Fiscal Year 2024 ANNUAL REPORT





GEORGIA TRAUMA
COMMISSION



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COMMISSION MEMBERS 18

Dennis W. Ashley, MD, FACS
Chairman

Elizabeth V. Atkins, MSN, RN, TCRN Executive Director

248 W. Jefferson St. Madison, GA 30650 (706) 841-2800 trauma.ga.gov To my fellow Georgia residents, our supporters, and our stakeholders:

Fiscal year 2024 was an active and productive one for the Georgia Trauma Commission.

As always, our focus was on ensuring access to quality trauma care, through the support of trauma centers, EMS services, system development, and operations. To do this, we allocated more than \$23 million—throughout the state—allowing us to support two new trauma centers, increase funding for level III and IV centers, provide equipment grants for 911 emergency response vehicles, and support the licensing of over 400 new EMS providers through the facilitation of EMS education programs.

With the support of Georgia's citizens and legislature, we have doubled the number of trauma centers in the state in just 16 years, increasing access to care, reducing mortality rates, and improving patient outcomes. Today access for severely treated patients has increased from 70 percent to more than 90 percent.

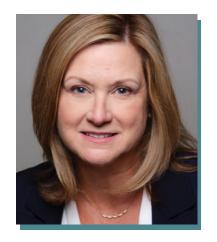
In addition to ensuring that access is trauma care is improved, we have also focused on equipment, technology, education, and preparedness, so that our extensive network of trauma centers is supported by expert EMS and support staff, armed with the tools and training they need to serve their vital mission.

The results speak for themselves. Georgia ranks well below the age-adjusted injury-related death rate, compared to both the southern region and U.S. as a whole. And we are achieving this progress efficiently, on behalf of Georgia's taxpayers.

In the coming years, the Georgia Trauma Commission will continue to work to ensure that we have adequate funding to bring about a transformational impact on our trauma centers, emergency medical service providers, and other vital system components. We invite you to follow our progress on trauma. georgia.gov as we work to improve trauma care for citizens and visitors to our great state.

Elizabet V. Actions

Elizabeth V. Atkins Executive Director



MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

In 2007, the Georgia Legislature, through Senate Bill 60, established the Georgia Trauma Commission.

MISSION

The Georgia Trauma Commission is dedicated to improving the health of injured Georgians by ensuring access to quality trauma care, coordinating key trauma system components, and educating trauma care providers across the multidisciplinary continuum.

VISION

The Georgia trauma system will become a top-tier trauma system that provides the highest quality care and education through discovery and innovation.

VALUES

STEWARDSHIP

Manage resources responsibly and bring value to patients and taxpayers.

INTEGRITY

Demonstrated through accountability, ethical behavior, transparency, and reliability.

INCLUSIVITY

Ensure teamwork, collaboration, and inclusion of a diverse stakeholder group.

The Georgia Trauma Commission administers the statewide trauma care network and serves as the accountability mechanism for the entire trauma system, overseeing the flow of funds for system improvement.

FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Fiscal Year 2024

FUNDING OVERVIEW

The annual budget of the Georgia Trauma Commission (GTC) is distributed through established funding formulas designed to sustain the critical infrastructure of the trauma system. The funds allocated to the Georgia Trauma Commission are aimed at improving the Georgia trauma system, which provides vital support to trauma centers, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), System Development, and Operations. The GTC takes great pride in showcasing the following accomplishments and improvements:

- Registry Start-Up Grants for Emerging Trauma Centers
- Level III Trauma Quality Improvement Program (TQIP) Reimbursement
- Provision of Equipment Grants for Georgia's 911
 Emergency Response Vehicles
- Facilitation of EMS Education through the Georgia Emergency Medical Services Association (GEMSA), supporting licensing for over 400 new EMS providers across the state
- Increase funding to rural Level III and IV trauma centers



\$23.8+ million budgeted and allocated through the Georgia Trauma Commission



FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Fiscal Year 2024 Overall Budget Breakdown



Trauma Centers **\$16,796,061.26**

\$4,065,589.82

\$1,939,869.27

Operations \$1,082,015.10

FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Trauma Center Distribution

\$16.5M was dispersed across all levels of Georgia's trauma, pediatric trauma, and burn centers, including \$437K in one-time readiness grants to two new trauma centers.

This funding injection underpins several critical aspects within the purview of trauma center operations, including trauma center readiness, registry management, and the provision of uncompensated care. Notable facets of the funding distribution encompass:

Performance-Based Pay Program (PBP):

Within this framework, a portion of the trauma readiness funding is subjected to a performance-based assessment. Performance metrics are employed to determine the percentage of funding that is potentially at risk, thereby incentivizing trauma centers to achieve and maintain high-performance standards. In FY 2024, readiness payments were based upon prior year PBP results; as a result, a center's current level of performance is their future economic reality.

Uncompensated Care Funding (UCC):

This funding category is allocated specifically to Level I and Level II trauma centers and burn centers. The allocation is based on individual centers' historical data, subjected to rigorous annual audits by an impartial third party. The disbursement of UCC funding is contingent upon the availability of resources and aims to address the financial challenges associated with providing care to patients who lack adequate compensation.

Trauma Quality Improvement Program (TQIP) Participation Reimbursement:

Participation fees for the Trauma Quality Improvement Program have been reimbursed for Level III trauma centers. This reimbursement seeks to incentivize participation in the program, thereby fostering continuous quality improvement efforts within these centers.

One-time Registry and Readiness Grants:

Funding support was provided to newly designated centers not currently participating in GTC funding.

The fiscal year 2024 funding allocation reflects a strategic investment in Georgia's trauma healthcare infrastructure. The multifaceted approach to funding distribution, encompassing performance incentives, uncompensated care considerations, and readiness enhancements, underscores a commitment to optimizing trauma healthcare delivery and patient outcomes across the state.



FY 2024 TRAUMA CENTER ALLOCATIONS

TRAUMA CENTERS	FY 2024 BASE BUDGET ALLOCATIONS							AMENDED FY 2024 BUDGET ALLOCATIONS			TOTAL FY 2024
	Readiness	Performance-Based Pay Dollars (Based on 2023 Scorecard Results)	Total Readiness Payments	UCC (CY 2021)	Total from Trauma Fund	Registry Support	Total Base Funds	Additional Readiness	TQIP Participation Support	Total Amended Funds	Total Base + Amended
LEVEL I									'		
Atrium Health Navicent Macon	98,761.00	396,746.00	495,507.00	625,138.00	1,120,644.00	75,451.00	1,196,095.00	98,894.00	-	98,894.00	1,294,989.00
Wellstar MCG	98,761.00	396,746.00	495,507.00	510,702.00	1,006,209.00	75,451.00	1,081,660.00	98,894.00	-	98,894.00	1,180,554.00
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta-Egleston	98,761.00	396,746.00	495,507.00	53,675.00	549,182.00	75,451.00	624,633.00	98,894.00	-	98,894.00	723,527.00
Grady Memorial Hospital	98,761.00	396,746.00	495,507.00	2,473,651.00	2,969,158.00	75,451.00	3,044,609.00	98,894.00	-	98,894.00	3,143,503.00
Memorial Health University Medical Center	98,761.00	396,746.00	495,507.00	878,632.00	1,374,139.00	75,451.00	1,449,590.00	98,894.00	-	98,894.00	1,548,484.00
Northeast Georgia Medical Center	98,761.00	396,746.00	495,507.00	377,790.00	873,297.00	75,451.00	948,748.00	98,894.00	-	98,894.00	1,047,642.00
LEVEL II											
Atrium Health Floyd	59,257.00	238,561.00	297,818.00	131,386.00	429,204.00	45,331.00	474,535.00	59,390.00	-	59,390.00	533,925.00
Wellstar MCG-Children's Hospital	59,257.00	237,026.00	296,283.00	-	296,283.00	45,331.00	341,614.00	59,390.00	-	59,390.00	401,004.00
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta-Scottish Rite	59,257.00	238,561.00	297,818.00	41,889.00	339,706.00	45,331.00	385,037.00	59,390.00	-	59,390.00	444,427.00
Doctors Hospital of Augusta	59,257.00	237,026.00	296,283.00	-	296,283.00	45,331.00	341,614.00	59,390.00	-	59,390.00	401,004.00
Northside Gwinnett	59,257.00	238,561.00	297,818.00	416,221.00	714,039.00	45,331.00	759,370.00	59,390.00	-	59,390.00	818,760.00
Piedmont Athens Regional	59,257.00	238,561.00	297,818.00	253,440.00	551,257.00	45,331.00	596,588.00	59,390.00	-	59,390.00	655,978.00
Piedmont Columbus Regional	59,257.00	225,175.00	284,432.00	382,777.00	667,208.00	45,331.00	712,539.00	59,390.00	-	59,390.00	771,929.00
Wellstar Kennestone Regional Medical Center	59,257.00	238,561.00	297,818.00	333,380.00	631,197.00	45,331.00	676,528.00	59,390.00	-	59,390.00	735,918.00
Wellstar North Fulton Hospital	59,257.00	238,561.00	297,818.00	131,641.00	429,458.00	45,331.00	474,789.00	59,390.00	-	59,390.00	534,179.00
LEVEL III											
Advent Health Redmond Hospital	30,000.00	40,500.00	70,500.00	-	70,500.00	17,595.00	88,095.00	15,017.00	8,954.00	23,971.00	112,066.00
Crisp Regional Health Services	30,000.00	42,750.00	72,750.00	-	72,750.00	8,595.00	81,345.00	15,017.00	8,954.00	23,971.00	105,316.00
Fairview Park Hospital	30,000.00	45,000.00	75,000.00	-	75,000.00	11,995.00	86,995.00	15,017.00	8,954.00	23,971.00	110,966.00
Hamilton Medical Center	30,000.00	47,329.00	77,329.00	-	77,329.00	17,595.00	94,924.00	15,017.00	8,954.00	23,971.00	118,895.00
J.D. Archbold Memorial Hospital	30,000.00	42,750.00	72,750.00	-	72,750.00	17,595.00	90,345.00	15,017.00	8,954.00	23,971.00	114,316.00
Piedmont Cartersville Medical Center	30,000.00	45,000.00	75,000.00	-	75,000.00	11,995.00	86,995.00	15,017.00	8,954.00	23,971.00	110,966.00
Piedmont Henry Hospital	30,000.00	45,000.00	75,000.00	-	75,000.00	17,595.00	92,595.00	15,017.00	8,954.00	23,971.00	116,566.00
Piedmont Walton Hospital	30,000.00	42,750.00	72,750.00	-	72,750.00	8,595.00	81,345.00	15,017.00	8,954.00	23,971.00	105,316.00
Wellstar Cobb Hospital	30,000.00	45,000.00	75,000.00	-	75,000.00	17,595.00	92,595.00	15,017.00	8,954.00	23,971.00	116,566.00
LEVEL IV											
Atrium Polk Medical Center	20,250.00	4,655.00	24,905.00	-	24,905.00	8,595.00	33,500.00	5,060.00	-	5,060.00	38,560.00
Effingham Hospital	20,250.00	4,978.00	25,228.00	-	25,228.00	11,995.00	37,223.00	5,060.00	-	5,060.00	42,283.00
Emanuel Medical Center	20,250.00	4,978.00	25,228.00	-	25,228.00	11,995.00	37,223.00	5,060.00	-	5,060.00	42,283.00
Memorial Health Meadows Hospital	20,250.00	4,655.00	24,905.00	-	24,905.00	8,595.00	33,500.00	5,060.00	-	5,060.00	38,560.00
Morgan Medical Center	20,250.00	4,978.00	25,228.00	-	25,228.00	8,595.00	33,823.00	5,060.00	-	5,060.00	38,883.00
Wellstar Paulding Medical Center	20,250.00	4,750.00	25,000.00	-	25,000.00	17,595.00	42,595.00	5,060.00	-	5,060.00	47,655.00
Wellstar Spalding Medical Center	20,250.00	4,750.00	25,000.00	-	25,000.00	11,995.00	36,995.00	5,060.00	-	5,060.00	42,055.00
Wellstar West Georgia Medical Center	20,250.00	4,750.00	25,000.00	-	25,000.00	17,595.00	42,595.00	5,060.00	-	5,060.00	47,655.00
BURN CENTER											
Grady Burn Center	-	-	-	-	-	37,675.00	37,675.00	-	-	-	37,675.00
Joseph M. Still Burn Center	123,451.00	124,304.00	247,755.00	140,948.00	388,703.00	37,675.00	426,378.00	49,352.00	-	49,352.00	475,730.00
TOTAL	1,681,330.00	5,069,946.00	6,751,276.00	6,751,270.00	13,502,540.00	1,162,150.00	14,664,690.00	1,352,859.00	80,586.00	1,433,445.00	16,098,135.00
New Trauma Center One-Time Registry and Readiness Grants	Readiness	Potential Performance Based Pay	Total Readiness Payments	UCC (CY 2021)	Total from Trauma Fund	Registry Support	Total Base Funds	Additional Readiness	TQIP Participation Support	Total Amended Funds	Total Base + Amended
LEVEL II											
Phoebe Putney	-	-	297,818.00	-	\$297,818.00	45,331.00	343,149.00	-	-		343,149.00
LEVEL III											
South Georgia Medical Center	-	-	75,000.00	-	-	19,095.00	94,095.00	-	-		94,095.00
			372,818.00		297,818.00	64,426.00	437,244.00				437,244.00

FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Emergency Medical Services Distribution

FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Emergency Medical Services Distribution

\$4M+ was allocated to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) stakeholders during the fiscal year 2024. Our EMS Committee thoroughly evaluates the disbursement of these funds with the primary objective of enhancing the quality of care rendered to trauma patients within the State of Georgia.

The allocation of funds encompasses the following key initiatives:



Continued Support for the Automatic Vehicle Locating System (AVLS) Program:

This initiative provides Wi-Fi to cellular gateways to primary 911 Zone Providers' ambulances in Georgia. These gateways facilitate real-time tracking and communication, ensuring seamless coordination between various EMS agencies and hospitals.



Allocation of \$1M+ to EMS Trauma-Related Equipment Grants:

These grants are designated to offer 911-zone ambulances throughout the state the opportunity to procure essential life-saving equipment. Such equipment enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of EMS operations in responding to trauma cases.



Dedication of \$1.85M to Support EMS Education through the Georgia Emergency Medical Services Association (GEMSA):

This substantial financial commitment is intended to bolster EMS education initiatives. GEMSA, as a vital partner, utilizes these funds to further advance and elevate the standards of education within the realm of Emergency Medical Services.



Pre-hospital Research:

\$30,000 was dedicated to exploring and mapping ambulance stations across the state to identify ambulance deserts and inform solutions for transportation infrastructure improvement.

The EMS allocation reflects a conscientious effort to fortify and optimize Georgia's Emergency Medical Services ecosystem. The objective is to ensure that trauma patients receive the highest caliber of care while concurrently fostering ongoing advancements in EMS infrastructure and education.



EMS Education **\$1,850,113.76**

AVLS Program-Support \$1,095,927.00

Trauma Related-Equipment Grants \$1,089,549.06

Pre-Hospital Research \$30,000.00

FUNDING IMPACT

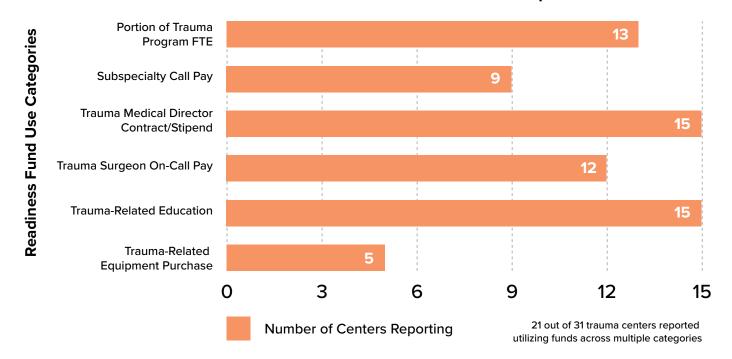
Trauma Center Readiness

FUNDING IMPACT

Enhancing Trauma Registry Education

Trauma Center readiness encompasses the financial outlays incurred by the trauma center to maintain a state of constant preparedness for the provision of trauma care services on an around-the-clock, 365-day-a-year basis. This year, centers reported their readiness spending on:

Trauma Center FY 2024 Readiness Fund Use Report



It is imperative to note that the Georgia Trauma Commission currently provides funding support to the extent of 7 percent of the total trauma center readiness costs. The necessity for additional funding resources is paramount to effectively bolster the financial support required for both present and forthcoming trauma center readiness, ensuring trauma system expansion and stability.

February 29 - March 1, 2024

During FY 2024, thirty-two stakeholders from Georgia's trauma system participated in the Abbreviated Injury Scale (AIS[©]) 2008 course. This diverse group included Trauma Program Managers, Registrars, and PI Coordinators from various designated trauma centers across the state.



standardized terminology for describing injuries and ranks them by severity within trauma registries used to evaluate and monitor trauma care at trauma centers. Attendees gained proficiency in applying injury-coding rules and received practical guidance on extracting and abstracting injury data from medical records to ensure accurate AIS code assignment.

The trauma registry is the backbone of performance improvement and improving outcomes. Looking ahead to FY 2025, the Georgia Trauma Commission plans to allocate funding for sixty seats in the AIS 2015 update course. This initiative aims to support trauma centers in meeting the rigorous standards set by the American College of Surgeons, reinforcing their capabilities in injury-coding and registry management.

FUNDING IMPACT

EMS Trauma Related-Equipment Grants

FUNDING IMPACT

EMS Education

13

\$1M+ was made available to Georgia's ambulances to purchase life-saving equipment for trauma patients.

This year, 170 agencies with 911-zone ambulances received grant funding to purchase equipment like extrication devices, splints for fracture stabilization, portable radios, stretchers, and intravenous access kits to provide quality trauma care to injured citizens.

FY 2024 Grant Funds by EMS Region Region 1 \$126,624.70 Region 2 \$82,648.00 Region 3 \$287,897.51 Region 4 6 \$96,475.96 Region 5 \$100,513.58 Region 6 \$53,474.35 \$42,285.28 Region 8 \$94,481.76 Region 9 \$145,005.16 Region 10 \$60,142.76 **Total** \$1,089,549.06

The Georgia Trauma Commission is deeply invested in the EMS community, supporting numerous initiatives including both initial and continuing education for EMS professionals. This support is facilitated through a partnership with the Georgia EMS Association (GEMSA), which conducts and manages funded courses statewide. From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, GEMSA supported 121 individual courses funded by the Georgia Trauma Commission. Among these, 38 were initial education classes that trained new Emergency Medical Responders and Emergency Medical Technicians. This crucial program licensed over 400 new EMS providers across the state, bolstering a declining workforce and ensuring access to care for the injured, even in the most rural communities.

Leadership Course



One of the most popular programs is the leadership course, held annually. This program consists of four one-week sessions spread over a 12-month period at various locations across Georgia. The curriculum was developed by many collaborative partners, including Georgia Southern University's College of Public Health, to aid industry leaders in performance-improvement activities.

Trauma Skills Labs



In the past 12 months, 11 Trauma Skills Labs were facilitated, reaching over 1,500 students from every region of the state. While students enhance their knowledge of anatomy and various pathologies, a significant benefit of the course is the hands-on practice of low-frequency, high-acuity procedures. This training enhances the skills and confidence of pre-hospital providers, leading to better care during rare but intense real-life events.

Farm Medic Course



The Farm Medic course was conducted seven times across Georgia over the last year. This specialized class trains pre-hospital providers to handle the unique challenges of emergencies at agricultural sites. Given the diverse nature of agricultural environments, the course equips EMS personnel with the necessary skills and knowledge to manage incidents involving heavy machinery, livestock, and hazardous materials. By addressing these specific scenarios, the Farm Medic course ensures that EMS providers are better prepared to deliver timely and effective care in rural and agricultural settings.



SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

GQIP Benchmarking Platform Goes Live

SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

GQIP Spring Meeting

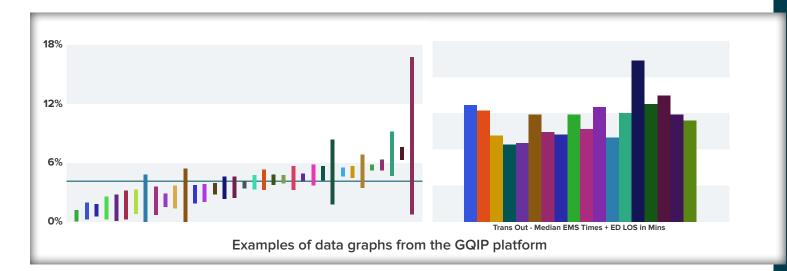
The GQIP risk-adjusted benchmarking platform launched in December 2023 after 18 months of work. The site allows GQIP to have a global view of selected processes and outcome measures at the state's designated trauma centers to see how they are doing compared to each other.

Initial Process Measures:

- Time to Care
- Hip Fracture Repair

Initial Outcome Measures:

- Mortality
- Specific Hospital Events/Major Hospital Events



At the GQIP Spring meeting, trauma centers received their first look at data analyzed through the platform. The platform offers great potential for providing real-time, impactful metrics to help improve trauma care.

CY2023 GQIP DATA ANALYSIS SUMMARY



33 Trauma Centers

from



44,214
Trauma Occurrences



13,512 Trauma Transfers



Hip Fractures



1,723 Deaths

May 20-22, 2024

Over 150 trauma system stakeholders joined us for our GQIP Spring meeting in Braselton, Georgia. The three-day event consisted of numerous topics and discussions of ways to improve the state of Georgia's trauma system.

While the Georgia Committee for Trauma Excellence (GCTE) met to discuss subcommittee progress, hospital senior executives enjoyed a finance workshop hosted by the Trauma Centers Association of America (TCAA) and presented by Valerie Rinkle. The workshop provided valuable updates focusing on billing practices, cost methodology, script for billers, trauma advocacy for CMS, and how to get credit for the newly purchased technology. Trauma Medical Directors also held their first hybrid meeting to discuss patient transfers and the opportunity to educate non-trauma hospitals on the importance of timely transfer of critically injured patients.



The following day, the Georgia Quality Improvement
Program hosted a quarterly meeting that included
scientific sessions, trauma center highlights, best-practice
discussions, and a closed-session case review. Attendees,
ranging from senior executives to performance improvement
coordinators, gathered to exchange knowledge and
continue striving to deliver optimal trauma care.



On the event's final day, Georgia Trauma Commission members met to discuss the latest updates from committees and system partners. Chris Scoggins, Director of Special Projects with the Georgia Rural Health Innovation Center, provided a comprehensive overview of the 2024 Survey of Rural Hospital Needs and Resources. Dr. Scoggins highlighted rural center demographics and capabilities, transfer and transport data, staffing, training, and equipment barriers. The survey emphasized the importance of addressing systemic issues to improve healthcare delivery in under-served areas.

We thank all trauma system stakeholders for their continued collaboration and support, contributing to the ongoing success of our Committees and Georgia Quality Improvement Program.

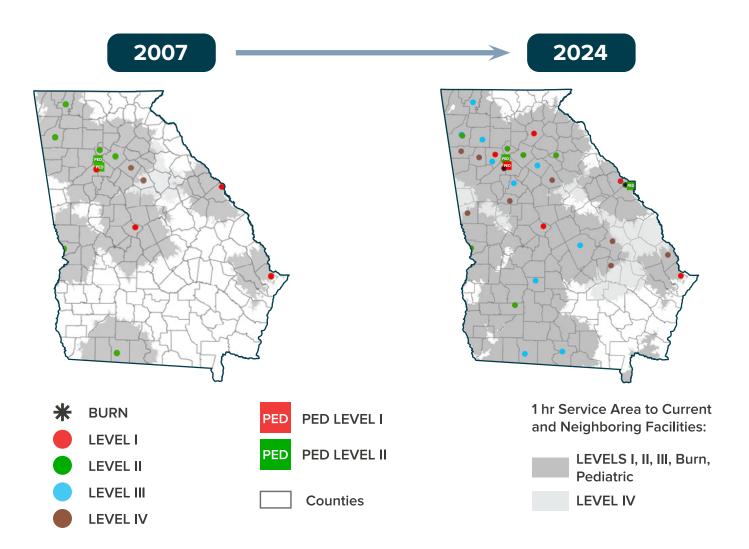


SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Trauma System Stabilization Advancements

Over the last 16 years, the Georgia trauma system has made significant progress by doubling the number of trauma centers, increasing access to care, reducing mortality rates, and improving patient outcomes.

Since the inception of the Georgia Trauma Commission's partnership with the Department of Public Health Office of EMS and Trauma, the system grew from 14 centers to 36 centers by mid-2024, including two burn centers and three pediatric trauma centers. Access for severely injured patients treated at a trauma center has increased from 70 percent to over 90 percent.



SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Trauma System Stabilization Advancements

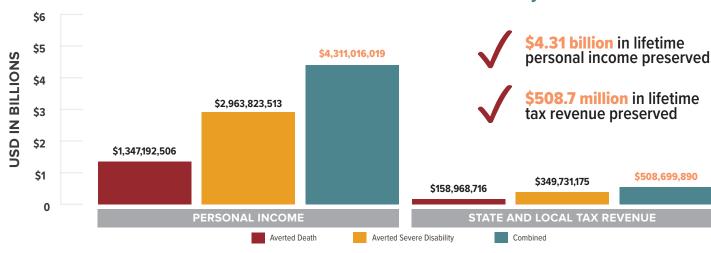
Georgia has also made substantial strides on a national scale, improving from 16 percent below than the national average for age-adjusted injury-related death rate to 6 percent above average. In 2020, that equates to 1,803 lives saved.

Age-Adjusted Trauma Mortality Rate, 2003-2020 GA compared to US



With access to life-saving trauma care, citizens can avoid death and severe disability. In 2020, Georgia preserved approximately \$5.4B in lifetime personal income and \$63M in lifetime tax revenue, resulting in a \$22.60 return on investment.

The Estimated Base Economic Effects of Lower Mortality Rates in 2020



Trauma centers received about 7 percent of readiness costs in FY 2024, which are incurred by trauma centers to ensure they are ready 24/7/365 to receive and treat critically injured patients.

The Commission continues to work towards increased readiness funding to ensure active recruitment and retention across the state, provide predictable readiness cost offsets, allow system expansion through start-up grants, and increase funding for regional centers, while minimizing the additional impact on Level I and II trauma centers. While significant strides have been made, the trauma system remains vulnerable, and funding is essential to stabilizing it.

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COMMISSION MEMBERS

Fiscal Year 2024

Dennis Ashley, MD, FACS

Chair

Will C. Sealy Endowed Chair Professor of Surgery, Mercer University SOM Director of Trauma, Atrium Health Navicent



James R. Dunne, MD, FACS

Vice-Chair

Chief of Trauma & Surgical Critical Care Memorial University Medical Center



Regina S. Medeiros, DNP, MHSA, RN

Secretary/Treasurer

Trauma Program Director Wellstar MCG



John C. Bleacher, MD, FACS

Georgia Trauma Foundation Chair Pediatric Surgeon | Retired



Courtney Terwilliger

Public Safety Coordinator Emanuel County



Pete Quinones

Principle and CEO MetroAtlanta Ambulance Service



S. Rob Todd, MD, FACS, FCCM

Senior Vice President / Chief, Acute Care Surgery Grady Health System



James "J" Smith, MD, FACEP

Emergency Department Medical Director Northside Gwinnett & Envision Physician Services



Terry T. Cobb

EMS Director Laurens County Emergency Medical Service







GEORGIA TRAUMA COMMISSION