

Access to Healthcare



ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Access to care is affected by a number of different factors including the number of healthcare facilities and providers in an area and the availability and affordability of healthcare.

According to the Georgia County Guide, in 2006 there were 907 persons per physician in Douglas County compared to Georgia at 494 persons per physician.

ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE

In 2008, more Georgia physicians provided specialty care than primary care. The Georgia County Guide 2010 reports that 43.5% of Douglas County physicians are considered primary care physicians (family practice, internal medicine and pediatrics).

The Georgia Health Disparities Report 2008 compares 32 counties in Georgia, including Douglas, on a number of important health issues including access to care. Letter grades were assigned to the counties based on various criteria. Douglas County received the following letter grades.

Letter Grade	Access to Care Category	Comments
F	Access to Primary Care Providers	The Report designates Douglas as a "whole-county health professional shortage area." Nine of the 32 counties received a F.
F	Primary Care Safety Net	Douglas County residents do not have access to a federally qualified community health center, which provides primary care to residents.
C	Health Professional Diversity	Measure of the black and Latino physicians per 100,000 black and Latino population. The Douglas rate is 69.4 minority physicians per 100,000 population. Even though Douglas' rate is higher than many of the 32 counties studied, it is still much lower than the rate for white physicians. Often residents from minority races prefer to see physicians of their own race.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE

Regular oral healthcare improves overall health. It also leads to the early treatment, diagnosis and prevention of oral diseases including oral cancer. Routine cleanings are recommended every 6 months for adults and children and have been shown to decrease incidence of plaque and gingivitis. Dental infections can rapidly spread to other parts of the body causing serious infections and illness.

According to the American Dental Hygienists' Association, 40% of Americans are not receiving the recommended dental care. A significant factor inhibiting access to care is the inability to pay for dental services. Another important inhibiting factor is the lack of sufficient numbers of dentists practicing in rural and inner-city areas. Fortunately, according to the Georgia Health Disparities Report 2008, Douglas County is *not* a Dental Health Professional Shortage Area.

Table 3-1: Percent of Adult Residents who Visited a Dentist or a Dental Clinic within the Past Year in Georgia (2002, 2006 and 2008)

Location	2002	2006	2008
Georgia	67.0 %	70.7 %	71.8 %

Source: BRFSS

- The percentage of adult residents in Georgia who visited a dentist or dental clinic in the past year has increased since 2002.
- The percentage from the 2008 survey is expected to decrease in 2010 due to the poor economy and unemployment rates.

HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

Residents must have access to healthcare providers and facilities. Table 3-2 shows the number of facilities available in Douglas County.

Table 3-2 : Healthcare Facilities Douglas County, 2008

Hospitals	Hospital Beds	Nursing Homes	Nursing Home Beds	Trauma Centers
1	108	1	246	0

Source: Georgia Department of Community Health

Did you know...

CDPH provides dental services for children ages 2 -20 as long as they are still in school. These services include dental screenings, composite fillings, sealants, cleanings, fluoride treatments, stainless steel crowns, pulpotomies, and extractions. We also provide extractions for adults during limited hours. Acceptable payment methods are PeachCare, Medicaid and cash.

Call us at
770-514-2372.



INSURANCE COVERAGE

Health insurance coverage has a profound effect on access to care. Those without health insurance are less likely to have regular medical care and are more likely to go without care. In Georgia, Medicaid and PeachCare are available to provide health insurance coverage for children and adults who are low income or disabled. Medicare is available to seniors over age 65. Table 3-3 shows the percentage of uninsured population in Douglas County.

Uninsured Facts

- Douglas County has an uninsured population of 18.5% of the total county population.
- The largest percentage of uninsured population falls in the 18 – 64 age group. Persons included in this group may exceed the maximum income level allowed to qualify for Medicaid but often cannot afford to pay for healthcare.
- The Georgia Health Disparities Report 2008 gave Douglas County a grade of B on the uninsured as percent of total population. The median percentage for the 32 Georgia counties in the report was 14.8%.

Table 3-3: Uninsured Residents Douglas County, 2008

Douglas County	Number	Percent of Population
Uninsured Population	23,615	18.5%
Under 18 years	4,854	3.8%
18 to 64 years	18,462	14.5%
65 years or over	299	0.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

PAYOR SOURCES

MEDICAID

The Medicaid program in Georgia provides healthcare for children, pregnant women, and people who are low income, aged, blind and disabled. Table 3-4 shows the average number of members and payment for Georgia Medicaid in 2008. Averaging membership over the year is necessary because persons enroll in and are dropped from the plan throughout the year.

Table 3-4: Medicaid Member Average and Payment, 2008

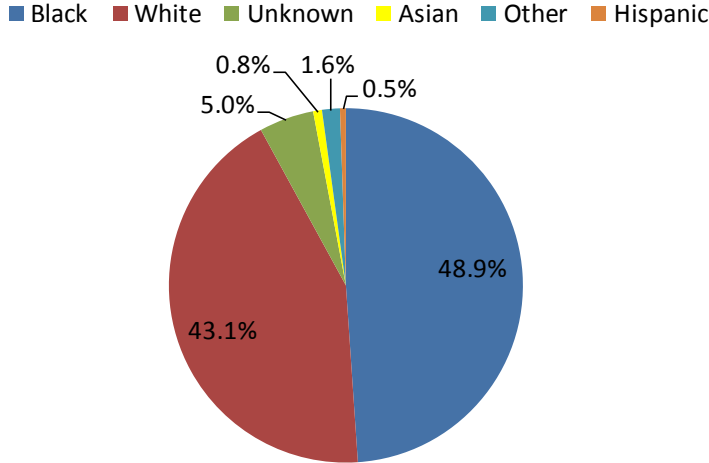
Location	Average Number of Members	Total Net Payment	Average Payment per Member
Douglas	14,852	\$45,040,374	\$4,752
Georgia	1,260,519	\$4,515,345,997	\$5,005

Source: Georgia Department of Community Health

- Douglas County residents made up 1.2% of the Georgia Medicaid members in 2008.
- The annual Medicaid payment per Douglas County member was slightly lower than payment per Georgia member.
- There are approximately equal proportions of white and black populations who are Medicaid members in Douglas County.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

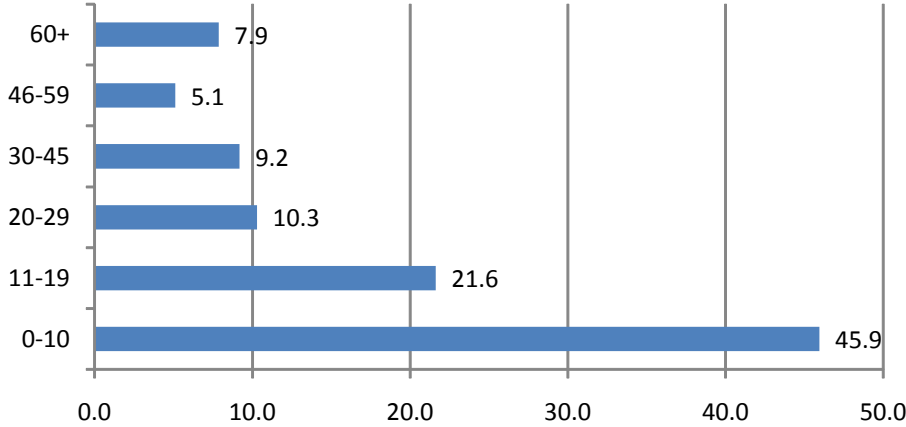
Figure 3-1: Medicaid Members by Race/Ethnicity Douglas County, 2008



The black and white populations used Medicaid almost equally, However, whites comprise 64.8% of the total population in Douglas County and blacks made up 35.2%.

Source: Georgia Department of Community Health

Figure 3-2: Percent Medicaid Members by Age Douglas County, 2008



Medicaid Facts

- Most Medicaid users in Douglas County are between 0-10 years of age.
- A Medicaid membership is established for eligible infants in the hospital after birth.

Source: Georgia Department of Community Health

PEACHCARE FOR KIDS™

In 1997, Congress created Title XXI of the Social Security Act to provide healthcare for the growing number of uninsured children in the United States. This legislation provided states with the opportunity to create programs to increase children's access to affordable health insurance. In Georgia, this program is PeachCare for Kids™.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

In 1999, PeachCare for Kids™ began covering comprehensive healthcare to children through the age of 18 who do not qualify for Medicaid and live in households with incomes at or below 235% of the federal poverty level. This means a family of three can earn \$43,029 a year and a family of four can earn \$51,818 a year (March 2010 figures). Georgia ranks fourth highest nationally in number of enrolled children. Table 3-5 shows the average number of members and payment breakdowns for this program during 2008. Averaging membership over the year is necessary because children enroll in and are dropped from the plan throughout the year.

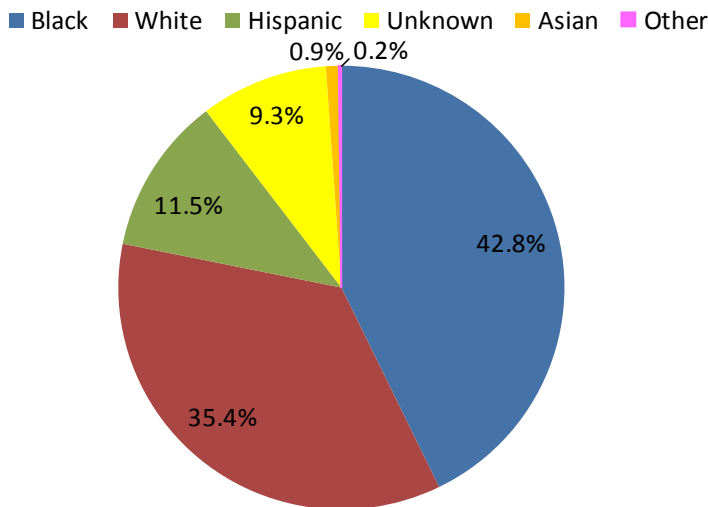
Table 3-5: PeachCare for Kids Member Average and Payment, 2008

Location	Average Number of Members	Total Net Payment	Payment per Member
Douglas	4,150	\$374,389	\$1,312
Georgia	250,094	\$22,624,379	\$1,399

Source: Georgia Department of Community Health

- Douglas County children made up 1.7% of the member average in 2008.
- The annual PeachCare payment per Douglas County child was slightly below that for all Georgia children.

Figure 3-3: PeachCare Members by Race/Ethnicity Douglas County, 2008



IN DOUGLAS COUNTY, THE HIGHEST PROPORTION OF PEACHCARE MEMBERS ARE BLACK (42.8%) FOLLOWED BY WHITE (35.4%) AND THEN HISPANIC (11.5%).

Source: Georgia Department of Community Health

MEDICARE

Medicare is health insurance for people age 65 or older, under 65 with certain disabilities, and any age with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD).

- Douglas County had 11,503 residents enrolled in Medicare in 2007-2008.
- Douglas County Medicare enrollees received \$117,611,000 in benefits, which represented 1.2% of Georgia Medicare payments in 2007-2008.

