

Congratulations to fellow GOGS Member and Board

Member, Keisha Callins, MD, MPH who was awarded the Sandra Dunagan Deal Rural Service Fellow award from Mercer University. The award was established in September of 2022 to honor former first lady Sandra Deal and her commitment to education, volunteerism, and community involvement. This award recognizes a faculty member, community, or volunteer partner who has made significant contributions mentoring, inspiring, and encouraging

Mercer Medical students to care for Georgians in rural, underserved areas in Georgia, furthering the School of Medicine's mission. Mercer University School of Medicine Nathan Deal Scholars each year select the recipient who best exemplifies Mrs. Deal's selfless devotion, love for education, and promotion of excellence.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Do you have recent news you would like shared with membership?

<https://tinyurl.com/4m5439kz>

Please submit by clicking on the link above

For more information this award, click on the following link:
<https://www.galiteracycenter.org/keisha-callins>



Perspectives on Nursing and Weaning the Older Baby and Toddler
Thursday, June 29, 2023
12:30 pm ET via GoToWebinar
Faculty: Amira Bobrov, MD, FAAP, Brandy Gheesling, MD, FAAP, IBCLC, Erica Paez, MD, FAAP and Keisha Callins, MD, MPH
Moderator: Hiral Lavania, MD, FAAP, IBCLC
www.GaEPIC.org

Perspectives on Nursing and Weaning the Older Baby and Toddler

Thursday, June 29, 2023
12:30 pm ET via GoToWebinar

If you are interested in learning more about how to support breastfeeding for older babies and toddlers, please join us for an upcoming panel discussion. Our panel of physicians will share their insights on the value of breastfeeding for both maternal and child health, as well as some tips on how to manage common concerns that may arise when breastfeeding older babies and toddlers. We hope you can join us for what promises to be a very informative discussion.

Registration is free via this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/EPICNursingWebinar062923>

CME Information: The American Academy of Pediatrics - Georgia Chapter is accredited by the Medical Association of Georgia to provide continuing medical education for physicians. The American Academy of Pediatrics - Georgia Chapter designates this live activity for a maximum of 1.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Questions?
Contact Anthony Smith-Adams
asmith-adams@gaaap.org

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