

ALBANY AREA PRIMARY HEALTH CARE, INC.

HISTORY

The authority for Albany Area Primary Health Care, Inc.'s program is in its Board of Directors. The present Board members emerged in part from the first advisory council which was formed in July of 1978 during the planning phase of this program. In November of 1979, the corporation was officially formed as a nonprofit corporation presented to the corporate code of the State of Georgia. The Lee County Primary Health Care Council, Inc., which was organized for the purpose of planning and developing a primary care center in Lee County, voted to merger with the Albany Area Primary Health Board in May of 1979. On November 29, 1979, the office of the Secretary of State issued a new corporate charter formalizing the merging of the two corporations. The charter declared the surviving corporate name to be Albany Area Primary Health Care, Inc.

Albany Area Primary Health Care, Inc. (AAPHC) provides a full compliment of primary care services in each of the community centers. Most of the services are provided by the clinic staff. Those services which are not provided in each clinic are available through referral and linkages with other agencies and services. Health care providers consist of a team of physicians and physician assistants and nurse practitioners known as midlevels. Midlevels primarily focus on acute illness and diseases while the physicians give their attention to more complicated illness thus giving greater community access to health care.

November of 1982 marked the fourth anniversary of AAPHC. It had grown to include three primary care centers which offer services in adult and pediatric medicine, dentistry (now closed), individual and family counseling, social work, and case management. These services are provided by a superb medical staff consisting of physicians, midlevels, and allied health personnel.

Parallel to the efforts of AAPHC, in 1979, a group of concerned citizens in Baker County formed a local nonprofit corporation for the purpose of seeking funds for the construction of a comprehensive health center building. The group received \$100,000 from a private foundation for the construction of this project. The Baker County Board of Commissioners donated a parcel of property located in Newton, Georgia, on Highway 200 near the intersection of State Highway 91. A 3,500 square foot facility was constructed on the site. In August of 1979, the Baker County Health Department, AAPHC, and the county mental health program moved into the building as lessees. This building was again upgraded in 1985 with another donation from the same private foundation in the amount of \$150,000. The new facility was approximately 5,500 square feet and continued to house the same three entities. This was completed in 1986. Further expansion occurred in 1993 with \$450,000 funding from the Woodruff Foundation for expansion to 11,284 square feet of which primary care occupies 5,731 square feet. The Department of Human Resources and AAPHC views the Baker County center as a model health center; the only one of its kind in the State of Georgia providing public health, mental health, and primary care under one roof.

In February of 1980, the AAPHC program negotiated contracts for construction of modular units to house the East Albany Medical Center and the center operation for its entire primary health care system. The site location for the units in Albany was located on property owned by the City of Albany in Dougherty County through a year to year lease at no cost to this program. An expansion was begun on April 19, 1982 where the four modular units previously located in Lee County were moved to the East Albany Medical Center site. Renovations were completed in June of 1982 that expanded services in East Albany. In 1985, this property was donated to AAPHC at 1712 East Broad Avenue. A new facility was constructed of approximately 11,000 square feet on this site. The modular units were removed. Again, the City of Albany was solicited in the Spring and Summer of 1990 for additional land behind East Albany Medical Center. The City again donated an additional parcel (.22 acres) of land attached to the current parcel of land for further expansion and parking. The City gave 1.00 acres for expansion in September of 1993.

The administrative offices of the corporation moved from East Albany Medical Center in July of 1990 to allow room for expansion at this facility. The administrative offices were relocated at 235 Roosevelt Avenue in a suite which included seven offices totaling 1,480 square feet. Then, in February of 1994, the administrative offices moved to a different suite to an additional space of 2,600 square feet of ten offices, conference room, and storage. In April of 1995, the administrative offices were moved to 804 Fourteenth Avenue, a former physician office, with 2,700 square feet of rented space for offices, conference rooms, and storage. Due to the need for further expansion and the opportunity to purchase property, the administrative offices were relocated to 204 N. Westover Boulevard in December 2004.

The original unit of Lee Medical Arts Center was in four modular units. A permanent structure of 6,276 sq. ft. was constructed on a loan approved by the Farmer's Home Administration. The building is located on over one acre of property donated by the Lee County Board of Commissioners in fees simple to AAPHC. The move into the Lee Medical Arts Center was completed and open to patients in March of 1982. The building contained space for primary care medicine and dentistry. In 1993, due the resignation of the dentist, AAPHC closed the dental practice. A pediatric wing now takes the place of the dentistry section. An additional internal medicine wing of 1,511 sq. ft was added in the summer of 2000.

In the summer of 1990, recognition of the HIV/AIDS case load in an outpatient management setting in conjunction with the District Health STD Program. AAPHC's Board of Directors applied for this program. Originally located at 1010 North Madison Street in Albany in a shared location with the District Health STD Program, we operated an outpatient Rural HIV Model from October 1, 1990 until June 1, 1991. After that time, both programs had grown and additional space was required and we moved to 522 Second Avenue. In September of 1993 when additional space was again needed, the Rural HIV Model moved to 1120 West Broad Avenue in Albany located beside the Ryan White II and Area Mental Health Substance Abuse Program. In the first part of 2003, an opportunity arose to purchase an existing vacant medical office which would allow future growth of services. In June 2003, the Rural HIV Model relocated to the 3,417 sq. ft. space at 2202 East Oglethorpe Boulevard in East Albany.

In August of 1995, a clinic in Edison, Georgia, formerly run by Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital and Phoebe Family Practice Residency Program, was taken over by AAPHC and re-named Edison Medical Center. A modular unit (2,018 sq. ft.) was developed by the development authority of Edison in 1998 to 19519 West Hartford Street in Edison.

In June of 1997, East Albany Pediatric & Adolescent Center opened. It is situated behind East Albany Medical Center on land donated by the City of Albany. This facility has a total of 5,433 square feet.

In October of 1998, a new modular facility (2,072 sq. ft.), Dawson Medical Center, opened at 475 Cinderella Lane, SE, in Dawson. An addition was made to the facility in the summer of 2000 of 756 sq. ft. for a total of 2,828 sq. ft. In October 2003, Phoebe Family Practice in Dawson and Dawson Medical Center merged. The former Phoebe center was remodeled and expanded to 5,634 sq. ft. incorporating laboratory, procedure, medical records, 13 exam rooms and office space.

South Albany Medical Center became the newest addition to the corporation when it was opened in October 2005. In collaboration with Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital and the City of Albany, a facility comprised of an urgent care center operated by Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital, a subsidiary location of the Albany Police Department, and our primary care practice was built to serve the south Albany population. South Albany Medical Center also gives us the opportunity to help meet the needs of the expanding elderly population by offering specialized Geriatric care services at this location. In January 2007, South Albany Medical Center expanded services to offer pediatrics in this facility as well.

The governing body of AAPHC is comprised of representatives from Baker, Calhoun, Dougherty, Lee, and Terrell Counties in a centralized management system. It has insured that the delivery of primary health care is accomplished in a comprehensive, efficient, and cost effective manner.

As Albany Area Primary Health Care, Inc. continues its commitment to delivering the highest quality of medical care to all residents of this area, we look to and appreciate the tremendous effort we have received from members of our community.