



# NEWS RELEASE

## CONTACT:

**Pamela A. Keene**  
**404-656-7645**  
[pkeene@dch.ga.gov](mailto:pkeene@dch.ga.gov)

## **DCH State Office of Rural Health Awards Four Safety-Net Grants Improving Rural Health Access Focus of This Program**

CORDELE, GA (April 30, 2014) – Four health care entities have been awarded Rural Health Safety-Net Grants from the Georgia Department of Community Health’s (DCH) State Office of Rural Health (SORH). The grants for 2014 total \$390,000 and will be used to expand health services in rural Georgia. Since the program began in 2007, SORH has awarded more than \$2.5 million through these Rural Health Safety-Net Grants.

“These four projects will help enhance our Rural Health care infrastructure in Georgia, improving quality and access to essential health services,” said DCH Commissioner Clyde L. Reese III, Esq. “Each project is diverse and demonstrates cross-county cooperation and outreach among the entities. The projects address critical issues in rural health care, including health care technology and childhood obesity.”

Here are the four grant recipient organizations and their projects:

- Crisp Regional Hospital -- to purchase cardiac monitors/defibrillators for Crisp and Wilcox County EMS Services -- \$90,000.
- Irwin County Hospital -- to establish the HealthHIE Georgia Collaborative, an integrated health care network addressing urgent health care information technology needs of its rural partners -- \$100,000.
- East Georgia Healthcare Center -- to implement new case management and outreach services to those patients determined to be at high risk through the hiring of case managers for a service area consisting of eighteen (18) rural Georgia counties -- \$100,000.
- Southwest Georgia Health Network -- to establish a comprehensive Childhood Obesity Prevention Program for children 2-18 years of age, in a five-county service area that includes Chattahoochee, Crisp, Quitman, Stewart and Sumter counties -- \$100,000.

“There is great value in communities collaborating to address health care needs as most citizens consume health care resources within their local region which are typically multi-county,” said Charles Owens, executive director of SORH. “These collaborative initiatives maximize grant funds to ensure access to high quality health care to improve the lives of the local citizens, which is vital to sustaining healthy communities and supporting local economies.”

These grants are state-funded and applications were open to non-profit health care providers and local governments. The funding cycle continues through June 30, 2015.

### **About The Georgia Department of Community Health**

Through effective planning, purchasing and oversight, the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) provides access to affordable, quality health care to millions of Georgians, including some of the state’s uninsured and most vulnerable populations.

DCH is responsible for Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids,<sup>®</sup> the State Health Benefit Plan, Healthcare Facility Regulation and Health Information Technology in Georgia.

Clyde L. Reese III, Esq., serves as Commissioner for the Georgia Department of Community Health.

To learn more about DCH and its dedication to **A Healthy Georgia**, visit [www.dch.georgia.gov](http://www.dch.georgia.gov).