

# Health System

*Heroes work here*



**2020** REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITIES

*Heroes work here*



 **Health System**

## We had big plans for 2020.

We would celebrate Huntsville Hospital's 125th birthday with a giant green cake and spend the year reflecting on our century-and-a-quarter of service to the community. We would talk about the amazing growth of our Health System and the exciting things still to come, like the new Orthopedic & Spine Tower opening in 2021 across from our main entrance.

## Then COVID-19 happened.

Just like your family, we had to change our plans and dramatically alter our daily routines. Caring for patients during a frightening global pandemic became our new reality.

Throughout this report, you will meet a few of the 15,000-plus Huntsville Hospital Health System heroes who gave their all under trying circumstances and stayed true to our motto — to always be safe, be caring and be kind.

### On the cover

**Top row (left to right):** O’Ryan Hollingsworth, Multi-Skilled Health Care Tech, Helen Keller Hospital; Erin Dickerhoff, RN, Pediatric ER, Huntsville Hospital for Women & Children; Alfenia Austin Elliott, Patient Access Representative, Decatur Morgan Hospital; Cindy Turvin\*, RN, Pre-Admission Center, Huntsville Hospital

**Middle row (left to right):** Rena Ezell, Respiratory Therapist, Decatur Morgan Hospital; Dr. Yi Jia\*, Hospitalist Physician, Huntsville Hospital; Daniel Clark\*, Athletic Trainer, Huntsville Hospital; Lidia Ruiz\*, RN, Intensive Care Unit, Madison Hospital

**Bottom row (left to right):** Harold Reaves, Clinical Laboratory Courier, Marshall Medical Centers; Teresa Thornton, Director of Critical Care Services, Helen Keller Hospital; Maurice Cunningham, RN, Intensive Care Unit, Athens-Limestone Hospital; Joyce Thomas, RN, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Huntsville Hospital

\*Photo courtesy Eric Schultz/Redstone Rocket

# A Year Like No Other

Historians will write countless volumes of pages on the pandemic of 2020, but the real experts in the story of COVID-19 will be those people who have served on the frontlines caring for patients with the virus. Since the first case presented in March, Huntsville Hospital Health System has been on the frontline of the fight.

Our team has engaged the worst pandemic of our time with every ounce of its energy. Heroes have emerged daily from every segment of our team — nurses, doctors, therapists, laboratory personnel, housekeepers, supply techs and many more. Thousands of people have stepped up to meet the challenge in our hospitals, emergency departments, clinics and in community outreach settings. Just as importantly, they continue to do this as the virus rages into 2021. Thankfully, there is light at the end of the tunnel with vaccines arriving. Once again, our team will lead the way with its distribution.

As you review this 2020 report, it will be evident that the past year was significant for more reasons than the pandemic. Our mission is to serve our communities, and we continued to do that in a variety of ways across the Tennessee Valley. In Madison County, we marked our 125th year of service — not with the celebration we intended but with an acknowledgment that we are here for the long haul. We began 2020 with the news that our accreditation review from the Joint Commission was one of the best we have ever had. And despite the pandemic, progress continued on the largest building project in the medical district in 40 years. The Orthopedic & Spine Tower will open in the summer of 2021.

Still, the story of 2020 will always be COVID-19, which brings us back to the people of Huntsville Hospital Health System. The stories in this report are about people who are committed to serving you. They represent thousands of others just like them. They are our heroes. We hope that they are your heroes as well.

Thank you for supporting our hospitals. We are community-owned, and we depend on the generosity of donors and volunteers who help provide funding for life-saving equipment, technology and needed programs. 2020 confirmed this more than ever, and we appreciate it. On behalf of the entire Huntsville Hospital Health System and the Health Care Authority of the City of Huntsville, thank you for allowing us to serve you and your family. Please stay safe.

**David S. Spillers**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Philip W. Bentley, Jr.**  
Chairman, Health Care Authority

## The Health Care Authority of the City of Huntsville



**Philip W. Bentley, Jr.**, *Chairman*  
**Mike Goodman**, *Vice-Chairman*



**Frank Caprio**, *Secretary-Treasurer*  
**Amit Arora, MD**



**Kerry Fehrenbach**  
**Bhavani Kakani**



**Macon Phillips, MD**  
**Beth Richardson**



**David Smith**



**David S. Spillers** **Jeff Samz**  
*Chief Executive Officer* *Chief Operating Officer*

# Huntsville Hospital Health System

Established in 1895, Huntsville Hospital is the second-largest hospital in Alabama with 971 licensed beds. Huntsville Hospital is a community-owned, not-for-profit hospital and is governed by the Health Care Authority of the City of Huntsville. In recent years, the hospital expanded its service to the region through the development of Huntsville Hospital Health System, now operating Huntsville Hospital, Huntsville Hospital for Women & Children, Madison Hospital, Athens-Limestone Hospital, Decatur Morgan Hospital (three campuses), Helen Keller Hospital, Red Bay Hospital, and Marshall Medical Centers (North and South). The Health System also provides management services to Lawrence Medical Center in Moulton and Highlands Medical Center in Scottsboro and has affiliate relationships with Russellville Hospital and Lincoln Health System in Fayetteville, Tenn.

## Health System Entities

Huntsville Hospital  
 Huntsville Hospital for Women & Children  
 Madison Hospital  
 Huntsville Hospital Foundation  
 Heart Center (8 locations)  
 Spine & Neuro Center (7 locations)  
 Caring for Life (Hospice Family Care)  
 Athens-Limestone Hospital

Decatur Morgan Hospital  
 • Decatur campus  
 • Parkway campus  
 • Decatur West  
 Helen Keller Hospital  
 Marshall Medical Centers  
 • North and South  
 Red Bay Hospital

### Physician Network

- Hazel Green Pediatrics
- HH Physician Care (8 locations)
- Clinic for Breast Care
- Digestive Disease Center (3 locations)
- Endocrinology & Diabetes Clinic
- Lung Center (2 locations)
- Maternal Fetal Medicine
- Neurological Associates
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Pediatric Neurology
- Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
- Huntsville Surgical Associates / Trauma Services
- Tennessee Valley Gynecologic Oncology
- Tennessee Valley Pediatric Surgery
- Valley Surgical Associates (2 locations)

### Management Agreements

Highlands Medical Center  
 Lawrence Medical Center

### Other Ownership Relationships

- Continuum RX (Home Infusion)
- North Alabama Community Care
- The Surgery Center of Huntsville
- Alliance Cancer Care
- North Alabama Managed Care Inc. CompOne
- First Community
- Health Group of Alabama (HGA)
- Occupational Health Group
- Laundry
- Medicaid Maternity Care
- Home Medical Equipment
- LHC Home Care
- HH Urgent Care
- HH Wound Care
- Viva Medicare

### Affiliates

St. Jude Hospital Affiliate Clinic  
 Lincoln Health System  
 Russellville Hospital

As of 01/01/2020

## Our Mission

Provide high quality care and services that will improve the health of those we serve

## Our Vision

To be one of the best health systems in America and consistently strive to provide clinical and service excellence

## Our Values

Safety, Compassion, Integrity, Excellence, Innovation, Accountability and Equality

## Health System Statistics 2020

### Admissions

100,215

### ER Visits

324,865

### Surgeries

97,334

### Babies Born

8,573

### Cardiac Catheterizations

11,306

### Outpatient Visits

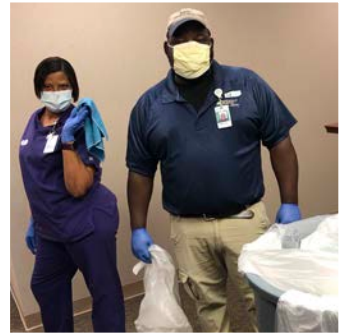
734,144

### Employees

15,537

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

# A YEAR OF HEROES





Via Cisco Webex  
LARGE TREATS. IT IS THE SECOND  
1:39 HOSPITAL IN ALL OF ALABAMA

**BREAKING NEWS**

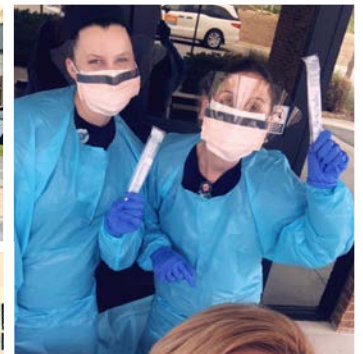
WORLD HEALTH ORG: WORLDWIDE CASES WILL TOP 1 MILLION IN DAYS

TO REOPEN ENROLLMENT, SENIOR ADMIN. OFFICIAL SAID YESTERDAY -- S. NEWSROOM

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC	
GLOBALLY	
TOTAL CASES	905,279
DEATHS	45,371
IN THE UNITED STATES	
TOTAL CASES	203,100
DEATHS	4,473

8PM ET ON CNN  
CALIFORNIA GOV NEWSROOM

**LIVE**  
CNN



# 2020: Test, Treat and Quarantine

Since opening in 1895, Huntsville Hospital has been here for the community in good times and bad.

That's never been more apparent than during the current pandemic. Before the first COVID-19 case arrived in North Alabama, the hospital stepped up to lead the community's response.

Anticipating a high demand for testing, we created, almost overnight, the Huntsville Hospital Fever & Flu Clinic. Staffed by an army of caregivers in personal protective

equipment, the clinic has screened more than 34,000 patients since opening on Governors Drive in March 2020.

Many other residents relied on the hospital's mobile COVID-19 testing events at John Hunt Park, local churches and homeless camps, and other locations throughout Madison County.

The nurse overseeing our mobile testing — Huntsville Hospital Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Joyce Thomas — was recognized with a statewide Advocacy in

Action Award.

Every Huntsville Hospital Health System facility joined the effort to slow the virus' spread through aggressive testing that's reached nearly 130,000 people so far.

Through it all, our hard-working staff has shown remarkable resolve. Some were re-assigned to jobs that didn't exist a year ago, like checking temperatures and calling anxious patients with COVID-19 test results. Others have selflessly volunteered to serve as front-line caregivers in COVID-19 units.



Mobile Medical Unit



Fever & Flu Clinic



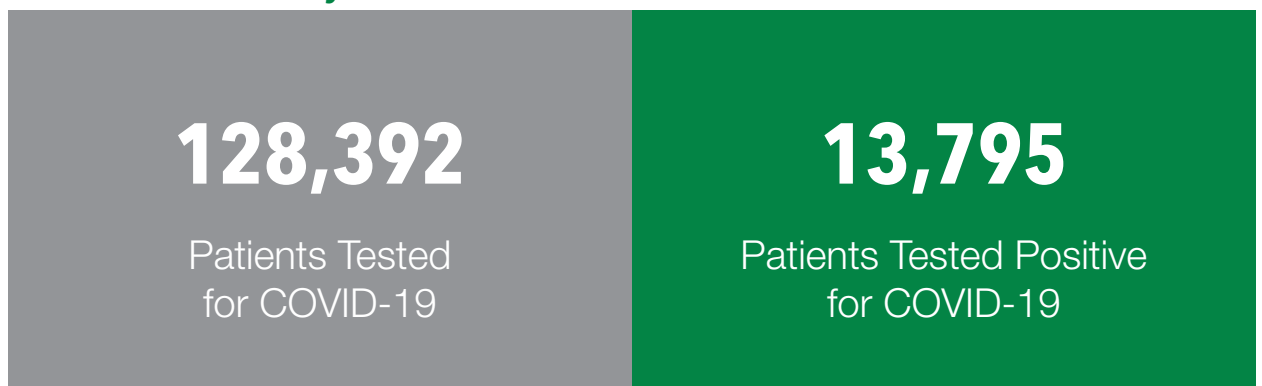
Testing at First Stop with Thrive



### In Madison County

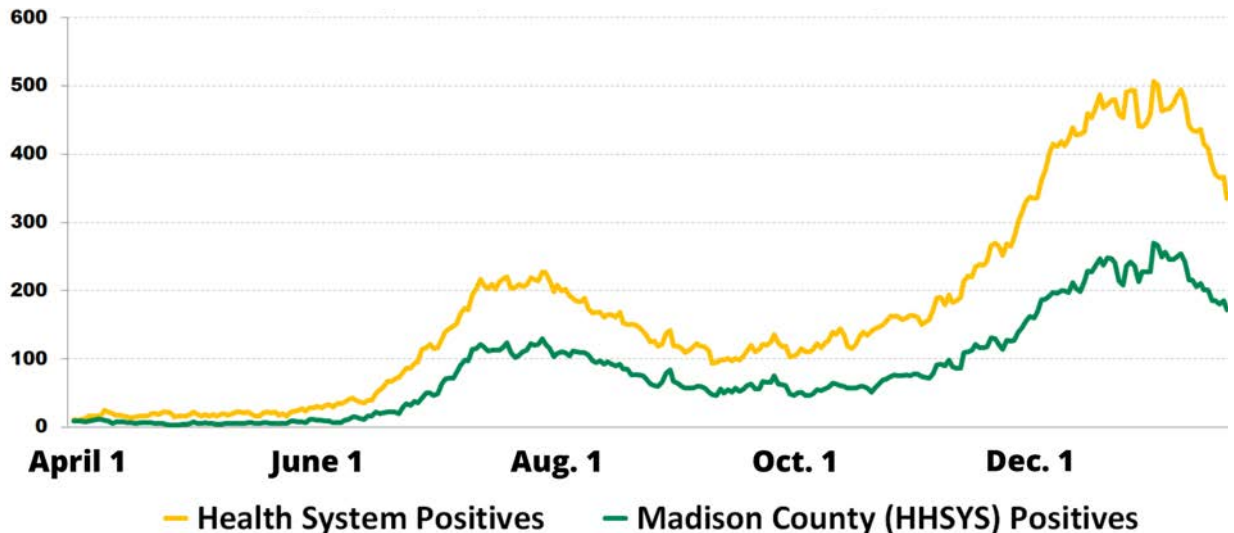


### Across HH Health System



## Huntsville Hospital Health System

Throughout 2020 we kept our communities informed about the spread and prevention of COVID-19. Daily reports were posted across all media platforms with the latest information on testing and hospitalizations. Thankfully, by years end, we began to report the number of people who were vaccinated as well.





*“Someone  
has to do  
it, so why  
not me?”*

*- Lorie Wilson*



**Tracy Doughty**  
*Senior Vice President  
of Operations*

**Admissions**

54,040

**ER Visits**

76,389

**Surgeries**

34,924

**Outpatients**

316,278

**Employees**

7,752\*

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

\*includes Huntsville Hospital,  
Heart Center and Spine & Neuro Center

*Heroes work here.*

Photo courtesy Eric Schultz/Redstone Rocket



**L**orie Wilson, RN, was on duty when Huntsville Hospital's Emergency Department received its first COVID-19 patient.

It was a Thursday in late March. Lorie carefully put on full personal protective equipment – gown, goggles, gloves and N95 respirator – and went inside the infectious disease isolation room to care for the patient.

Within days, the Emergency Department converted an entire pod to coronavirus care. Since then, Lorie has spent only two days working outside of the COVID unit.

“I went into nursing to care for people – no matter what,” Lorie says. “Someone has to do it, so why not me?”

Before becoming a registered nurse, Lorie worked for 10 years as a patient family representative serving as a liaison between Emergency Department physicians and families, helping identify unknown patients, working with local law enforcement on criminal cases, and coordinating organ donation requests.

Today she is one of the most experienced

COVID caregivers in North Alabama. Through it all, Lorie continues to smile behind her mask.

“Even after 12 hours in a respirator, I wear my mask outside the hospital because I see what COVID-19 does inside the hospital,” she says. “My hope is that community members will do the same and partner with us to reduce the spread of the virus.

“It’s real,” Lorie added, “and it spreads very easily.”

In addition to COVID care, Lorie helps enroll patients in a clinical trial for a gentler testing method being developed by Huntsville Hospital’s infectious disease specialists and HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology. Instead of a long and uncomfortable nasopharyngeal swab, patients simply cough and give a saliva sample.

Asked what it’s like to be on the front lines of a global pandemic, Lorie offered a quote from children’s book author Dr. Seuss:

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”



**Elizabeth Sanders**  
*Vice President  
of Operations*



*“They can tell  
from my eyes  
that I’m smiling  
behind my mask.”*

*- Shirley Cleveland*

**Pediatric ER Visits**  
32,113

**Well Baby  
Nursery Days**  
7,923

**Neonate  
Nursery Days**  
18,834

**Births**  
4,369

**OB ER Visits**  
8,794

**Employees**  
845

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

*Heroes work here.*



Shirley Cleveland

In this age of masks, we've all learned to smile with our eyes.

It's a skill that patient care aide Shirley Cleveland has perfected while greeting people at the front entrance to Huntsville Hospital for Women & Children.

"People are stressed right now, so I like trying to put a smile on their face," Shirley says. "I've had lots of people say they can tell from my eyes that I'm smiling behind my mask. They just know."

Shirley's warm smile is genuine. She's a glass-half-full person who enjoys interacting with people. Early in the pandemic when hospital leaders decided that everyone entering the building should have their temperature checked, Shirley volunteered to help with the screenings.

It's a busy job. Shirley points her trusty digital thermometer at about 9,000 foreheads every month. She also asks arriving patients and family members to fill out a health questionnaire.

Shirley especially likes talking with new mothers coming to visit their baby in Women & Children's

Regional Level III Neonatal ICU. She can relate to them because her own son was a NICU baby 30 years ago.

"They just need a friendly face – or maybe a prayer," Shirley says.

Sandra Browning, a nursing supervisor who oversees the hospital's temperature screeners, says Shirley has the perfect personality for the job. Before COVID-19 she was a patient care aide who floated between different areas of the hospital as needed.

"She's brought a level of customer service to the front entrance that was needed in a time of high stress," Sandra said. "She's that smiling face that greets everyone and guides them on the steps to be safely screened."

Shirley says her guiding philosophy is simple: treat others like you would want to be treated.

"I just always consider that person walking into the hospital could be my mom, my sister, my brother," she said.



**Mary Lynne Wright**  
*President*

### Hospital Board Members

- Mike Goodman**  
*Chairman*
- Beth Richardson**
- Jim Bolte**
- Ashley Burchfield, MD**
- Bobby DeNeefe**
- Gerald Dupree**
- Paul Finley**
- Matthew Hunt, MD**
- Carole Jones**
- Krishna Srikakolapu**
- Taron Thorpe**
- Clarence Tidwell**
- Carmeleita Winburn**

...  
“It’s been  
a huge  
team effort.”

- *Dr. Ferrod Taylor*

### Admissions

6,866

### ER Visits

48,768

### Surgeries

3,574

### Births

1,172

### Outpatients

28,221

### Employees

651

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

*Heroes work here.*

The pandemic became personal for Dr. Jerrod Taylor when his father died of COVID-19 in New Orleans.

It was March 2020, and the virus was just starting its rampage across America. New Orleans was an early hotspot.

“It was that first wave of the virus, and nobody was really sounding the alarms yet,” said Dr. Taylor, a critical care pulmonologist with Huntsville Hospital Lung Center. “My Dad was 77 years old but extremely healthy.

“All of a sudden the pandemic became very real in my life — not just something you see on TV.”

His mother also tested positive but never developed symptoms.

Having lost a loved one to the virus pushes Dr. Taylor to work that much harder on behalf of COVID-19 patients at Madison Hospital and Huntsville Hospital. And he has seen a lot of them.

Combined, the two hospitals have admitted more than 1,100 novel coronavirus patients since

the start of the pandemic. Those with breathing troubles are typically seen by Dr. Taylor or one of his Lung Center colleagues, Drs. Jason T. Smith and Muhammad Shafi.

Some patients respond well to treatment and bounce back quickly. For others, the effects of the virus linger for weeks — or months. Scientists have yet to understand why.

“This is a different level of unpredictability than anything I’ve seen before,” said Dr. Taylor. “You sometimes don’t know what’s going to happen with a patient from hour to hour.”

While physicians have an important role to play, Dr. Taylor said nurses, respiratory therapists, patient care aides, IV technicians, housekeepers and other hospital staff are the true superheroes of the pandemic.

“It’s been a huge team effort,” he said. “Nurses are the backbone of our COVID-19 response and deserve the lion’s share of the credit.”



**Traci Collins**  
*President*

### Hospital Board Members

**Camilla Gaston**  
*Chairman*

**Max Boone, MD**

**Patrick Boyett, DO**

**Kyle Bridgeforth**

**John Curtis**

**Pat King**

**Ben Ladner, MD**

**Russ Mitchell**

**Rick Mould**

**Ray Neese**

**Tom Norton**

**Nauman Qureshi, MD**

**Shelia Smith**

...  
“Getting  
COVID-19  
changed  
my outlook.”

- Renee McGill

### Admissions

3,564

### ER Visits

29,552

### Surgeries

6,986

### Births

438

### Outpatients

101,701

### Employees

958

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020



*Heroes work here.*

As the coronavirus closed in on North Alabama last spring, Athens-Limestone Hospital tapped Renee McGill to help lead its response.

The veteran nursing supervisor spent long days in meetings making sure the hospital would have an adequate supply of ventilators, personal protective equipment and other medical supplies.

“We were ready,” Renee said.

Ironically, those preparations may have saved her life.

In late March, Renee developed a fever and tested positive for both COVID-19 and the flu. By April 3, she could barely breathe. Her husband, Ted, called an ambulance which rushed her to the Athens-Limestone Hospital Emergency Room.

She was admitted to the hospital and immediately placed on a ventilator.

In the difficult days that followed, Renee went into cardiac arrest twice and had to be revived. Doctors told Ted they weren’t sure if she would

leave the hospital alive.

Because she was heavily sedated, Renee doesn’t remember much about her nearly month-long hospital stay. She knows she was hooked to a ventilator for 17 days. And she knows the ICU staff – all of whom she considers personal friends – saved her life.

“I’ve been a nurse at Athens-Limestone Hospital for 35 years,” Renee said. “That’s home, and the staff took amazing care of me. But not just me – they continue to be there for the entire community.”

Renee was discharged from the hospital on April 28 but was still quite weak. Her recovery took all spring and summer. Finally, in early October she returned to her nursing duties.

“Getting COVID changed my outlook,” Renee said. “I know what those patients and their families are going through. And it’s made me even prouder to be a nurse at this hospital.”



**Kelli S. Powers**  
*President*

## Hospital Board Members

**Nicholas Roth**  
*Chairman*

**Philip W. Bentley, Jr.**

**Judge David Breland**

**Melissa C. Craig**

**Rodney Harney, MD**

**Randall Riehl, MD**

**Ken Schuppert**

**C. Wallace Terry**

**Bill Wyker**

...  
“They’ve just stepped up to do what needs to be done.”

*- Paige Norris*

## Admissions

10,012

## ER Visits

52,840

## Surgeries

5,356

## Births

391

## Outpatients

154,483

## Employees

1,445

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

*Heroes work here.*



Paige Norris

**I**ntense. That’s how Paige Norris describes the past few months at Decatur Morgan Hospital. Paige oversees two areas in the thick of the hospital’s COVID-19 response: the Clinical Laboratory and Respiratory Therapy.

The Clinical Lab was in coronavirus overdrive throughout 2020: acquiring the sophisticated equipment needed for in-house testing and learning how to use it; running tests as fast as possible; notifying patients; reporting results to public health officials.

“Our Lab Director Jerry Kimbrell and the lab team have really been champions,” said Paige. “They’ve taken on all this added testing without any additional personnel.”

So far, more than 5,000 people have come to Decatur Morgan Hospital to be tested for COVID-19. Hundreds more visited a drive-through testing site on the hospital’s Parkway campus.

Paige and the hospital’s infection control nurses pour over the medical records of newly diagnosed

COVID-19 patients, looking for clues that might be helpful in slowing the spread.

Do multiple patients work at the same place? Did they attend the same gathering?

As director of outpatient services, Paige helps manage another group of Decatur Morgan employees on the front lines — respiratory therapists.

Decatur Morgan’s 38 respiratory therapists and their director, Jeffrey Sherrill, are available around the clock to help stabilize a COVID patient’s breathing. If a patient needs to be placed on a ventilator, respiratory therapists assist the physician performing the delicate intubation.

“They’re at the head of the bed, directly in the line of fire of this virus,” Paige said. “They rarely come out of their PPE. They’re sweating and have sores on their face from wearing a mask all the time.

“But I’ve never heard anyone complain,” she said. “They’ve just stepped up to do what needs to be done.”



**Kyle Buchanan**  
*President*

**Hospital Board  
Members**

**Steve Hargrove**  
*Chairman*

**Al Boyd**

**Belinda Carmichael**

**Larry Collum**

**Ryan Conner, MD**

**Larry Holcomb, MD**

**Aaron Karr, MD**

**Andy Mann**

**Mark McIlwain, MD**

**David Ruggles**

**Mark Smith, MD**

**Keller Thompson**

**Joshua Vacik, MD**

The data below includes statistics from Red Bay Hospital, an affiliate of Helen Keller Hospital.

**Admissions**

9,271

**ER Visits**

36,623

**Surgeries**

5,620

**Births**

680

**Outpatients**

57,127

**Employees**

1,023

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020



*“I felt like I  
needed to  
step up and  
volunteer.”*

*- Michael McWaters*

*Heroes work here.*

Michael McWaters

In the early days of pandemic when most people were running from the coronavirus, Michael McWaters ran toward it.

Normally a relief charge nurse in Helen Keller Hospital's Intensive Care Unit, Michael volunteered to care for patients hospitalized with COVID-19. He's 27 and in good health, which makes him less vulnerable to the virus than older people with pre-existing conditions.

"I felt like I needed to step up and volunteer," Michael said, "because I'm in a lower-risk group than some of my co-workers."

The Sheffield hospital began preparing for an influx of patients a few weeks before the first confirmed coronavirus cases in north Alabama. Nursing staff converted the Pediatric wing into a COVID isolation unit. Hospital leaders made sure there were enough ventilators and other medical supplies on hand to care for critically ill patients.

When the COVID surge came in July, Helen Keller Hospital was as ready as it could be. But

being on the front lines was even tougher than Michael had expected.

"They were the sickest patients I've ever seen," he said. "They were on ventilators. Many of them needed continuous dialysis, and they had to be prawned (rotated onto their stomachs) to improve their breathing. Pre-COVID, I had proned two patients in my entire career. All of a sudden, we were rotating 5 or more patients multiple times a day."

At times last summer, about a third of the patients in the 185-bed hospital were being treated for COVID-19.

Michael said he's proud of how other departments rallied to help the hospital's ICU staff. For example, nurses from Progressive Care stepped up to care for sicker patients than they were accustomed to treating.

"The teamwork has been fantastic," Michael said. "It's been hard, but given the circumstances I think we've done a great job."



*“The collaboration  
between the  
two hospitals...  
amazing.”*

*- Renee Jordan & Audra Ford*



**Cheryl Hays**  
*President*

### **Hospital Board Members**

**Mike Alred**  
*Chairman*

**Joe Abercrombie**

**Pat Allen**

**Liles Burke**

**Stan Chaffin**

**Wayne Crews**

**Roy Rollings**

**Donald Slappey, MD**

**Nancy Stewart**

**David Walker**

**Winter Wilson, DO**

### **Admissions**

7,079

### **ER Visits**

52,986

### **Surgeries**

5,852

### **Births**

857

### **Outpatients**

204,972

### **Employees**

1,470

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

*Heroes work here.*

Audra Ford and Renee Jordan

**C**COVID-19 has tested emergency departments across the country. And not just in big cities.

The outbreak forced Marshall Medical Center North in Guntersville and its sister hospital in Boaz, Marshall Medical Center South, to fundamentally change — almost overnight — their tried-and-true ER processes.

Renee Jordan and Audra Ford were up to the task. Renee is director of emergency services at Marshall Medical South; Audra is her counterpart at Marshall Medical North.

Under their guidance, both hospitals created COVID pods where highly contagious patients are isolated from those coming to the ER for other reasons. They set up outdoor triage stations. They installed glass dividers. They used walkie-talkies so nurses wouldn't have to constantly come and go from an infected patient's room — thereby preserving valuable personal protective equipment.

"It was a daily learning experience," said Renee. "Many nights I went home to read about how COVID was affecting other areas — just trying to

learn as much as we could so we didn't have as much fear."

Rather than re-invent the wheel, Renee and Audra borrowed clever ideas from other hospitals.

By adding extension tubing, for example, caregivers could monitor a COVID-19 patient's IV pump without entering the room. That simple move saved hundreds, if not thousands, of hospital gowns, masks and gloves.

While Marshall Medical North and South are separated by about 16 miles, the ER staffs have worked together closely throughout the pandemic. That became apparent when Bonita Long, a longtime ER nurse at Marshall South, died of COVID-19 in August.

Marshall North nurses volunteered to work at Marshall South so Bonita's co-workers could attend her funeral.

"They knew her friends needed that time to grieve," Audra said. "The collaboration between the two hospitals has really impressed me and made me proud. Both staffs have been amazing."

# While the pandemic was going on

While 2020 will be remembered for the tragedy of the pandemic, there were many other stories during the year that were encouraging and beneficial to everyone in and out of health care. One of those stories was the incredible wave of generosity that swept across communities as individuals, businesses, churches and others poured out their support for community hospitals and staffs. Donors to Huntsville Hospital Foundation, and the foundations of Athens-Limestone Hospital, Decatur Morgan Hospital, Helen Keller Hospital, and Marshall Medical Centers stepped up with financial gifts, food for frontline workers, masks and face shields, and other items to thank and encourage hospital workers. Signs popped up all over the area with words of support, and public drive-by events demonstrated the gratitude for caregivers across the Tennessee Valley.

## Huntsville

Clinton Carter joined Huntsville Hospital Health System in October as Chief Financial Officer, bringing extensive experience in financial leadership roles from education, state government, and private industry. Prior to joining the Health System, he served as Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration and Chief Financial Officer of the University of North Carolina System which includes all 16 public universities in North Carolina, the UNC Hospital and two medical schools.



Clinton Carter

The largest construction project in the Huntsville medical district in four decades continued toward a projected completion in the summer of 2021. The 375,000-square-foot Orthopedic & Spine Tower will bring 72 new patient rooms and

24 additional operating suites to the downtown campus.

Like its counterparts across the Health System, Huntsville Hospital Foundation continued to provide lifesaving equipment and support for programs that improve patient lives. Community-owned hospitals depend on philanthropic support to fulfill their mission.

In Huntsville Hospital's 125th year of service, donors to the Foundation continued to help fill the gap to ensure availability of advanced health care services for our community and region.

In fiscal year 2020, more than \$4.9 million in Foundation support was provided to Huntsville Hospital, Huntsville Hospital for Women & Children,



Orthopedic & Spine Tower



Madison Hospital, and Caring for Life (hospice). Included in this total was more than \$900,000 for COVID-19 relief through the Huntsville Hospital Foundation Emergency Assistance Fund (EAF). The EAF provided for and protected frontline caregivers in FY20 through purchases of more than \$315,000 in PPE, donations of 11,000 meals and employee assistance totaling \$62,000 for employees impacted by COVID. The Foundation collaborated with the Huntsville/Madison Chamber of Commerce to mobilize members to use 3D printing to make protective face shields and worked with local organizations that made thousands of fabric masks when PPE was in short supply.

Foundation donors also touched the lives of patients at

Huntsville Hospital for Women & Children, providing \$827,000 in equipment and programs. Among the areas benefiting from these donations were the Regional Level III Neonatal ICU which added 10 new beds in 2020 and three pediatric programs that are regularly included in the “doctor’s orders”

for nearly every young patient — Arts in Medicine and Music Therapy and Canines for Coping. A visit from Asteroid, our facility dog, has become so popular with our patients that she was joined this past year by her brother, Orbit. Thanks to the Foundation for these wonderful additions to our services.



Our facility dogs, Asteroid and Orbit.

## Safety Net

All of the hospitals in Huntsville Hospital Health System are the health care safety nets for their communities – especially for patients with little or no ability to pay. This is foundational to our missions as community-owned hospitals, even though it is an ever increasing challenge to accomplish it. In Huntsville and Madison County, 2020 was unlike any in our history. Consider some of the services which were rendered free of charge or below actual cost in Madison County alone.

- \$15,916,183 in charity care (actual cost of care to hospital)
- \$57,453,079 in uncollected accounts (actual cost of care to hospital)
- \$5,272,969 for medical education (non-reimbursed cost of educating medical residents and interns)
- \$7,371,874 (our non-reimbursed cost of providing care to Medicaid patients)
- \$250,000 for community screenings
- \$435,767 contributed to local health-related organizations (Community Health Initiative grants)
- \$1,250,000 provided to local schools through athletic training services and other programs

*Huntsville Hospital does not receive any tax support for charity care or for any service that it renders.*

## Madison

From the day it opened in 2012, Madison Hospital has been on a rocket trajectory. One of the programs leading the growth at the hospital is obstetrics. In June 2020, our Level II Special Care Nursery cared for its first set of triplets. Later in the year, the obstetrical team delivered the largest baby ever born at the hospital. He weighed 14 pounds and required care in the Level II Special Care Nursery. The presence of this unit continues

to reinforce our commitment to families in Madison and western Madison County.

One of the many Madison patients who recovered from COVID-19 was Major Wooten, a 104-year-old World War II veteran. Mr. Wooten's discharge from the hospital occurred at his birthday, triggering a national "good news story" about this remarkable man.

Philanthropy has always played an integral role in the growth of Madison Hospital. In

2020, the Foundation supported the hospital with gifts totaling \$665,119. Twenty-five Nara cribs, which enhance mother and infant closeness, were purchased to help care for the 1,172 babies delivered at Madison Hospital during the year.

As they have since the hospital opened, the Madison community rallied behind their hospital team throughout the pandemic by providing food and special shows of support.



There was a victory parade for Major Wooten, a 104-year-old World War II veteran, as he leaves Madison Hospital after a bout with COVID-19.



Twenty-five new Nara cribs, which promote mother-infant closeness, are now in place to help care for the babies delivered at Madison Hospital.

## Athens

Traci Collins, RN, the longtime Chief Nursing Officer at Athens-Limestone Hospital, was named President of the hospital during the past year. Like her counterparts across the Health System, priority one is leading her hospital through the pandemic.

Athens-Limestone Hospital (ALH) continued to invest in advanced medical technology

for patients in this fast-growing community. A new 64-slice computerized tomography (CT) scanner now produces higher quality images with faster turnaround times and lower doses of radiation. In addition, the hospital acquired a new ultrasound system for three dimensional cardiac imaging and further upgraded the hospital's

medication dispensing system. Investments like these promote better care and safer care. ALH's staff commitment to safe care was demonstrated in 2020 by the remarkable achievement of zero surgical site infections and zero catheter-associated urinary tract infections.

The outpouring of support for the hospital through the Athens-

Limestone Hospital Foundation topped \$161,000 in 2020. The very popular Canebrake Witches Ride raised \$21,928 for the Pink Elephant project, which helps fund mammogram scholarships for women. The annual ALH Gala was a virtual event that raised \$37,813 in memory of former Board member Steve Smith and helped purchase new ICU beds. Steve's memory was also the focus of the Crystal Cup Golf Tournament which produced \$40,254 for the ICU project. Generous supporters gave \$22,787 to the ALH COVID-19 Emergency Fund, and hospital employees donated more than \$30,000 to the Foundation during the year as well.



This new 64-slice computerized tomography (CT) scanner produces higher quality images with faster turnaround times and lower doses of radiation.

## Decatur

One of the highlights of 2020 at Decatur Morgan Hospital (DMH) was the naming of Kelli Powers as President of the hospital. Kelli is a veteran administrator in the Huntsville Hospital Health System and was

placed into leadership there as the pandemic ramped up this past summer. Morgan County was hit hard by COVID-19, and the DMH team provided a creative solution to support its mission and other Health System

hospitals during the pandemic. Following a rapid development and recruitment plan, the hospital opened the first phase of a 36-bed COVID unit in November in vacant space at Decatur Morgan's Parkway Campus. The unit continues to serve patients during the COVID-19 crisis.

Of course, not every patient has COVID-19. For growing families in the area, Decatur Morgan Hospital offers renovated and updated facilities, including Labor & Delivery which has 13 spacious new Labor/Delivery/Recovery/Postpartum (LDRP) suites. The unit is beautiful throughout — from the surgical suites to the nursery to the family waiting area. The latest technology is available to enhance your newborn's health and insure security



Decatur Morgan Hospital's Labor and Delivery program has an impressive new home in a completely renovated unit on the Decatur campus.

as well. Added to this is an incredible team of nurses, techs and personal care aides who have a combined 625 years of experience in caring for mothers and babies. The physician team from Decatur Morgan Women's Healthcare delivers babies exclusively at DMH and are joined by Decatur Morgan Pediatrics to support families in Decatur and Morgan County.

As you would expect, 2020 impacted the event-laden calendar of Decatur Morgan

Hospital Foundation, but it did not keep the community from supporting their hospital. Local companies, churches, individuals and other partners stepped up with financial gifts, meals for staff, masks for caregivers, and dozens of other creative and generous contributions totaling over \$400,000. Here are a few of the ways that the community responded:

- Decatur High School's Homecoming Court raised \$5,000 for meals for our staff
- Ten-year-old Caroline Wyatt raised \$5,000 in her own personal chin-up-a-thon to fund PPE
- More than 10,000 lunches and dinners were donated
- 5,000 masks were sewn by community residents
- 6,000 pieces of PPE were donated
- Our staff was celebrated with five appreciation parades, three military flyovers, a parachute jump and thousands of prayers and personal expressions.

## Sheffield

Helen Keller Hospital is located in the heart of the Shoals and has long been the leader for health care in the area. In 2020, the hospital opened a new outpatient facility in Muscle Shoals. Keller Imaging and Therapy on Avalon offers physical therapy and advanced imaging services, including CT scanning and MRI.

Back on the hospital's main campus, robotic surgery continues to grow rapidly. During the past year surgeons at Keller performed 225 robotic-assisted knee replacements using the new Mako system. Shorter hospital stays and quicker recovery can benefit patients with this technology.

Keller's sister facility, Red Bay Hospital, has been on the frontline in bringing COVID-19 testing and treatment to people

in Franklin County. Without the efforts of this 25-bed hospital, many residents would have faced an hour-plus drive to the nearest testing site.

Helen Keller Hospital Foundation has a history of connecting the community with the hospital. COVID-19 did not change that in 2020 as efforts

to support caregivers resulted in the development of the Helping Heroes Fund. Contributions from the community were used to purchase meals from local restaurants for hospital staff members who were working.

Foundation support helped renovate the hospital's Women's Center and also brought



This impressive new facility on Avalon Avenue in Muscle Shoals brings physical therapy and the latest imaging technology together under one roof.

awareness and recognition to the namesake of the hospital with the unveiling of a tribute to the “First Lady of Courage” in the hospital lobby. A memorial tribute was also held for the late Steve Nesbitt, founding board chairman. The event recognized his many contributions to the hospital.



The Helping Heroes Fund fed employees several times through donations from the community.

## Marshall County

Cheryl Hays, a veteran in administration for Marshall Medical Centers (MMC), took the helm of the two Marshall County facilities upon the retirement of Gary Gore. Under her leadership, MMC has begun the largest medical construction project on Sand Mountain in more than a decade. A new \$61 million patient bed tower at Marshall Medical Center South in Boaz will add 68 patient rooms, new main entrance, cafeteria and gift shop and significant renovations to outpatient areas.

The 65-year-old facility in Boaz is also upgrading the Emergency entrance and establishing new ambulance stations in the communities of Grant and Douglas. MMC is further reaching out to provide lab and diagnostic imaging support to new family medicine practices in the Blountsville community.

Marshall Medical Center Foundation exists to support MMC North in Guntersville and MMC South. In 2020, \$56,000

was raised for the COVID-19 Emergency Fund which enabled the Foundation to care for Marshall Medical’s frontline staff as they cared for our patients. In addition, the Foundation coordinated the donations of more than \$100,000 in PPE donations, 5,000 hand-sewn masks and more than 6,000 meals delivered to our health care team members.

Thanks to a one million dollar gift from the Marshall Health Care Authority, the Foundation endowed the Patient Navigator program at Marshall Cancer Care Center to support patients

who are dealing with cancer. Complementing that service is Marshall Mobility, a patient assistance program created to help ensure that transportation is not a barrier for residents to receive care.

The Foundation’s longest-running event is the Pink Pumpkin Run, and not even the pandemic could stop it. Proceeds from the 10th Annual run provide mammograms for local women and helped fund the purchase of a Trident Breast Imaging System for Marshall Medical’s mammography departments.



A construction project underway at Marshall Medical Center South in Boaz will give the hospital an attractive new main entrance. Here’s an architect’s rendering of what it will look like when complete.

# SAFETY & QUALITY MEASURES

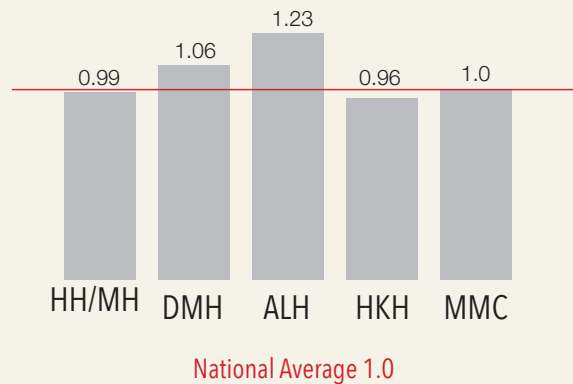
Huntsville Hospital Health System is committed to being a highly reliable organization — one where safety is not only the first priority, but the primary driving force in everything we do. Our journey to high reliability incorporates best practices from health care and from other highly reliable industries, including airlines and nuclear power. Our pledge to you is to Be Safe, Be Caring, Be Kind. To deliver on that pledge requires the development of a culture of safety that our patients can count on every day. We have started our journey in each of our Health System hospitals, and we're convinced that it will lead to safer and better care for you and your family. As you review the measures below, we will be transparent in our reporting and determined in our efforts to provide you with the quality care that you seek.

**Patient Safety Indicators (PSIs)** are a set of measures that provide information on potential hospital complications and adverse events following procedures. The measure shown to the right includes the following PSIs: decubitus ulcer, iatrogenic pneumothorax, postoperative hip fracture, perioperative hemorrhage or hematoma, postoperative acute kidney injury, postoperative respiratory failure rate, perioperative pulmonary embolism or deep vein thrombosis, postoperative sepsis, postoperative wound dehiscence and accidental puncture or laceration. This index value is a ratio of observed to expected events. The goal is to remain below a score of 1.0.

Data source: Hospital Compare  
[www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare](http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare)

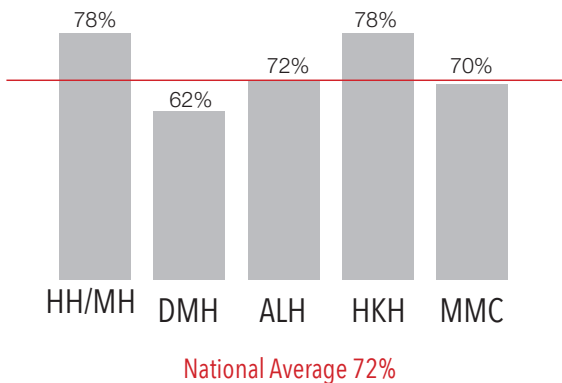
## Patient Safety Composite Index

July 2017 – June 2019



## Inpatient Likelihood to Recommend

January – December 2019



## HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems)

is a national survey instrument and data collection methodology for measuring patients' perceptions of their hospital experience. The survey is conducted on behalf of CMS, which oversees Medicare and Medicaid. The "Likelihood to Recommend" question measures the percentage of patients who answered "always."

Data source: Hospital Compare  
[www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare](http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare)

### CHART KEY

HH - Huntsville Hospital  
 MH - Madison Hospital  
 DMH - Decatur Morgan Hospital

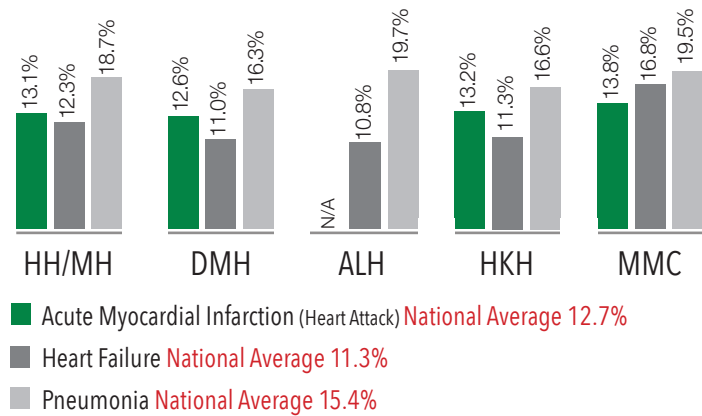
ALH - Athens-Limestone Hospital  
 HKH - Helen Keller Hospital  
 MMC - Marshall Medical Centers

\*Huntsville Hospital data includes Huntsville Hospital and Huntsville Hospital for Women & Children. Decatur Morgan data includes Decatur and Parkway campuses. Helen Keller data does not include Red Bay Hospital.

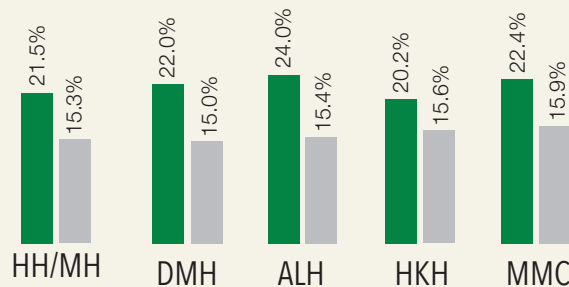
**30-day mortality rates** are the percent of patients who expire within 30 days of being hospitalized. Mortality rates are considered an "outcome of care" measure and show what happened after patients with certain conditions receive care. The rates are "risk-adjusted," meaning the calculations take into consideration the patients' severity of illness upon admission.

Data source: Hospital Compare  
[www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare](http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare)

**30-day Mortality Rates (30 days from admission)**  
 Inpatient Medicare only | July 2016 – June 2019



**30-day Readmission Rates**  
 (to any acute facility) Inpatient Medicare only  
 July 2016 – June 2019 (Heart Failure)  
 July 2018 – June 2019 (Hospital-wide)



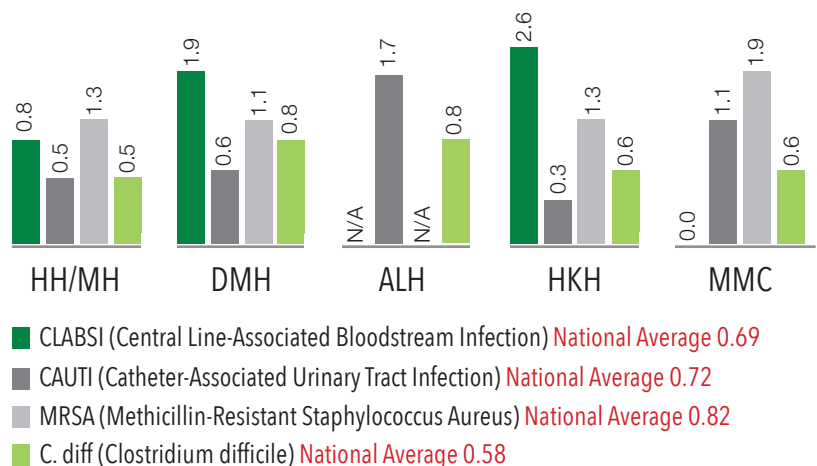
**30-day readmission rates** are the percent of hospitalized patients who return to the hospital within 30 days of discharge. While some readmissions are appropriate, the measure is intended to highlight readmissions to the hospital that were potentially avoidable. The rates are "risk-adjusted," meaning the calculations take into consideration the patients' severity of illness upon admission.

Data source: Hospital Compare  
[www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare](http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare)

**Health care-associated infections (HAIs)** are infections people get while receiving health care for another condition. HAIs can happen in any health care facility, including hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, end-stage renal disease facilities, and long-term care facilities. HAIs can be caused by bacteria, fungi, viruses, or other, less common pathogens.

Data source: Hospital Compare  
[www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare](http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare)

**Health Care-Associated Infections Ratio**  
 January – December 2019



*Ratio of the actual observed rate to the predicted rate.*

# HH Health System

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