

Rising to the Forefront

For the better part of the past 30 years, Georgia has enjoyed consistent, stable economic and population growth fueled by a high quality of life, a pro-business environment and a low cost of living. This unprecedented growth has transformed Georgia into the 8th most populous state in the nation and doesn't look to slow down any time soon.

This growth, while welcome, also poses challenges.

In addition to the demand that comes with such growth, there also has been an internal migration from Georgia's rural communities to its urban centers. This has led to a "brain drain" for small towns and a gradual, but steady depletion of services, offerings and opportunities for those who remain.

This is particularly true for the medical industry, which is stressed not by the juxtaposition of continued growth and shrinking offerings, but also an aging population that is increasingly living longer, yet in need of more and more healthcare services.

Additional investment in healthcare education is a commitment that's needed in all existing institutions to meet the current and future demand. Every accredited UME slot available at Georgia's medical schools contributes toward collaboratively meeting the state's care needs.

There is important work to be done, and PCOM stands ready to be a committed, engaged partner in doing so.

11M

Since 1990, Georgia's population has nearly doubled in size, growing from 6.6 million to more than 11 million as of 2024.

57%

Underserved areas in Georgia often are among those most in need of care. Consider that 57 percent of rural Georgia adults have multimorbidity.

There is one issue that must rise to the forefront — ensuring a steady pipeline of medical professionals to deliver care to Georgians who need it.

Meeting this challenge is imperative for Georgia, and it requires addressing several challenges head-on, including:



A shortage of healthcare professionals



Georgia's geographic isolation and disparity



The increasing costs of healthcare education

Addressing Georgia's Complex Problems

For Georgia to continue down the path of growth, it's imperative that the state make critical investments in its human capital infrastructure. A strong, grounded network of healthcare plays a vital role in attracting economic growth and providing necessary services to Georgia residents. By identifying key workforce shortages, we can build meaningful solutions to aid all Georgians.



Shortage of Healthcare Professionals

The data is clear – Georgia does not currently have an adequate number of physicians to care for its communities. That deficit is projected to get worse with a growing and aging population, and it's exacerbated in its rural communities, many of which have either experienced recent economic development wins or are being marketed to attract future investments. The inability to provide basic healthcare services to these communities will be detrimental to our continued growth.

Georgia's healthcare profession is nearing a crisis point:

-23%

Georgia currently ranks 42nd in primary care physicians per capita with a physician to patient ratio, which is 23% below the national average

1 in 5

As of 2023, 22.5% of Georgia's physicians are 65 or older with 1 in 5 physicians likely to retire in the next five years

8k

Georgia is projected to be short by 8,000 doctors by the year 2030

33.5%

There are only 167 residency slots in Georgia focused on primary care each year—and 33.5 percent of those residents ultimately will practice out of state, resulting in a "brain drain"



Geographical Isolation and Disparity

The state of Georgia is the largest state east of the Mississippi River, and its sheer size creates its own unique challenges to providing access to quality healthcare for its residents.

For many rural residents, the closest emergency room can be more than 20 minutes away. Additionally, 40 counties in Georgia lack an internal medicine physician. There is a price to this shortage as delays in healthcare associated with **physician shortages in underserved areas cost the state an estimated \$3.6 million annually.**

59k

The state of Georgia encompasses more than 59,000 square miles

20 minutes

For many rural residents, the closest emergency room can be more than 20 minutes away

40

40 counties in Georgia lack an internal medicine physician

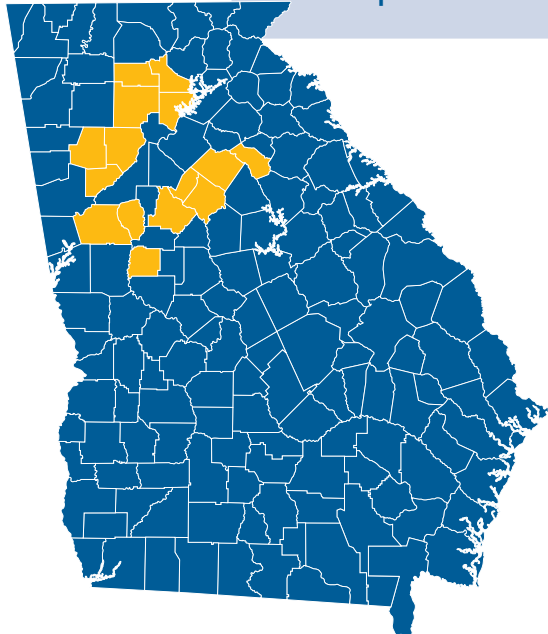
170k

According to the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, in 2020 alone more than 170,000 people relocated to the Metro Atlanta area from across Georgia, leaving rural communities behind

**3,500
to 1**

143 out of 159 Georgia counties are designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), areas where there are 3,500 or more patients for every one provider

■ = HPSAs



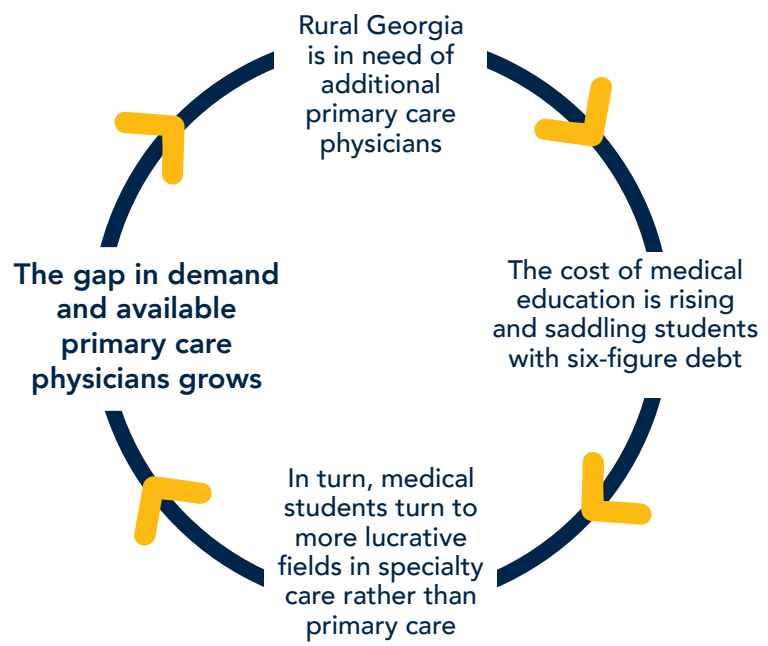
In 2017, Georgia's State Office of Rural Health, a division of the Georgia Department of Community Health, found that **89 counties did not have enough doctors to treat people living in those areas**



Increasing Costs of Healthcare Professional Education

The growing cost of medical school paired with the recently implemented cap on student loans has created a challenging cycle for Georgians to pursue a career in primary care.

As such, **Georgia is trapped in a self-defeating loop:**



238k

Nationally, the average total cost of medical school is \$238,320

\$\$\$

Lack of affordability is on the horizon, meaning that qualified students who want to practice medicine will be unable to pursue that career due to the cost of UME

40%

According to AAMC, more than 40 percent of students leave Georgia upon the completion of their residency

Support for PCOM is Vital for the Future of Georgia

Over the past two decades, PCOM has made the state healthier as the only medical institution with established campuses in both rural and suburban communities in Georgia. PCOM has a legacy that spans more than 125 years, training healthcare professionals to see the whole person. The institution's focus on preventative health is part of a comprehensive approach to providing high quality, holistic care.

Between campuses in Suwanee and Moultrie, PCOM features a medical school, a pharmacy school and a doctor of physical therapy program with graduate degrees in physician assistant studies, biomedical sciences and medical laboratory sciences.

PCOM currently receives significantly less financial operating support from the state compared to its non-profit medical institution peers, **yet graduates the second most medical professionals in Georgia and more primary care physicians than any other school.** With additional financial support, PCOM can remain a competitive and viable option that is affordable to Georgians.

Investing in PCOM will create a healthier and more prosperous rural Georgia.

As Georgia looks to train the next generation of healthcare professionals to address its various challenges, **PCOM is well-positioned to make a difference.**

PCOM represents healthcare infrastructure

- 68.5% of PCOM's students are from the state.
- The average economic output generated by a single physician is \$3.2 million.
- Almost 1 in 3 medical students in the U.S. are enrolled at COMs. Nearly 60% of those graduates pursue careers in primary care.

PCOM's established presence makes Georgia healthier

- PCOM graduates the second most medical professionals in Georgia and more primary care physicians than any other school.
- More PCOM graduates remain in the state than graduates of any other medical school in the state.
- PCOM currently receives minimal financial operating support from the state compared to other medical institutions.

PCOM is vital to Georgia's primary care pipeline

- Both the osteopathic medical profession and PCOM as an institution have a deep history of community-based primary care for rural areas.
- Over the past two decades, PCOM has privately invested more than \$100M in establishing two medical campuses that have significantly bolstered Georgia's physician workforce.
- Georgia retains more PCOM graduates than any other medical school.