

TITLE X GRANTEE PROFILE: THE FAMILY HEALTH CENTERS OF GEORGIA, INC.

OCTOBER 2020

The Family Health Centers of Georgia, Inc. (FHCGA) was founded in 1975 and has participated in the Title X program since 2014. FHCGA has more than 40 years of experience with expanding access to healthcare for low-income individuals and families. Its mission, to provide high-quality patient-centered healthcare with a commitment to excellence, makes the group a natural fit for the Title X program.

FHCGA implements a family planning program through the Georgia Family Planning System (GFPS), one of the largest and most ambitious efforts in the nation to integrate Title X family planning services into federally funded primary care health centers. The need for comprehensive family planning and preventive health services offered by Title X providers is substantial in Georgia; in 2020, an estimated 695,120 women needed publicly supported family planning services in the state, a 7 percent increase since 2010. But it's not only women who benefit from GFPS services. In 2017, 27 percent of all GFPS users were males—more than twice the national average. Expanding Title X family planning services to males enables GFPS providers to ensure males are included in the discussion of positive, healthy relationships and shared decision-making around reproductive life plans and optimal health outcomes.

According to FHCGA's program director, one of the hallmarks of the GFPS is its individualized implementation programs. The GFPS has 28 subrecipient agencies—that's 28 unique models! Its quality assurance/quality improvement nurse manager said of GFPS programs, "We can't have a top-down or one-size-fits-all model. We need to meet folks where they are—urban areas such as Atlanta and Savannah aren't doing it the same way as agencies in rural communities."

The grantee also noted that the integration of [Providing Quality Family Planning Services: Recommendations of CDC and the U.S. Office of Population Affairs](#) didn't happen overnight. FHCGA needed education and support from champions, like a colleague who brought knowledge from her Title X work in Pennsylvania. As project director, she was able to work with the FHCGA team to educate providers on compliance, best practices, and outcomes.

FAST FACTS

HHS Region:	4
Year of initial Title X funding:	2014
Grantee tenure:	6 years
# of subrecipients:	28
# of service sites:	153
Website:	FHCGA GFPS

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

- Georgia's unintended pregnancy rate is the seventh highest in the United States.
- Women in Georgia experience higher rates of breast cancer mortality, obesity, low birth weight, and preterm birth than the U.S. average.
- The infant mortality rate of 7.5 per 1,000 live births is higher than the national rate of 5.8.

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The GFPS nurse manager notes, “We had to frame it for these providers—why is it important for an internist or cardiologist to ask these questions about family planning? How do we connect chronic disease with pregnancy and fertility?” Chronic disease management is a vital component of assisting with pregnancy planning and improving maternal and fetal outcomes.

While many Title X-funded health centers have taken steps toward integrating family planning into primary care, FHCGA empowers agencies to take their services from co-location to true integration by offering on-site support. The grantee noted that this integration is a key contributor to reaching males in their existing patient population.

Recently, FHCGA has taken additional steps to make family planning even more accessible. FHCGA received supplemental funding in September 2019 for an mHealth (mobile health accessed through phones and tablets) project to expand and improve access to integrated Title X family planning and primary care services. This additional funding provided incentives to clinics to develop telehealth programs, an approach that has been critical during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

When asked about the effect of the Title X services that the GFPS provides, FHCGA emphasized that it’s “HUGE!” FHCGA shared that in 2015, the GFPS served 86,000 people. After 5 years with Title X, it is now serving nearly 160,000 patients across Georgia—an increase of 86 percent.

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Special thanks to Sara Shay Sullivan, B.A., GFPS program director, and Pamela L. Brooks, B.S.N., GFPS quality assurance/quality improvement nurse manager, for their contributions to this story.

ABOUT TITLE X

For 50 years, Title X family planning clinics have played a critical role in ensuring access to a broad range of family planning and related preventive health services for millions of low-income or uninsured individuals and others. Title X is the only federal grant program dedicated solely to providing individuals with comprehensive family planning and related preventive health services.

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