COVID-19 in 2020:
A Decade’s Worth of Transformation in Six Months

Judy Fitzgerald, Commissioner

National Dialogues on Behavioral Health
September 17, 2020
Elements of Georgia’s Rapid Transformation

- Policies
- Financing
- Practices and Procedures
- Legal Review and Liability
- Communication
- Remote Workforce
- Use of Telehealth
- Interagency Cooperation
- Budget Reductions
- Special Populations
Regions contain field offices with resources serving the community (i.e., integration homes and providers)

Georgia’s Public Safety Net

STATE OFFICE
2 Peachtree St, Atlanta

23 Community Service Boards

6 REGIONS

STATE HOSPITALS

Georgia Regional Hospital at Savannah
SAVANNAH

Georgia Regional Hospital at Atlanta
ATLANTA

East Central Regional Hospital
AUGUSTA

West Central Georgia Regional Hospital
COLUMBUS

Central State Hospital
MILLEDGEVILLE
# COVID-19 State Hospital Impact

## Internal
- Five State Hospitals
- Different Populations and Configurations
- Staffing
- Testing
- Quarantine and Isolation Units
- PPE Access and Use

## External
- Staff Support
- National Guard Involvement
- Department of Public Health and CDC Guidance
- Media and Communication
## Confirmed COVID-19 Cases in DBHDD Hospitals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DBHDD Facility</th>
<th>Tested Positive</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central State Hospital (Milledgeville)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Central Regional Hospital (Augusta)</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Regional Hospital – Atlanta</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>74</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Central Georgia Regional Hospital (Columbus)</td>
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<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia Regional Hospital – Savannah</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>218</strong></td>
<td><strong>353</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DBHDD Facility</th>
<th>Individuals</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central State</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>ECRH</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRHA</td>
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<td>WCGRH</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRHS</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As of September 10, 2020

Deaths
Impact

• Warp-speed adoption of telehealth activities
• Quadrupled number of individuals served via telehealth
• Less clarity about populations for whom telehealth is less effective/not desired
• 180-day billing lag has made utilization snapshot difficult
Addiction Services

Supported prevention, treatment, and recovery providers via guidance documents and connection to public health officials

Responded to community reports of overdose clusters in certain areas by mobilizing naloxone distribution

State Opioid Response Grant will assist continuation of Medication-Assisted Treatment

Supporting Recovery Month Activities
Special Populations

- Children and Adolescents
- Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Peer Services and Supports
- Minority Populations
Snapshot of Crisis System: Behavioral Health Crisis Continuum

**Crisis Response**
- Georgia Crisis & Access Line (GCAL)
- Mobile Crisis Response Dispatch
- GCAL Text to Chat Line
- Crisis Bed Management System

**Behavioral Health Crisis Center (BHCC)**
- Crisis Services Center (BH Urgent Care Walk-in Clinic)
- Temporary Observation
- Crisis Stabilization Beds

**Crisis Stabilization Unit**
- Crisis Stabilization Beds

**State Funded Detox Facility**
- Detox Inpatient Beds

**Private Psychiatric Hospitals**
- Contracted Beds

**State Hospital**
- Psychiatric Inpatient Unit

**Crisis Bed Referrals are made via:**
- GCAL 800 toll free line
- BHL Web Electronic referral system (Live Board)
- Direct Admissions by BHCC/CSU

**Referrals Originate from:**
- Emergency Departments
- Sheriff/Law Enforcement
- Mobile Crisis
- Providers/Professionals
- Individuals seeking assistance and/or their family
Snapshot of Crisis Calls

We began looking at year over year comparisons beginning March 16th. Differences in call volumes may be related to the day of the week (eg. March 22 is Sunday this year, but Friday in 2019).

On April 1st GCAL added functionality allowing them to capture when a caller referenced COVID in a call. These numbers reflect those calls and not the calls to the COVID 19 Support line.
Rapid System Adjustments

- Mobile Crisis and Crisis Units’ use of Telehealth
- Reduction in Capacity
- Cleaning
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Reconfiguration
- Increase in Utilization of Contract Beds
Georgia’s Adult Crisis Bed Capacity v. Demand during COVID-19
Georgia’s Percentage of Adult Crisis Beds Affected by COVID-19

- **85.0% Average**
  - March 30 through July 31, 2020

- **Adult Online**
- **Adult Offline**

State Fiscal Year 2021
Customized Co-Existence: Crafting our Future

**Current Concerns**
- Workforce Shortages
- Virus Hotspots
- Economic Challenges
- Fear
- Other Unmet Needs

**Noteworthy Assets**
- Rapid Learning
- Mission-Driven System
- Launched into New Territory
- Resilience of Recovery and Disability Community