

OUR

RURAL

HEALTH

IMPACT

CLEMSON  RURAL HEALTH

2024 Impact Report



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Transforming health outcomes in **rural** and **underserved** communities.

- by -

Reducing **premature mortality**,
decreasing **preventable hospitalizations**
and improving **overall quality of life** in
the regions we serve.

- through -

Integrating **food and nutrition** with primary care.

Conducting and facilitating **research**.

Investing in **rural health workforce** development.

Building strategic **partnerships**.

Providing **evidence-based care**.

Reducing **social determinant barriers** to health care.

Engaging patients as **partners** in their health care.

*Clemson Rural Health is an academic component of the Clemson University
College of Behavioral, Social and Health Sciences.*

STRENGTHENING THE FOUNDATION OF CLEMSON RURAL HEALTH

It is difficult to believe that only five years ago Clemson Rural Health was born from a longstanding history and passion to close gaps in care, a small group of dedicated mission-oriented leaders and committed partners. Since then, we have had the honor to provide **41,062 outpatient visits** from across all South Carolina's 46 counties and have acquired **\$5.2 million dollars of sponsored activities** aimed toward achieving our mission.

Fiscal year 2024 was a year of furthering our commitment to transforming access to care and health outcomes in rural and underserved communities. As Clemson Rural Health settled into our newest location in Orangeburg, S.C., we have developed 31 new community collaborators from across the region. Our clinical teams statewide have offered advanced care for chronic disease, infectious disease and prevention while working hard to build trust with community leaders and members. We also have secured collaborative partnerships with three contract research organizations and one integrated research organization to help us bring clinical trials to these same communities.

868 South Carolinians have seen their chronic disease and health outcomes improve this year due to passionate care by Clemson Rural Health clinicians and staff. The following impact report highlights many of this year's successes. Our work is only possible with the generous support of the South Carolina state legislature, the South Carolina's Governor's Office, the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Clemson University administration and its Board of Trustees, donors to our organization and hundreds of like-minded community collaborators. Our hope is that the often behind-the-scenes accomplishments of fiscal year 2024 will propel us as we step into fiscal year 2025. I hope you enjoy the report and learn more from www.clemsonruralhealth.org.

Respectfully,

Ron Gimbel, Ph. D.
Clemson Professor and Director
Clemson Rural Health



By the Numbers

2023-2024

4,024
Unique Patients

Thousand in Grant Awards
\$2000

Mobile Clinic
Sites

127

Increase in
Patient Revenue

9.4%↑



*Clemson Rural Health is responsible for **four driving metrics** under Clemson Elevate, the university's new strategic plan.*

12,283

Total Patient Encounters

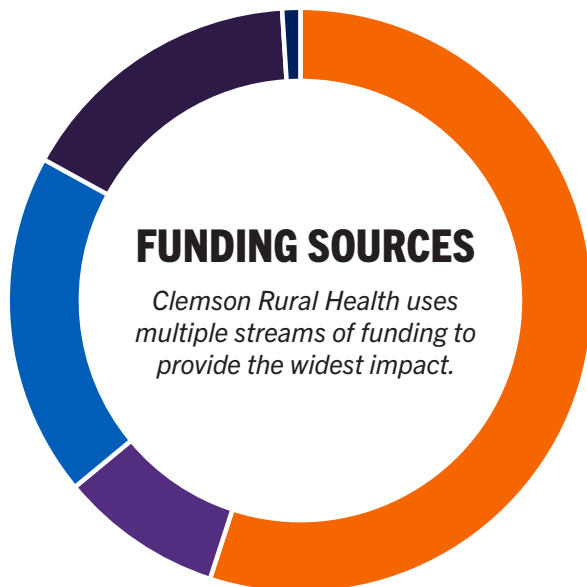
5 Research Activities

3,390

Preventative Screenings

48k

Mobile Health Miles Traveled



- State Funding
- Clemson University Funding
- Patient Revenue
- Grants
- Philanthropy

Primary Care

Improving access to health care in rural and underserved communities.

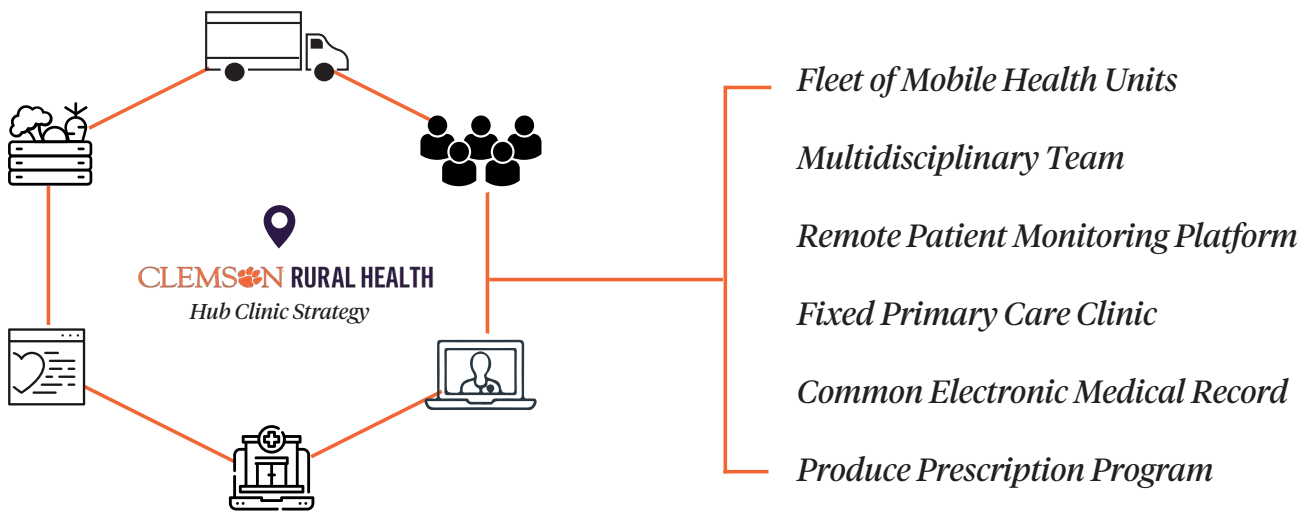


Setting the stage for expansion

As we see more and more success in improving health access and outcomes using our unique rural health model, Clemson Rural Health is poised to reach each persistent poverty county by 2030.

7,272

Primary care-related appointments were provided to rural and underserved communities by our hub clinics.



BUILDING A NETWORK OF CARE

Reaching further with a hub clinic model

Clemson Rural Health operates three primary care clinics that provide comprehensive chronic, acute and preventive health care to insured, uninsured and underinsured patients. Each of our hub clinics serves not only its local community, but also the surrounding counties. This is accomplished through a host of strategies including staffing each clinic with a multidisciplinary team, a fleet of mobile health units, a common electronic medical record, remote patient monitoring capabilities and a produce prescription program. Our three current hub clinics, combined with our support office located in Abbeville, S.C., serve a total of 16 counties with our mobile clinics and all 46 counties with telehealth capabilities. We plan to expand fixed and mobiles services to six more counties by the end of this fiscal year.

THE MORE, THE MERRIER

Using multidisciplinary teams to change outcomes

When a patient comes into any of our Clemson Health Clinics, they are treated as a whole person. Our clinics are staffed by nurse practitioners, dietitians, community health workers, translators, nurses and administrative staff all working together with specialists in the community to provide the best wrap-around care possible for the individual. Each intake appointment includes a social determinants of health screening that the community health workers utilize to reduce patients' barriers to care.

Ms. Annie Sistrunk, a resident of Orangeburg county, was able to experience this level of holistic care firsthand. Sistrunk was first referred to Clemson Rural Health by her endocrinologist and was then connected with certified diabetes care and education specialists and a registered dietitian to manage her diabetes. Before Clemson Rural Health, Ms. Sistrunk traveled two hours each way

to receive the care she needed, and now all of her care takes place within a convenient 10-minute commute of her home.

Through her hard work and the support of her new medical team, Ms. Sistrunk was able to cut her A1c in half and lose over 30 pounds — and the work is not finished. Ms. Sistrunk recently enrolled in a physical activity intervention at the Clemson Health Clinic in collaboration with personal trainers at the MUSC Health Orangeburg Health Plex facilities.

She uses her newfound healthy lifestyle to help others. Ms. Sistrunk recently completed her community health worker certification through South Carolina Department of Public Health and enjoys helping her congregation, family and friends live a healthier life.



*The support they
have given me
is more than I
ever thought I
could receive.
To have this
kind of access in
Orangeburg is so
beneficial.*

Annie Sistrunk



NEW FACES AT CLEMSON RURAL HEALTH

Founding medical director passes the torch to rural health physician, Dr. Aaron Zeller

In February of 2024, Aaron Zeller, M.D., assumed the role of medical director for Clemson Rural Health. While maintaining a patient load at the Clemson Health Clinic at Walhalla, Dr. Zeller will provide mentoring to nurse practitioners and lend his 18 years of rural health experience to the overall mission and vision of Clemson Rural Health.

In his previous role, Dr. Zeller founded a rural family medicine physician residency in Seneca, South Carolina, to combat rural health disparities. Currently, 41 of South Carolina's 46 counties are experiencing a health professional shortage. To keep up with their urban counterparts, the Association of American Medical Colleges estimates that rural counties will need 180,000 more primary care providers nationwide by 2035. His work to bring more providers to rural communities will continue as he develops his role as medical director.

After working on the educational side of the rural health problem for many years, I am excited to be back in the field with such an innovative and interprofessional team.

Dr. Aaron Zeller

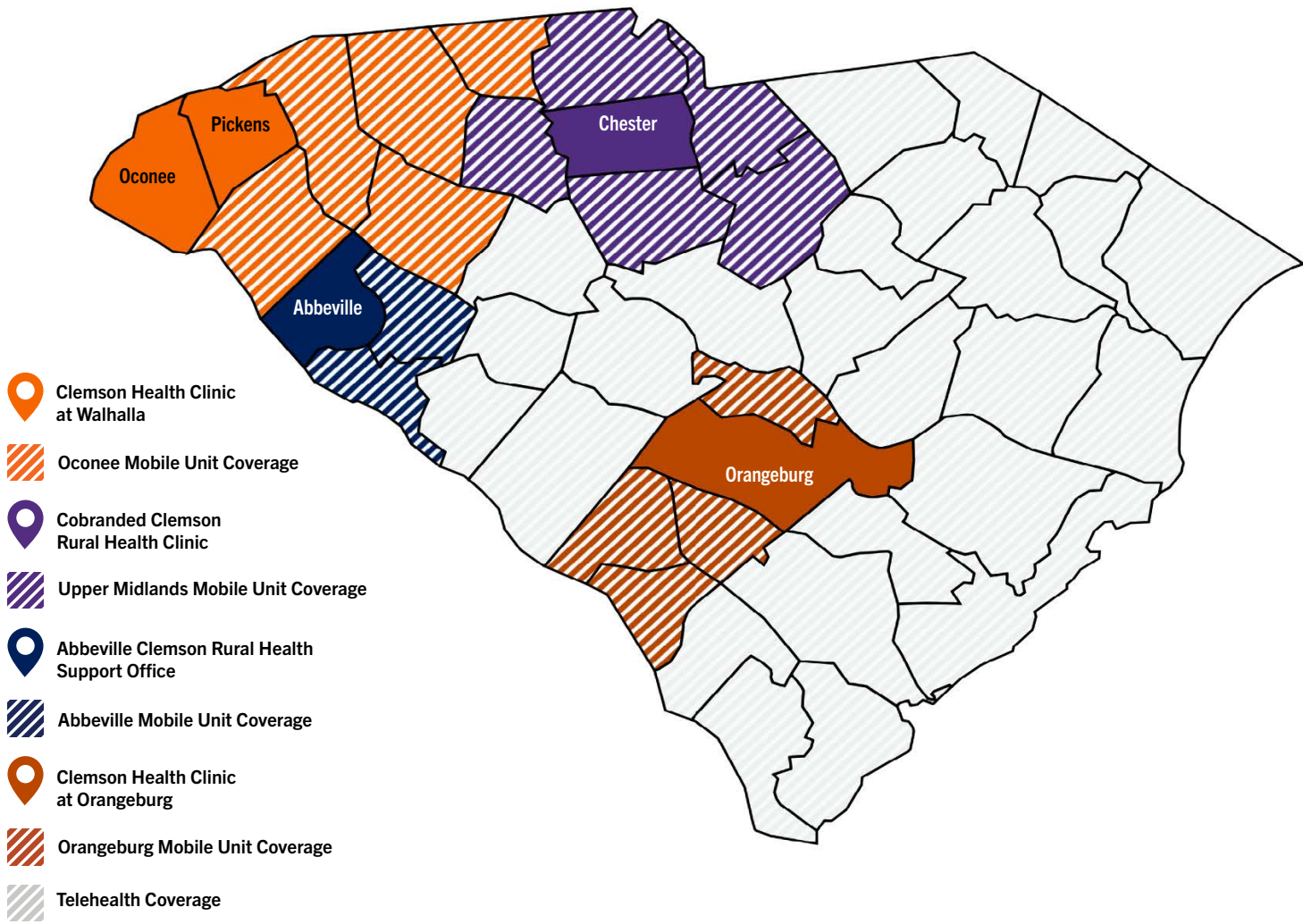


EXPANDING ACCESS THROUGH INSURANCE

Care is available for those with or without insurance at Clemson Rural Health

Clemson Rural Health reached another major milestone this year. After years of work, all providers now accept most major health insurance plans including Medicare, Medicaid and all federal Health Insurance Marketplace plans.

Working diligently to stay in-network with South Carolina payors allows us to provide regular and affordable care to our patients. If patients are not insured or underinsured, Clemson Rural Health offers a self-pay discount to further diminish financial barriers to health care.



A mission to change outcomes in the upper Midlands
 Heart disease, cancer and diabetes rank in the top five causes of death in each of the six counties targeted by the proposed hub clinic. The practice will seek to modify and overcome the contributors to premature death through social determinant, lifestyle and clinical interventions.

FORGING NEW PATHS FOR EXPANSION

Clemson Rural Health continues to pursue co-branded hub clinic

With the goal to transform health outcomes in rural counties around the state, Clemson Rural Health remains committed to reaching the upper Midlands with fixed and mobile health care. The project will host an interdisciplinary team and work closely with existing health care systems to increase access to care in those communities.

The new health care venture will aim to serve six upper Midlands counties including Lancaster, York, Chester, Union, Kershaw and Fairfield. Work is already underway to build collaborative partners in those areas to provide opportunities for mobile health outreach, business health connections and patient resource networks.

*Wonderful, compassionate,
professional staff! Great
service to the community.*

Jennifer R.
Joseph F. Sullivan Center

Hear from our Patients

*People are kind. You aren't a number here. They take the
time to listen and address everything you bring to them.
It's a great team of people who work together to bring you
the best care possible.*

B. White
Clemson Health Clinic at Walhalla

*So happy
to have
access to
health care
in our little
community!*

Heather I.
Clemson
Health Clinic at
Walhalla

Sometimes people will tell you something, but don't do the follow up to see, 'Are you doing that? Have you made an adjustment?' Here, we actually get recipes and a box of food where you have some things to actually make them. I think it's worthwhile.

Marcella F.
Clemson Health Clinic at Orangeburg

You couldn't ask for a better provider than Michelle Deem. She really cares about her patients. And she is thorough in treatment.

Giniza M.
Clemson Health Clinic
at Walhalla

When I came to the program I was a bit apprehensive. As I talked with the lady that did my intake, I began to be excited. Then I met Ms. Yolanda...she made me excited and made me want to fight for me.

Anonymous
Clemson Health Clinic at Orangeburg

From the receptionist to the nurse to the doctor to the students - each and every single one of them were kind and understanding. I'll never forget my experience here and how they helped me to feel relief.

Zahrah H.
Joseph F. Sullivan Center

This program has been a blessing to me by assisting me with taking control of my health.

Anonymous
Clemson Health Clinic at
Orangeburg

Transforming Rural Health Outcomes



Connecting communities to measurable outcomes

Transforming health outcomes is not just aspirational at Clemson Rural Health, but something that is attainable and measurable.

47%

of Clemson Rural Health chronic disease patients saw their health outcomes improve this year.



REDUCING THE BURDEN OF DIABETES

Implementing comprehensive lifestyle interventions

Diabetes is the eighth leading cause of death for South Carolinians and contributes to other preventable causes of premature mortality such as heart disease, stroke and kidney disease. Studies show that access to nutritious foods, safe physical activity, regular physicals, medication management and social support can significantly decrease the risk of complications or death from the disease.

Reducing the burden of diabetes on our population falls squarely within our threefold mission – reducing premature mortality, decreasing preventable hospitalizations and improving overall quality of life in the regions we serve. In light of this, Clemson Rural Health deploys several programs through the work of nurse practitioners, registered nurses, community health workers and registered dietitians around the state to tackle this salient issue.

VEGGIE RX

Walhalla, S.C.

Produces prescription and nutrition education for Clemson Rural Health patients living with diabetes or high blood pressure.

FRESH FOR LIFE

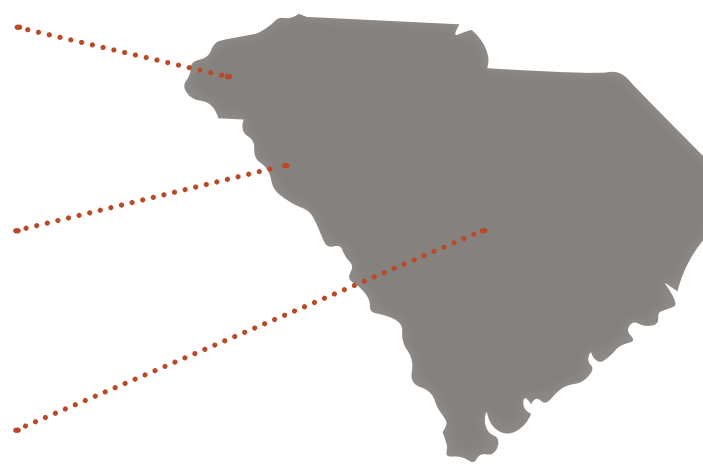
Abbeville, S.C.

Produce prescription and nutrition education for Abbeville Area Medical Center patients living with diabetes.

MANAGE TOGETHER

Orangeburg, S.C.

Produce prescription, diabetes self-management education, nutrition education, physical activity access and remote patient monitoring for Clemson Rural Health patients living with and at-risk for diabetes.



MANAGING DIABETES RISK TOGETHER

Empowering women to take control of their health

This year, **163** women have joined our Manage Together program and those who have graduated from the program have seen their **A1C levels drop by an average of 24.6%**. These are not just numbers, but real women who have taken charge of their health.

One of those women is Ms. Disher, a retiree living in Orangeburg County. Disher saw this program as a golden opportunity to make sure she remains independent and active as she gets older. Being able to travel was also a major motivator as she has grandchildren living a few states away that she plans to visit often.

“When I first heard about [Manage Together], I thought, ‘I hope I can get into it.’ I went to my doctor and he filled out the paper work for me, and the rest is history.”

After taking advantage of everything the Manage Together program had to offer, she was able to adjust her lifestyle and dramatically impact her A1c and blood pressure.

Whether it is reusing a recipe from the cooking demonstrations, reading a nutrition label correctly or being conscious of her portions, she feels confident to put what she has learned into practice for the rest of her life. Now, she is able to take advantage of the extra energy her new lifestyle has afforded her.

We have seen impressive results this year. Our most engaged Manage Together participants have experienced an **average reduction of 9.58 mg/dL in blood glucose levels**. These improvements highlight the power of active involvement in the program; as participants increase engagement with our tools and personalized advice, the more their health outcomes improve.

Ms. Disher’s advice? “Try it, you’ll like it. You will be in control and the results will follow.”

Manage Together is funded by the BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Foundation, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, to support the goals of Diabetes Free S.C.





FRESH FOR LIFE

Abbeville, S.C.

161 patients received produce boxes, diabetes education, medical nutrition therapy and cooking demonstrations in Abbeville County through Fresh for Life, a clinical research study funded by The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP).

The results of the study will be published in early 2025.



REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING

Orangeburg, S.C.

In the fight against diabetes, Clemson Rural Health is committed to removing barriers to care. Remote patient monitoring (RPM) is being utilized in Manage Together to overcome transportation issues that prevent patients from interacting regularly with a provider. In collaboration with Palmetto Care Connection, participants receive a glucose monitor, blood pressure cuff, pulse oximeter and weight scale connected to a provided tablet through Bluetooth technology.

Through the provided technology, patients can regularly track their biometric data and receive virtual feedback from a registered nurse without ever leaving their home.



VEGGIERX

Walhalla, S.C.

At the Clemson Health Clinic at Walhalla, patients who demonstrate risk for diabetes or heart disease are enrolled into VeggieRx, led by a registered dietitian in partnership with FoodShare and Feed & Seed. Participants receive 12 biweekly produce boxes and have access to monthly food demonstrations.

29% of participants achieved clinically significant changes to their A1c level.

Knowing that someone is available and actively monitoring makes all the difference for our patients.

Yolanda Green

WHEN PASSION BECOMES PRACTICE

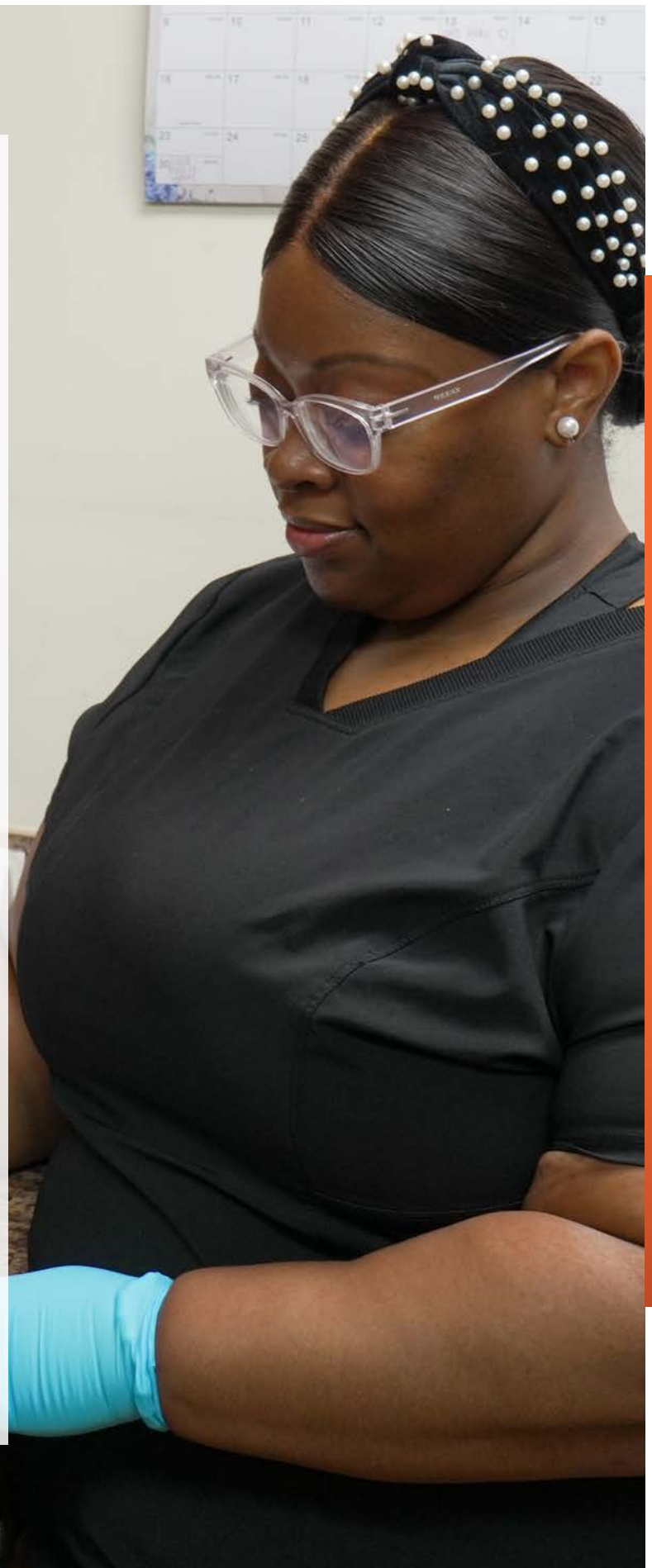
Using technology to bridge the patient-provider relationship

Even as a nursing student, Yolanda Green saw herself as an educator. Now as an RN and Clemson Rural Health's remote patient monitoring (RPM) coordinator, Green uses her position to give each Manage Together patient a comprehensive and personalized experience.

Her care philosophy is to always determine the underlying causes of the patient's negative outcomes. She sees her role as an advocate, taking the time to be present and listen to the patient.

Green has observed that the RPM patients show more engagement with the Manage Together program. She attributes this to the patient's understanding that they have a person on the other side of their apps and devices committed to their success.

As the program continues and more success is documented, our hope is to expand RPM to each hub clinic and to become a resource for other South Carolina practices interested in creating an RPM program.





**COMMUNITY
RESOURCE CENTER**
OF ABBEVILLE AREA MEDICAL CENTER



A JOURNEY TO BETTER HEALTH

Fresh for Life improves diabetes outcomes in Abbeville County

Before joining Fresh for Life, Robert Grant* was watching his blood sugar and A1c rise year after year. Based on his age and other risk factors, he knew that now was the time to learn how to manage his diabetes. When he was referred to the program by his primary care provider, he was ready to make a change. His personal goal was to lower his A1c without starting any new medications.

Grant used this motivation to fully commit to each aspect of the type 2 diabetes intervention. He used the bimonthly food boxes to try new recipes, gained insights from other program participants, and found ways for him and his wife to be more aware of what they ate and how they were taking care of themselves.

In just a few months, Grant began to see his hard work pay off. Since the beginning of the program, he was able to lower his A1c back to a prediabetic range.

“I was so shocked when Dr. Moore [Abbeville Area Medical Center physician] told me this number, I told him he had the wrong results!” said Grant. “I am very proud of this number and the work I put in to get it down.” Seeing this success kept him engaged in the program, learning skills to improve his quality of life.

One benefit of the program is regular appointments with Abby Morningstar, one of Clemson Rural Health’s registered dietitians. Joining the clinic nutrition team last fall, she specializes in nutritional interventions for diabetes management, gastrointestinal issues and hormonal conditions like polycystic ovarian syndrome.

Morningstar has been working with Grant for several months. The change in his overall health and well-being has been obvious. “Working with Mr. Grant to help him meet his goal of lowering

his A1c through sustainable nutrition habits was an incredibly rewarding experience,” Morningstar noted. “Witnessing his progress and celebrating his achievements was deeply fulfilling and is a great reminder to me for why I do what I do.”

Grant is just one of the **161** Abbeville residents who have been able to access this promising intervention. Clemson Rural Health hopes to enroll 215 patients through the life of the GusNIP grant.

It’s not easy, it’s an everyday battle, but this program helps make the journey more manageable.

This is something I will keep doing for the rest of my life.

Robert Grant

**Patient name changed for privacy and IRB compliance.*



It is estimated that nearly 65,000 people in South Carolina are living with chronic hepatitis C.

SCDHEC

ERADICATING HCV IN SOUTH CAROLINA

A case for mobile health strategies

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hepatitis C (HCV) infections have increased by 300% in the last 15 years and deaths linked to HCV have even surpassed those from HIV. Due to the safe and effective treatment available for HCV, most view it as a disease of the past, but evidence shows that it is still a major threat to vulnerable communities.

For the last three years, Clemson Rural Health has been a leader in the mobile testing and treatment of HCV in at-risk communities. Through statewide partnerships and financial assistance, patients who typically have no access to traditional medical care can receive their full treatment at no cost.

Their work has demonstrated the effectiveness and feasibility of mobile health clinics in efforts to fully eradicate HCV in rural and underserved populations.

EXPANDING MOBILE INTERVENTIONS TO SOUTH CAROLINA'S DETENTION CENTERS

Mobile health efforts continue to build on past success in hepatitis C testing and treatment

Clemson Rural Health is committed to improving access to care for patients in all walks of life. This includes residents of detention centers. Depending on their trial and sentencing, residents may remain in the custody of a detention center for a weeks to several months without access to health insurance. Knowing that the prevalence of HCV is higher among incarcerated populations, detention centers and prisons are a strategic site for reaching high risk patients in an environment that can bolster treatment compliance and risk reduction.

Since beginning our HCV screening and treatment services in three detention centers in August 2022, Clemson Rural Health's program has grown exponentially through new partnerships. In an effort to prevent duplication of services and facilitate a new referral pathway, the HCV mobile team is working with a nurse practitioner-led team from S.C. Department of Public Health who is also providing sexually transmitted infection (STI) screenings at county detention centers. This collaboration scaled our efforts to nine Upstate detention centers with plans to expand further. Additionally, our team has connected with the HCV treatment team working in South Carolina's prison systems allowing for continuity of care as inmates transition during the treatment process.

2023-2024 CLEMSON RURAL HEALTH HEPATITIS C EFFORTS AND OUTCOMES

125 Mobile testing events

247 Patients tested for HCV

49 Positive HCV results needing treatment

42 Patients entering treatment, reducing their risk for cancer and liver disease



Lesslie Pekarek, MD FAAFP



Prerana J. Roth, M.D., MPH



Donna Potts, M.D.

STATEWIDE PHYSICIAN SUPPORT

Bolstering success through collaboration

The wide impact of rural health programs is largely facilitated through the support of collaborative physicians around the state.

In South Carolina, nurse practitioners (APRNs) are required by law to have a collaborating physician. Our nurse practitioner-led model of care would not be possible without the support of these collaborating physicians. The majority of our collaborating physicians, including Dr. Lesslie Pekarek and Dr. Prerana Roth, do this through a voluntary arrangement and support our APRNs delivering a variety of care. They are available to answer questions and consult on cases, and they even assist with prior authorization for some procedures or medications that APRNs cannot order due to insurance barriers.

Through these relationships, Clemson Rural Health patients have access to a variety of specialties including endocrinology, obstetrics and gynecology, family medicine, internal medicine and infectious disease.

Their commitment is not just limited to consultation and oversight. Donna Potts, M.D., has volunteered her time and expertise to the Clemson Rural Health cause for many years, even joining the Joseph F. Sullivan staff at one point. Under the auspices of Clemson Rural Health, Dr. Potts will be working with Lutheran Services Carolinas, the Health Resources and Services Administration designated refugee settlement agency in South Carolina, over the next year to provide **350** pro bono physicals a year for legal refugees in need and on the path to citizenship. This saves the charity almost \$600 per physical, supporting their ability to provide care to this underserved community.

This level of support and collaboration at every level of our organization with collaborative physicians is critical in pushing us toward our vision to transform health outcomes in rural and underserved communities.

I'm most excited to be using my medical skills and knowledge to help very vulnerable future citizens.

Dr. Donna Potts



ADDICTION SERVICES

Clinical interventions to support recovery

As patients are screened for hepatitis C, Clemson Rural Health also aims to alleviate another epidemic in rural and underserved communities. According to S.C. Department of Public Health, opioid overdose deaths have more than doubled since 2018. A National Institute of Health funded study¹ found that “compared to those not receiving medication assisted treatment, opioid overdose deaths decreased by 59% for those receiving methadone and 38% for those receiving buprenorphine over the 12 month follow-up period.” Our hub clinics are pursuing our mission to decrease premature deaths by providing medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) in each of our fixed and mobile clinics.

Patients are identified using a point-of-care urine drug screening, meaning that transient or transportation-insecure individuals do not need to manage another appointment in order to enter treatment. Through a partnership with Anderson Oconee Behavioral Health Services, Clemson Rural Health is able to offer these life-saving medications at no- or low-cost with options for insured and uninsured patients.

This year, we integrated MOUD into the primary care of **22** patients in order to holistically support their recovery.

¹Larochelle, et al. Medication for opioid use disorder after nonfatal opioid overdose and association with mortality. A cohort study. *Annals of Internal Medicine*. June 19, 2018.



CANCER PREVENTION EFFORTS

Mobile strategies for cervical and breast cancer detection

As a member of the Best Chance Network (BCN), Clemson Rural Health provided comprehensive cancer screening and education to **524** South Carolinian women, including **191** screened for cervical cancer and **450** screened for breast cancer* during the 2024 fiscal year in **14** statewide community sites.

Clemson Rural Health nurses provide case management for abnormal screening findings and ensure coordinated care for diagnostic follow up. These screenings identified **81** women with abnormal results and ultimately coordinated a pathway to treatment for two underinsured women diagnosed with breast cancer.

16% of Clemson Rural Health’s BCN clinics were coordinated by our newest hub, the Clemson Health Clinic at Orangeburg. In just one year, the clinic was able to create and sustain nine partner sites, expanding the program to 31 more women than the year before. As Clemson Rural Health expands its footprint into rural South Carolina, we hope to continue to see a increase in access and positive outcomes related to these vital cancer screenings.

*Screenings based on age and guidelines.

Decentralizing Clinical Research



Improving representation and access

The proliferation of clinical trials in and around the state has not benefited all South Carolinians equally. Rural residents are underrepresented in the recruitment process and therefore not represented in the research data and findings.

292

Clemson Rural Health patients are currently enrolled in a clinical trial.

BUILDING A FOUNDATION

New staff and partnerships set the stage for clinical research at Clemson Rural Health

Brand new to the Clemson Rural Health leadership team, Katie Poplin has been hard at work this year to bring clinical research to Clemson Rural Health. Poplin is a Clemson University alumna and has nine years of experience in managing and recruiting for clinical research activities. She brings her expertise at a pivotal moment as our state has moved to decentralize clinical research into sites that reach rural and underserved populations.

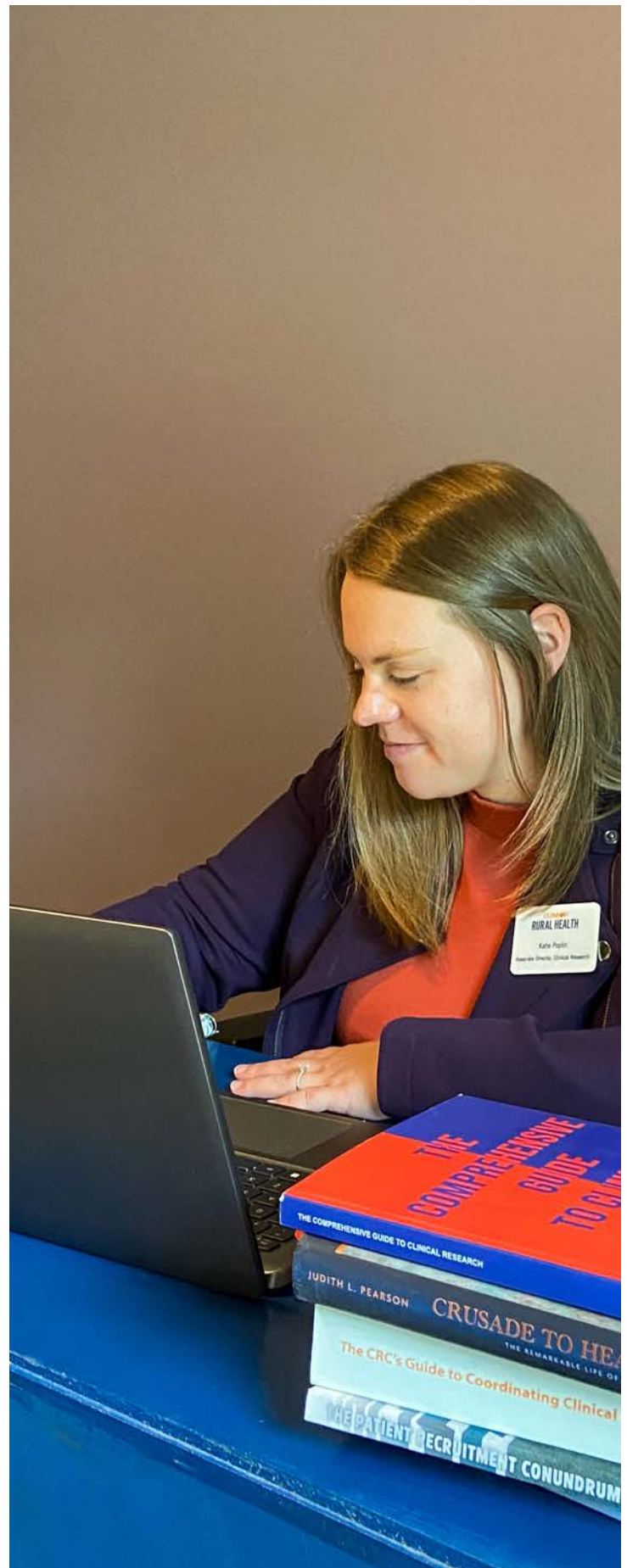
Nationally, lack of enrollment accounted for 55% of all Phase I–IV clinical trials that were terminated, suspended or discontinued during 2008–2017, making it more difficult for life-saving discoveries to be approved for public use, according to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

Poplin hopes to reverse these trends. By working with three contract research organizations including the Precia Group, Guardian Research Network and Clinrova, and one integrated research organization, SiteBridge Research. Clemson Rural Health will host trials that fit into our current vision, mission and strategies.

The new initiative supports the third pillar of the university's strategic plan, Clemson Elevate, to transform lives statewide and beyond.

Paving a way for decentralized clinical trials

Clemson Rural Health will be one of the first organizations in the state to adopt the decentralized clinical trial (DCT) model based on the new guidance released by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.





CLINICAL SITE STRUCTURE

5 Fixed Clinics

- Joseph F. Sullivan Center, *Pickens County*
- Clemson Health Clinic at Walhalla, *Oconee County*
- Clemson Health Clinic at Orangeburg, *Orangeburg County*
- Clemson Rural Health Support Office at Abbeville, *Abbeville County*
- Cobranded Clinic, *Upper Midlands (Coming Spring of 2025)*

5 mobile health units comprised of 1-3 exam rooms

20+ health care services ranging from prevention to chronic disease management.

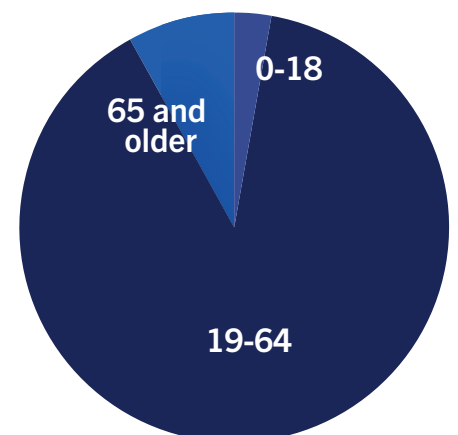
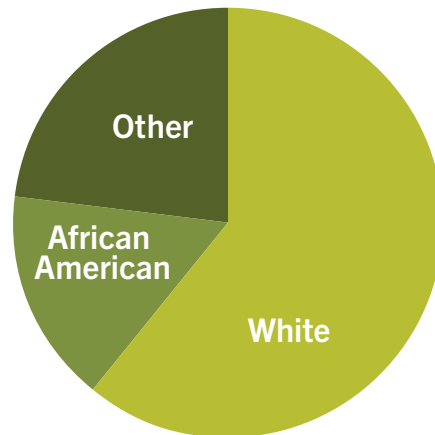
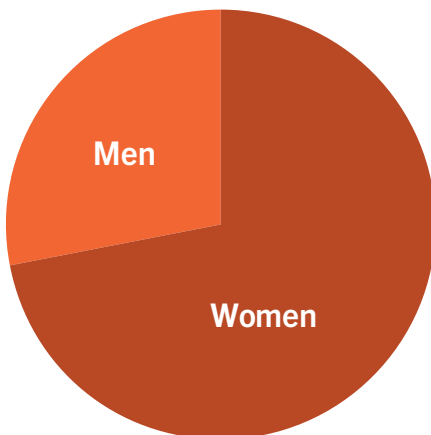
RESEARCH SITE CAPABILITIES

- Electronic Health Record (EMR)
- CLIA, CAP, ISO lab accreditation
- Primary Care Clinic Equipment
 - » Scale, pulse oximeter, ECG/EKG
- Back-up power capabilities
- -24°C freezers
- Temperature monitoring equipment
- Electronic record keeping
- Trained multidisciplinary team

PRIMARY RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Diabetes
- Kidney Failure
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Hypertension
- Hepatitis C
- Vaccines
- Medical Devices

PATIENT DEMOGRAPHICS



Rural Workforce Development

Creating student opportunities in rural health care.



Preparing the future rural health workforce

Clemson Rural Health students clocked in over 2,500 hours of internships and shadowing in rural and underserved communities.

20

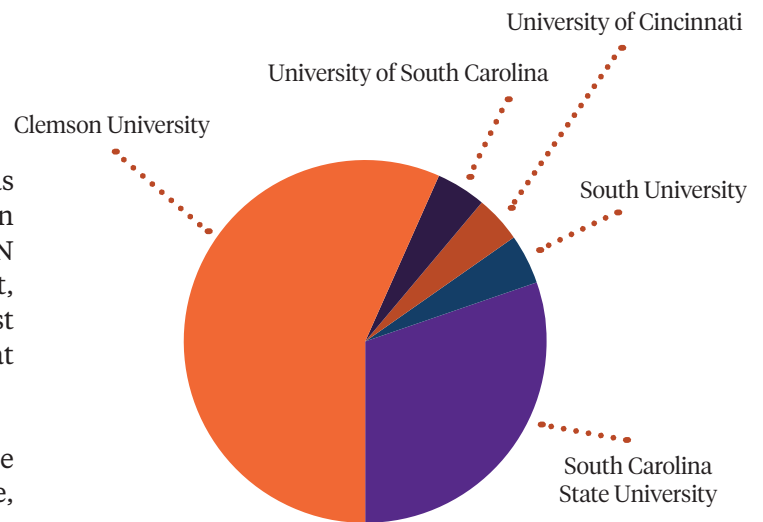
**students participated
in intensive rural
health internships
and practicums this
academic year.**

A CALL TO INVEST

Addressing provider gaps in rural South Carolina

Residents of urban counties have access to 2.3 times as many physicians as those living in rural counties. Fourteen counties in our state do not have a practicing OBGYN provider. According to the 2023 State Health Assessment, 74% of active psychiatrists in the state were located in just three urban counties, while 14 rural counties had none at all.

Clemson Rural Health views the rural health care shortage as a call to action. To build the rural health workforce, we foster opportunities in our clinics and on our mobile health units for students all around the state. Our hope is that their work with Clemson Rural Health inspires these students to come back to serve in rural practices after they graduate from their health professions training.



*Institutional Representation Among
Clemson Rural Health Interns*



KYLIE HENDERSHOT, CLASS OF 2023

Food Science and Human Nutrition, Clemson University

“My time with Clemson Rural Health has been an amazing experience to be able to further my interest in rural health care. Being able to be hands on with patients in an area where rates of diabetes and other diseases are so high has helped to open my eyes to how much impact practicing medicine in a rural area can have. I have learned so much through my experience and I know that it will help guide me as I move forward into medical school and beyond.”



JADAH DARBY, CLASS OF 2024

Biology, South Carolina State University

“Clemson Rural Health showed so many things that I am very appreciative to experience.

My future goal is to go to medical school to become a pediatrician and Clemson Rural Health showed me how I can impact my community and just be able to provide great health care to the community.”



BAILEY DRAKE, CLASS OF 2025

Health Sciences, Clemson University

“While interning with Clemson Rural Health, I was able to see the true impact social determinants and health disparities have in health care. This experience has broadened my perspective to understand that supporting someone’s health is not just all about medicine, but overall wellness. I think this perspective will serve myself and my future patients well as a future health care professional.”



TIMOTHY WILEY, CLASS OF 2024

Family and Consumer Sciences, Business, South Carolina State University

“My time at Clemson Rural Health in Orangeburg underscored the vital importance of cultivating genuine connections within communities to deliver essential care to underserved populations. It illuminated the necessity of a passionate, diverse team united in service excellence. This experience has profoundly influenced my approach to patient care and leadership, guiding me to prioritize empathy, inclusivity and the transformative power of unity.”



ANSLEY BRANSON, CLASS OF 2024

Health Sciences, Clemson University

“Working with Clemson Rural Health was such a blessing and really opened my eyes to how social determinants play a role in individuals access to health care and their outcomes. Clemson Rural Health is filling the health care gap in the rural communities and it was amazing being around people with a passion to serve in their community. It really motivated me to learn more about rural health care.”

Looking Forward

Setting the stage for the next five years of Clemson Rural Health



A mission to fill gaps in health care access

After half a decade of growth, we are not done yet. Clemson Rural Health has plans to expand into the Pee Dee and Low Country regions to cover 15 more rural counties.

**In concert with Clemson Elevate,
Clemson Rural Health has a goal
of improving**

20,100

health outcomes by 2028



STRENGTHENING STATE PARTNERSHIPS

S.C. Department of Public Health provides key partnership in future of Clemson Rural Health

The South Carolina Department of Public Health is a leader in public health efforts in the state. As an important collaborator for over a decade, Clemson Rural Health and SCDPH plan to nurture and grow their relationship as the organization restructured on July 1, 2024.

Building on the past success of programs such as Best Chance Network, WISEWOMAN, and collaborations within the state justice system, the two organizations will continue to work to find opportunities to together fulfill their aligned missions to transform rural health outcomes and improve the quality of life for all South Carolinians.

RPM EXPANSION

Addressing barriers to care in Abbeville County

After seeing initial success with remote patient monitoring (RPM) interventions in the Low Country, Clemson Rural Health is working with the Abbeville Area Medical Center (AAMC) and Self Regional health systems to fund a similar programs in the Lakelands region.

Clemson Rural Health began working in Abbeville County in 2018 through a partnership with the United Christian Ministries of Abbeville County (UCMAC) Free Clinic. Through this collaborative effort, our team connected AAMC directly with Best Chance Network to become a mammography provider. This led to the founding of the Fresh for Life program as BCN clinicians identified a high prevalence of food insecurity.

Both organizations hope to build on this success by seeking additional ways to support Abbeville County through a variety of mechanisms, including grant proposals, to address barriers to care for Abbeville residents and the surrounding communities.



SUPPORTING SOUTH CAROLINA'S WORKFORCE

Partnering with rural employers to provide comprehensive wellness services

This year, Clemson Rural Health launched statewide business health services. Our unique hub clinic structure has allowed us to expand beyond our previous local work to create a menu of wellness services that fit any business model.



Annual Screenings

Employees receive a blood panel, health risk assessment and biometric screening with access to follow-up care for abnormal results.



Direct Acute Care

Employers can reserve guaranteed appointment slots for employees at one of our fixed clinic locations for a flat annual rate.



On-Site Clinic Days

Clemson Rural Health mobile clinics come to the workplace to provide medical services such as primary care, vaccinations, cancer screening and more.



Travel Services

For employees traveling for business or leisure, we provide health information, medications and vaccinations to ensure healthy and safe travel overseas.



In the business of



MOBILE SCREENINGS

Serving the Calhoun County School District

In collaboration with MUS.C.Health, the Clemson Health Clinic at Orangeburg provided comprehensive annual screenings to faculty and staff at Sandy Run K-8 School in Calhoun County. Covered by their PEBA benefits, participants received a health risk assessment, biometric screening, lipid panel, complete blood count and basic metabolic panel.

More screening events will be held in conjunction with the school district during the 2024-2025 academic year.



HOMETOWN CONNECTIONS

Treating City of Clemson employees

2024 marks eighteen years of collaboration between Clemson Rural Health and the City of Clemson. Through this contract, city employees have access to guaranteed same-day appointments with a nurse practitioner for all types of sick visits, at no cost to the employee. Appointments are available to all City of Clemson employees, even those working part-time.

This ongoing relationship in our own hometown is just one of the many ways Clemson Rural Health hopes to improve access to health care for South Carolina employees.

business health.

Our Leadership



Kristie Boswell, DNP, APRN, FNP-C
Assistant Director, Mobile Operations



Brooke Brittain, MS, RD, LD, CHES, CLC
Associate Director, Food and Nutrition Security



Dianna Colvin, MPH, MSW
Associate Director, Business Development and Communications



Michelle Deem, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC
Assistant Director, Clemson Health Clinic at Walhalla



Christy Gibson
Business Manager



Ron Gimbel, Ph.D.
Professor and Director, Clemson Rural Health



Yolanda Green, MSN, RN
Assistant Director, Clemson Health Clinic at Orangeburg



David Hatch
Associate Director, Health Administration



Leslie Hossfeld, Ph.D.
Professor and Dean, College of Social, Behavioral and Health Sciences



Logan McFall, MS
Project Officer and Evaluator



Caitlin Moore, DNP, APRN, FNP-C
Associate Director, Clinical Operations



Katie Poplin, MS
Associate Director, Clinical Research



Aaron Zeller, M.D.
Medical Director, Physician

THANK YOU TO OUR 2023-2024 COLLABORATORS

Abbeville Area Medical Center	FoodShare Bamberg	Project Host
Alabaster House	FoodShare Orangeburg	Samaritan House
Allendale County First Steps	Franklin United Methodist Church	S.C. Agricultural Worker Health Program
Alliance for a Healthier South Carolina	Generations Unlimited	S.C. Department of Public Health
Anderson City Jail	GifTed by Tonya	S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce
Anderson County Detention Center	Golden Corner Food Pantry	S.C. Department of Social Services
Anderson Oconee Behavioral Health Services	Grove Park Pharmacy	S.C. Free Clinic Association
AnMed	Guardian Research Network	S.C. Hospital Association
Bamberg County Community Rural Arts Work League	Husqvarna	S.C. Housing Authority Region 8
Bamberg County Office of Aging	La France Elementary School	S.C. Legal Services
Bamberg Job Corp	Laurens County Detention Center	S.C. Office of Rural Health
Barnwell Farmers Market	Mabry Cancer Center	S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation
Barnwell Nutrition Kitchen	Macedonia AME Church	S.C. Works
BHG Spartanburg Treatment Center	Motivated Woman	S.C. Association of Community Action Partnerships
BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina	MUS.C.Health	S.C. Regional Housing Authority #3
BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Foundation	New Morning Foundation	S.C. State University
Breathe Easy Tri-County	OCAB Community Action Agency	Self Regional Full Circle Clinic
Calhoun County Library	Oconee Addiction Recovery and Solutions	SiteBridge Research
Calhoun County School District	Oconee County	Southwest Carolina Treatment Center
Calhoun Falls Family Practice	Oconee County Detention Center	St. Francis Outreach
Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare	Odulair	St. Matthews Christian Center
Cherokee County Detention Center	Ollie Johnson Memorial	Swiss Krono, USA
Cherokee Free Clinic	Orangeburg Area Mental Health Center - Holly Hill	The Well
City of Clemson	Orangeburg County Council on Aging	Tri-County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
City of Hope	Orangeburg County First Steps	Triune Mercy Center
Clemson Free Clinic	Orangeburg County Library	United Christian Ministries Abbeville County
Clemson University	Orangeburg County School District	Union County Detention Center
Clinrova	Our Daily Bread	United Way of Bamberg and Barnwell
Community Action Network	Palmetto Care Connections	University of South Carolina
Connected Community	Palmetto Carolina Treatment Center	Voorhees University
Crossroads Seneca	Patrick B Harris Psychiatric Hospital	Welvista
Diabetes Free SC	Pickens County Detention Center	Wholespire Chester
Dr. Willie Louis	Phoenix Center	Wholespire Lancaster
Dreams with Open Arms	Precia Group	Williams Chapel AME Church
Family Health Centers, Inc.	Piggly Wiggly	Zeus International
	Prisma Health	

Locations

CLEMSON HEALTH CLINIC AT WALHALLA

200 Booker Drive
Walhalla, S.C.29691

CLEMSON HEALTH CLINIC AT ORANGEBURG

1181 Hutto Street
Orangeburg, S.C.29118

JOSEPH F. SULLIVAN CENTER

101 Edwards Hall
Clemson, S.C.29634

CLEMSON RURAL HEALTH SUPPORT OFFICE AT ABBEVILLE

420 Thomson Circle
Abbeville, S.C.29620

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