

# REPORT

## TO OUR COMMUNITY

2011-2012 | IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITY



# TANNER – IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITY

*Through the caring and dedication of our team of employees and physicians, Tanner Health System will be recognized as the Provider of Choice for quality, accessible health care for our patients and our community.*

## 2011–2012 AWARDS & ACCOLADES

### 15 TOP HEALTH SYSTEMS IN THE NATION

Thomson Reuters named Tanner Health System to its annual list of the Top 15 Health Systems in the nation for 2012, citing the health system's high quality and patient satisfaction scores.

### OUTSTANDING PATIENT EXPERIENCE AWARD

Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton and Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica earned HealthGrades' Outstanding Patient Experience Award, ranking among the top 5 percent of hospitals in the nation for patient satisfaction.

### NATION'S TOP 100 CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITALS

Higgins General Hospital was the only hospital in Georgia named to the National Rural Health Association's list of the nation's Top 100 Critical Access Hospitals.

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*President and CEO,*  
Tanner Health System

## A Message from the CEO

What makes a good healthcare organization great? That's the question we asked ourselves a decade ago. The answer, we found, varies.

Great healthcare organizations take a team approach to care that involves all aspects of the patient's well-being. Great healthcare organizations realize they are not caring for the patient alone, but also for the patient's loved ones, who must be included in important decisions.

Great healthcare organizations are committed to quality above all, delivering the right care at the right time, every time, and ensuring the best possible clinical outcomes.

Great healthcare organizations are trendsetters, at the forefront not simply of technology but also in establishing protocols and procedures that other organizations may emulate. From our unique team approach to care to our advocacy for the meaningful use of electronic health records, Tanner has sought to lead the way.

Our efforts have been recognized nationally. In 2012, Tanner was named one of the 15 Top Health Systems in the nation by research firm Thomson Reuters — the only health system in Georgia on the list. Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton was recognized by HealthGrades as No. 1 in Georgia for overall orthopedic care for the third consecutive year. That hospital and Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica also were recognized by HealthGrades with prestigious Outstanding Patient Experience awards for the second year

in a row, ranking among the top 5 percent of hospitals in the nation for federally reported patient satisfaction. And Higgins General Hospital in Bremen earned the distinction as one of the Nation's Top 100 Critical Access Hospitals by the National Rural Health Association.

In addition, all three hospitals — Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton, Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica and Higgins General Hospital — were named to the Chairman's Category of the Georgia Hospital Association's Partnership for Health and Accountability Measures Honor Roll — the highest category for quality. Only 14 other hospitals in Georgia made the list.

While these awards look great in our hospitals' trophy cases, what's even better is the validation that the answers we've found are right. We never set out to be noticed by the nation; we set out to deliver the best possible care to the people who depend on us.

In the following pages, you'll see how our commitment to quality and patient satisfaction is paying dividends for our community, enabling us to continue to grow and to ensure that decisions that impact the health of our communities are made locally.

### BY THE NUMBERS

# TOP 5%

### FOR PATIENT SATISFACTION IN U.S.



Thank you for your continued support.

Loy M. Howard  
President and CEO  
Tanner Health System

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# COMMITTED TO CARE FOR EVERY MEMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY

## BY THE NUMBERS

**\$52M**

## IN CHARITY AND INDIGENT CARE

Illness is not confined to the employed or those with health insurance. Access to high-quality medical care is a need felt throughout our region.

At Tanner, we are committed to providing care to every member of our community, regardless of their ability to pay. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit healthcare organization, Tanner provides charity care for those who need — but who could not otherwise afford— quality healthcare services. In the past fiscal year alone, Tanner provided \$52 million in gross charges for

charity and indigent care — including \$32.2 million from Tanner Medical Center/ Carrollton, \$12.5 million from Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica, \$6.7 million from Higgins General Hospital in Bremen and \$700,000 through Tanner Medical Group.

Tanner provides those millions in charity care while receiving no local tax dollars. We reinvest all revenues into new technology, new facilities and charity care for our region.



## BY THE NUMBERS

**\$0**

RECEIVED IN  
LOCAL TAXES



## AN ENGINE FOR OUR REGION'S ECONOMY

These have been difficult economic times for our nation, state and region. According to the Georgia Hospital Association (GHA), a third of Georgia's hospitals operated with a negative total margin in 2010, the latest year for which data is available. The growing burden of providing uncompensated care to the uninsured or underinsured, as well as years of federal and state cuts to Medicare and Medicaid, have created an uncertain future for health care in Georgia.

Nonetheless, by emphasizing quality care and through the careful stewardship of Tanner's senior leadership and board of directors, Tanner remains a strong contributor to the region's economy, contributing almost \$662.3 million in economic impact and helping to create 5,300 full-time jobs, according to the GHA.

Using local services from area companies allows Tanner to create employment opportunities in our region and improve economic prospects beyond the hospital walls.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**\$662.3M**

IN ECONOMIC  
IMPACT

## BY THE NUMBERS

# \$4.84M

## TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH

### TANNER'S BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY

What is it worth to have nationally acclaimed medical care available right in your own community?

Exceptional health care is priceless, though there are many ways Tanner makes an impact in the communities where its services go beyond providing medical care. Tanner invests in developing future healthcare providers, offers free health screenings and wellness opportunities, provides health-focused community resources and more.

#### IN THE PAST FISCAL YEAR, TANNER PROVIDED:

### \$2,280,922

investment in our area's future healthcare providers

### \$1,186,601

in community health, planning and wellness initiatives

### \$425,004

in subsidized emergency care

### \$296,272

for community programs and community clinic support

### \$102,404

to support economic development

### \$76,873

for medical research

### \$57,631

in training for community leaders

### \$414,340

in walking trails management and community housing

## BUILDING A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY

**T**anner works to improve the wellness of the communities we serve — from providing health education to offering free screenings and partnering with others to support the new Get Healthy West Georgia initiative. During the past year:

**6,625** people attended programs on health and wellness offered through the Tanner Speakers Bureau

**301** pre-K children throughout the region received free vision screenings

**33** episodes of WLBB NewsTalk 1330 AM's "Community Voice" program featured Tanner physicians and other healthcare professionals who provided health education to the community

**522** community members attended monthly State of the Heart sessions hosted by Tanner Heart & Vascular Specialists

**3,088** older adults learned more about their health at events specifically designed for them

**275** people received free screenings for peripheral artery disease, skin cancer and prostate cancer

**5,146** residents attended free health fairs and community-based events to learn more about their health and how to live well

**2,689** people attended programs to learn more about cancer and cancer prevention

**4,038** people learned more about their health through business and industry outreach programs provided by Tanner Health Source and Tanner Occupational Health

**1,031** people donated blood at drives held across Tanner Health System

**1,182,153** page views were made to [www.tanner.org](http://www.tanner.org), where people can take free health quizzes, view medical information, apply for a career at Tanner and find a doctor

**286** people took lifesaving Safe Sitter, first aid and CPR classes

**171** performances were offered by Tanner's Harmony for Healing music therapy program to audiences of patients and their families, Tanner staff and members of the community

To learn more about the Tanner Speakers Bureau or to schedule a presentation for your community group, civic group, church group or professional organization, call **770.836.9282**.



## BY THE NUMBERS

# 24,034

RESIDENTS ATTENDED FREE  
HEALTH FAIRS AND EVENTS



Tanner Connections began with a small group of students, growing to more than 30 by the end of the fiscal year.

## 2012: A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

### TANNER CONNECTIONS OFFERS EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR AREA STUDENTS

#### BY THE NUMBERS

**33** CARROLL COUNTY SCHOOLS STUDENTS IN THE TANNER CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2011-2012 began at Tanner with an innovative new initiative that is giving area high school students a look inside health care and the importance of living healthfully.

Tanner Connections, a partnership between Tanner Health System and the Carroll County Schools, engages students in the exploration of healthcare careers and opportunities while helping them gain an understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The inaugural year of the program began with eight students and grew to almost 20 students by the

end of the academic year.

Students experienced several different areas of the health system, including not only clinical care, but also food and nutrition services and information technologies. Tanner Connections students were mentored at each of the Carroll County's two hospitals, Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton and Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica.

Tanner Connections continues a long tradition in Carroll County of neighbors caring for neighbors that stretches back to the opening of the original Tanner Memorial Hospital, when the community came together to raise funds to build and staff the community's first hospital in 1949. The initiative also continues Tanner's commitment to improve the health of the communities we serve, both by providing an education in medical services and by showing the county's students how important it is to be advocates for a healthier lifestyle.

## TRADITION OF SERVICE

As a nonprofit organization that receives no taxpayer dollars, Tanner does not operate for the benefit of shareholders, but for the communities it serves. Instead of dispersing earnings to shareholders, Tanner reinvests profits back to improving health care in west Georgia and east Alabama in the form of expanded facilities, advanced technology, additional physicians and caregivers, emergency care, community outreach, educational programs and related benefits.

**13,018**

inpatient admissions

**416,518**

outpatient procedures

**108,942**

emergency department visits

**984,088**

laboratory tests

**1,743**

births

**6,265**

visits from Tanner Home Health

**6,625**

visits from Tanner Hospice Care

**9,981**

free behavioral health assessments through Willowbrooke at Tanner

**4,681**

visits to Tanner Advanced Wound Center

**20,523**

visits to Tanner Occupational Health Center

**85,978**

X-rays

**16,325**

digital mammograms

**27,049**

CT scans

**5,021**

MRI procedures

**4,073**

nuclear medicine procedures

**27,549**

ultrasounds

**748**

PET/CT scans

# GROWING

## STAFF, GROWING SERVICES

**T**he number of medical providers available in a community has a major impact on that community's ability to access care. In an area with a single cardiologist, for instance, it can take months to get an

appointment. A team of cardiologists — specializing

in a range of cardiac services — means that appointments are easier to make and more services are available.

Georgia ranks 41st in the number of active physicians in the state, according to

the Association of American Medical Colleges, which forecasts that Georgia will rank last in the nation by 2020 with a shortfall of 2,500 physicians.

Overcoming this shortage while extending care to the state's growing population defines a significant challenge for community-based healthcare organizations such as Tanner in the years to come.

Tanner is taking steps now to meet this challenge, creating efficiencies by integrating clinical excellence initiatives, integrating information technology and more while also recruiting new physicians to practice in the region and join the health system's medical staff. Additional physicians, expanded services and improved access to care is one way Tanner is helping to improve the health of the communities we serve.

### BY THE NUMBERS

# 300

PHYSICIANS ACROSS  
34 SPECIALTIES



BY THE NUMBERS

308,618

TANNER MEDICAL GROUP  
OFFICE VISITS

## NEED A SPECIALIST? THAT'S OUR SPECIALTY!

Tanner Health System can help you find the specialty healthcare practitioner to address your every need. More information about our medical staff and locations is available online at [www.tanner.org](http://www.tanner.org), or call **770.214.CARE**.

### DURING THE PAST FISCAL YEAR, TANNER HEALTH SYSTEM WELCOMED 27 PHYSICIANS TO THE MEDICAL STAFF:

**DIPTI H. ANAND, MD**  
*Dermatology*  
SkinPath Solutions

**RAUL R. BLANCO, MD**  
*Cardiology*  
Emory Clinic

**JOHNNY L. BONNER, MD**  
*Internal Medicine*  
Tanner Intensive Medical  
Services

**SHANNON V. COUVREUR, DO**  
*Obstetrics and Gynecology*  
Carrollton Obstetrics and  
Gynecology

**JONATHAN M. DAVIS, MD**  
*Emergency Medicine*  
EMCARE

**AMY H. DODSON, DO**  
*Obstetrics and Gynecology*  
West Georgia Healthcare  
for Women

**JOSHUA E. EVERTS, MD, DDS**  
*Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*  
G. Fred Atwell Oral and  
Maxillofacial Surgery

**FARIBA FARHIDVASH, MD**  
*Neurology*  
Carroll County Neurology/  
Georgia Sleep Disorders Center

**BILLY L. GLASS, MD**  
*Cardiology*  
West Georgia Cardiology  
Associates

**AARON O. GODWIN, MD**  
*Psychiatry*  
The Practice of Mahaveer  
Vakharia, MD

**ANNA M. HARRIS, MD**  
*Radiation Oncology*  
Tanner Radiation Oncology

**BRENT A. HARRIS, MD**  
*Family Medicine*  
Professional Park Medical  
Services

**ANTHONY F. HUMAN, DO**  
*Family Medicine*  
Bremen Family Health  
and Wellness Center

**MUJEEB A. JAN, MD**  
*Cardiology*  
Tanner Heart & Vascular  
Specialists

**THOMAS P. JENSEN II, MD**  
*Psychiatry*  
Willowbrooke at Tanner

**RAJAT JHANJEE, MD**  
*Cardiac Electrophysiology*  
Tanner Heart & Vascular  
Specialists

**RAE A. KING, MD**  
*Ophthalmology*  
Carrollton Eye Clinic

**NICHOLAS R.  
LIVINGSTON, MD, DMD**  
*Oral and Maxillofacial  
Surgery*  
G. Fred Atwell Oral and  
Maxillofacial Surgery

**ALDRICH V. MENDOZA, MD**  
*Family Medicine*  
Tanner Immediate Care

**HESS A. PANJETON, MD**  
*Pain Management*  
Tanner Pain Management  
Center

**UFUOMA Y. PHILEMON, MD**  
*Internal Medicine*  
Tanner Intensive Medical  
Services

**CHARVA P. POOLE, MD**  
*Pediatrics*  
Children's Healthcare  
of West Georgia

**LAWRENCE G. SEIDEN, MD**  
*Neurology*  
Multiple Sclerosis Center  
of Atlanta

**DAVID D. SHEPARD, MD**  
*Medical Oncology*  
Northwest Georgia Oncology  
Centers

**NIA M. SIPP, MD**  
*Psychiatry*  
Willowbrooke at Tanner

**EDWIN VILLARREAL, MD**  
*Internal Medicine*  
Tanner Intensive Medical  
Services

**MITZI J. WILLIAMS, MD**  
*Neurology*  
Tanner MS Center

BY THE NUMBERS

2,600

TANNER TEAM  
MEMBERS



# THOMSON REUTERS

## NAMES TANNER AMONG 15 TOP HEALTH SYSTEMS IN THE NATION

**T**homson Reuters, the world's leading source of intelligent information for businesses and professionals, named Tanner Health System one of the 15 Top Health Systems in the nation.

Tanner was the only health system in Georgia on the list in any category — small, medium or large. Researchers from Thomson Reuters analyzed the clinical quality and efficiency of more than 300 health systems across the country to identify the top 15.

This is the fourth year Thomson Reuters ranked the nation's top health systems.

The first year, they divided the list into the three categories based on size. The 15 Top Health Systems lead in all study comparisons, including higher survival rates, reduced patient complications, better long-term outcomes for patients, improved adherence to accepted care protocols and patient safety standards, shorter hospital stays and higher patient satisfaction scores.

All U.S. health systems with two or more short-term, general, nonfederal hospitals; cardiac and orthopedic hospitals; and critical access hospitals were assessed in the study. Researchers

analyzed clinical quality and efficiency, including health systems' mortality rates, 30-day readmission rates, adherence to clinical standards of care (evidence-based core measures published by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services), and Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) patient survey scores.

The Thomson Reuters study found that small health systems, like Tanner, had the shortest average lengths of stay, lowest readmission rates and highest HCAHPS patient satisfaction scores.



### TANNER DARES TO COMPARE

Exactly how does Tanner compare with other hospitals in key measures of quality and satisfaction? Find out online at [www.TannerQuality.org](http://www.TannerQuality.org).



Sherry Morrow, RN, a nurse at Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton, inspects Mrs. Dorothy Nalley's arm band before taking her vital signs. Tanner's commitment to care and experience helped to propel the health system to being among the nation's 15 Top Health Systems in 2012, according to research firm Thomson Reuters. Tanner was the only health system in Georgia included in the 15 Top Health Systems rankings.





Danny Sheffield, 12, of Hiram, watches as Gregory Slappey, MD, with Carrollton Orthopaedic Clinic checks how his foot and leg are healing after a break. Tanner Ortho and Spine Center, staffed by Dr. Slappey and his colleagues at Carrollton Orthopaedic Clinic, was named No. 1 in Georgia in overall orthopedic services for the third consecutive year by hospital ratings firm HealthGrades.

## NO. 1 IN ORTHOPEDICS

The nation's leading independent source of physician information and hospital quality ratings, HealthGrades, named Tanner Ortho and Spine Center at Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton No. 1 in Georgia for overall orthopedic services.

The hospital earned additional orthopedic honors from HealthGrades, including:

- HealthGrades' Orthopedic Surgery Excellence Award for five years in a row (2008-2012)
- HealthGrades' Joint Replacement Excellence Award, 2012
- Ranked Among the Top 5 percent in the nation for Overall Orthopedic Services for four years in a row (2009-2012)
- Ranked Among the Top 10 percent in the nation for Joint Replacement, 2012
- Ranked No. 1 in Georgia for Overall

Orthopedic Services for three years in a row (2010-2012)

- Ranked Among the Top 10 in Georgia for Joint Replacement for four years in a row (2009-2012)
- Five-Star Rated for Overall Orthopedic Services for five years in a row (2008-2012)
- Five-Star Rated for Joint Replacement for four years in a row (2009-2012)
- Five-Star Rated for Spine Surgery for five years in a row (2008-2012)
- Five-Star Rated for Total Knee Replacement for four years in a row (2009-2012)
- Five-Star Rated for Total Hip Replacement, 2012
- Five-Star Rated for Hip Fracture Treatment for eight years in a row (2005-2012)
- Five-Star Rated for Back and Neck Surgery for five years in a row (2008-2012)

### BY THE NUMBERS

# 2,180

ORTHOPEDIC AND  
SPINE PROCEDURES  
PERFORMED LAST YEAR

Tanner is proud to offer the same level of orthopedic excellence from the same patient care team and providers with Carrollton Orthopaedic Clinic in Villa Rica and Bremen as well. Learn more about the orthopedic services available through Tanner Ortho and Spine Center at [www.TannerOrtho.org](http://www.TannerOrtho.org).

## PROVIDING AN 'OUTSTANDING' PATIENT EXPERIENCE

For the second year in a row, Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton and Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica ranked among the top 5 percent of hospitals in the nation for patient satisfaction, earning both facilities Outstanding Patient Experience awards from hospital ratings firm HealthGrades.

Each year, HealthGrades reviews publicly reported patient satisfaction data for almost 4,000 U.S. hospitals.

Tanner's staff has made it a priority to be among the top hospitals in the country for quality of care, as well as to be among the top in patient satisfaction.

To designate its 2012 Outstanding Patient Experience Award recipients, HealthGrades analyzed hospital survey data from the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS), and identified 332 hospitals ranking in the top 10 percent in the nation for patient satisfaction. Hospitals had to meet stringent criteria on the number of patient beds each provides, the number of patients who participated in the HCAHPS survey and clinical quality thresholds in order to be eligible for the award.



Loy Howard, president and CEO of Tanner Health System, and John Burson III, MD, chairman of Tanner's board of directors, accept Outstanding Patient Experience Awards for Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton and Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica from HealthGrades representative Katherine Hennen. The two hospitals were among just about a dozen in Georgia ranking in the top 10 percent in the nation for patient satisfaction.



## 2,000<sup>TH</sup> HEART SAVED WITH ANGIOPLASTY

BY THE NUMBERS

2,708

CATHETERIZATIONS AND  
CARDIAC INTERVENTIONS



Timothy Dockery, of Temple, received the 2,000th angioplasty and stenting procedure at Tanner. It was performed by Shazib Khawaja, MD, with Tanner Heart & Vascular Specialists, right.

Timothy Dockery did not expect to be the 2,000th heart saved at Tanner. In fact, he didn't really expect to be a patient at Tanner at all.

"I was about to have a heart attack," said Dockery, from Temple. "I was on the verge of having one, and I took my nitro pill and went to the hospital in Villa Rica."

At Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica, the board-certified emergency physician with Carrollton Emergency Physicians looked at Dockery's vital signs and his history of heart disease, and determined that he probably needed angioplasty.

A heart attack occurs when one of the arteries that carries oxygen-rich blood to the heart becomes blocked. Starved for oxygen, the cells that comprise the heart begin to die, leaving the heart potentially damaged and weaker.

Angioplasty is a minimally invasive, nonsurgical procedure that allows a physician to thread a catheter — a small, flexible tube — through the arteries around the heart to the site of a blockage. By inflating a small balloon at the end of the catheter, the catheter pushes the plaque causing the blockage out of the

way and restores the flow of blood to the heart. Often, a small tube of wire mesh also is inserted at the site of the blockage. This tube, called a stent, helps to keep the artery open and reduce the risk for future blockages.

Angioplasty is often an alternative to far more invasive cardiac bypass surgery. Many hospitals in Georgia do not offer angioplasty — but Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton does.

"I didn't know they could do that here," said Dockery. "I'm glad I was able to have it here. It's a lot easier. The doctors and nurses here have been excellent."

A short ambulance ride later, Shazib Khawaja, MD, chief of interventional cardiology and endovascular interventions for Tanner Health System, met Dockery in one of the cardiac catheterization labs at Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton. Dr. Khawaja performed a heart catheterization, finding three blockages.

Since October 2006, when angioplasty and stenting became available at Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton, more than 2,000 angioplasties have been performed, an average of 31 procedures a month, or just more than one a day. Those numbers indicate the strong need in the community for this procedure.

# CARDIAC ELECTROPHYSIOLOGY NOW AVAILABLE

Think of the heart as an electric pump.

That's an oversimplification, of course, but the heart does rely on electrical impulses — signals — to know when and where to contract and relax. Contracting and relaxing in the right order, in the right parts of the heart, is necessary to pump blood to the rest of the body efficiently.

There are times, however, when the pump does not function as it should, due to what could be considered faulty wiring. There's a short somewhere. The top half of the heart beats at a different rate from the bottom half. Or the whole pump goes much too fast, much too slow, or in a dangerous pattern that can cause the whole heart to stop suddenly.

The study of these electrical signals is called cardiac electrophysiology, and the ability to treat these problems is now available in west Georgia.

Rajat Jhanjee, MD, MSEE, board-certified in cardiology and electrophysiology, joined Tanner Heart & Vascular Specialists, bringing advanced cardiac electrophysiology services to the region. Dr. Jhanjee earned a master's degree in electrical engineering from the University of California, Los Angeles and worked as an electrical engineer for Dallas Semiconductor and Guidant before enrolling in medical school at the University of Minnesota. There, he earned his medical degree, completed his internship and

residency in internal medicine, and achieved fellowships in cardiovascular research, clinical cardiology and clinical electrophysiology.

With cardiac electrophysiology now available at Tanner, several new treatments are available close to home, including catheter ablation, implantable cardioverter-defibrillator procedures and biventricular pacemaker implantation.



Rajat Jhanjee, MD, MSEE, with Tanner Heart & Vascular Specialists, observes a monitor as he performs an ablation procedure at Tanner Heart and Vascular Center in Carrollton.

## A COMPLETE APPROACH TO CARDIAC CARE

### BY THE NUMBERS

# 31

ANGIOPLASTIES  
PERFORMED MONTHLY

Cardiac electrophysiology and angioplasty with stenting are among a variety of tools now at the disposal of area physicians working to battle cardiovascular disease — the leading cause of death in west Georgia and east Alabama. Nuclear cardiology, cardiac rehabilitation and more also are available to diagnose, treat and help patients recover from cardiovascular disease.

To learn more about the cardiac services at Tanner — including those at the Tanner Heart and Vascular Center at Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton — visit [www. TannerCardiovascularCare.org](http://www.TannerCardiovascularCare.org). To find a cardiologist on Tanner's staff, call **770.214.CARE (2273)**.



Leading the way in Carrollton's Fourth of July People's Parade is the banner signed by local residents who were among the first to join the Get Healthy West Georgia initiative. Alma Cuellar, 6, of Villa Rica, above right, takes a turn with a hula hoop at the Get Healthy West Georgia booth at Carrollton's Mayfest.



## GET HEALTHY WEST GEORGIA

Residents in Carroll, Haralson and Heard counties can join the Get Healthy West Georgia initiative for free by logging on to [www.GetHealthyWestGeorgia.org](http://www.GetHealthyWestGeorgia.org). Track meals and exercise, participate in fitness and nutrition challenges and engage with a community that's determined to overcome obesity and sedentary lifestyles.

BY THE NUMBERS

1,101

RESIDENTS JOINED  
GET HEALTHY WEST GEORGIA

## 'GET HEALTHY' PROGRAM LEADING THE WAY TO HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES

In April, Tanner Health System and the Community Foundation of West Georgia launched a massive new initiative to reduce obesity rates and improve the health of communities in Carroll, Haralson and Heard counties.

Get Healthy West Georgia supports residents in adopting more active lifestyles and making healthier nutrition choices.

A recent report from the nonprofit Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute provided statistics on more than 3,000 counties throughout the country. According to the report, 31 percent of adults in Carroll and Haralson counties are obese — higher than the national (25 percent) and Georgia (28 percent) benchmarks. Heard County's adult obesity rate was 28 percent — still above the national benchmark, but on target with the state's. The percentages of adults who report getting insufficient leisure physical activity — such as walking and other recreation — also are higher than state and national benchmarks for all three counties.

A new, easy-to-use Web site, [www.GetHealthyWestGeorgia.org](http://www.GetHealthyWestGeorgia.org), supports the initiative's three-year goal of improving nutrition, increasing physical activity and reducing obesity.

Web site visitors who make the commitment to get healthy and join the initiative can click the "Get Started" link

to access the Get Healthy West Georgia Wellness portal, where they will complete a four-minute health assessment, calculate their body mass index and be able to join the current exercise or nutritional challenge.

This portal enables members to log their exercise, keep a food diary, track their weight loss, participate in challenges, take online nutrition and stress management classes, connect with buddies, keep a journal of their "get healthy" journey, share healthy recipes and more — all for free.

The personal and health-related information that participants supply in the portal will remain completely private and will be used only to track participant progress as a group, such as how many miles are logged and how many pounds are lost during the three-year initiative.

In addition to joining the initiative, visitors to [www.GetHealthyWestGeorgia.org](http://www.GetHealthyWestGeorgia.org) can find out more about obesity, learn how it affects health, see how west Georgia compares with state and national obesity trends and more. An interactive map of parks and trails provides information on a variety of regional locations for walking, running, swimming and biking, and an event calendar contains information on upcoming exercise and nutritional opportunities, as well as a list of events where Get Healthy West Georgia staff will be promoting the initiative.

# NEW MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS CENTER

## AT TANNER MEDICAL CENTER/VILLA RICA

**T**anner made leading-edge care for people with multiple sclerosis (MS) more accessible and convenient with the opening of the Tanner MS Center at Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica.

The new MS Center is on the ground floor of the VillaWest medical office building adjacent to Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica, at 601 Dallas Highway. It is staffed with neurology specialists who — along with being on Tanner's medical staff

— also serve on the staff of the esteemed Multiple Sclerosis Center of Atlanta with medical infusion experts on staff at Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica.

The center is designed to be accessible and accommodating to MS patients, from its location on the ground floor to the specially designed chairs that make treatments easier on patients and doors that open with the wave of a hand.



BY THE NUMBERS

416,518

OUTPATIENT PROCEDURES  
PERFORMED

## NEED A DOCTOR NEARBY?

From Tallapoosa to Franklin, Wedowee to New Georgia, Tanner offers convenient access to specialists and primary care providers throughout the region. To find a physician near you, click "Find a Doctor" at [www.tanner.org](http://www.tanner.org) or call 770.214.CARE (2273).



## TANNER GROWS INTO ALABAMA

Neighbors in east Cleburne and Randolph counties will soon have a more convenient, comprehensive destination for care as work continues on Tanner/East Alabama in Wedowee.

The facility is being constructed on more than 15 acres of property in Wedowee. The ongoing construction is the first of a planned multiphase build-out at the location, which is central to all Randolph County residents and is accessible for Cleburne County residents as well. It is an important aspect of Tanner's plans to develop medical services in this part of Alabama.

Tanner/East Alabama will serve as the new home for Tanner Primary Care of Wedowee — formerly the Wedowee Clinic — which will continue to offer walk-in services and preventive medicine. Specialists from Tanner's medical staff also will rotate through the facility, providing a range of healthcare options not previously available in the region.



# Our Promise:

## 3 Days from Cancer Diagnosis to Treatment Options

**T**anner Health System has found a way to help cancer patients that goes beyond excellent outcomes: speed.

Like many exceptional programs in Georgia, Tanner Cancer Care boasts leading-edge technology and treatments, a comprehensive approach to care and excellent clinical outcomes.

But Tanner Cancer Care also has a tight-knit team of cancer specialists who already work closely together; who represent a variety of disciplines in the fight against cancer; and who made Tanner Cancer Care uniquely positioned to establish a process that would get patients ready to start a treatment plan fast.

That was the idea behind the Tanner Cancer Care Promise: 3 Days from Diagnosis to Treatment Options. To fulfill the Tanner Cancer Care Promise, staff members begin devising a treatment plan as soon as they receive a physician's referral. Within three days, a patient navigator will contact the patient to discuss options for care and to set up any further testing that may be necessary.

No more waiting, wondering what happens next. The treatments are state of the art, the treatment team is compassionate and cohesive — and treatment options are available in three days.

That's the Tanner Cancer Care Promise.

### FAST AGAINST FEAR

Learn more about the Tanner Cancer Care Promise and the exceptional level of care available through Tanner Cancer Care at [www.TannerCancerCare.org](http://www.TannerCancerCare.org) or by calling 770.812.5500.

## HIGH-FIELD OPEN MRI AT TANNER MEDICAL CENTER/CARROLLTON



Crews work to install the 10-ton magnet for the new high-field open MRI system at Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton. Unlike other open MRI systems, the high-field technology of the one now online at Tanner produces images comparable to modern traditional MRI scanners.

**T**anner's newest diagnostic imaging service is now open — wide open.

The health system's new Open MRI is now in service, affording a new level of comfort for overweight or claustrophobic patients, the elderly and small children.

Traditional MRI systems require patients to lie down inside a tube while images are taken. The new Philips High-Field Open MRI system in the Patient Services building at Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton features a broad, nearly 360-degree opening.

Mechanical installation crews spent weeks setting up the new Open MRI system, which required ripping a truck-sized hole in a wall of a building on the Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton campus and using a crane to move a 10-ton magnet that makes up the core of the system.

MRI stands for magnetic resonance imaging. Unlike other medical diagnostic imaging procedures that often use X-rays and radiation, MRI systems use a powerful magnetic field and computers to produce clear images of the body's anatomical structures.

# 162,234

TOTAL DIAGNOSTIC  
IMAGING PROCEDURES  
COMPLETED

### TAKE A LOOK INSIDE

In addition to the new Open MRI, traditional MRI services are available at Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton, Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica and Higgins General Hospital in Bremen.

To schedule an MRI at any Tanner facility, have a physician's order at hand and call **770.836.9721**.

To find a physician on Tanner's medical staff, call **770.214.CARE (2273)**. More information on diagnostic imaging services and a complete physician directory are available online at [www.tanner.org](http://www.tanner.org).

# LOOKING AHEAD

## WORK ON COMPREHENSIVE INPATIENT REHABILITATION FACILITY IN CARROLLTON UNDER WAY

Crews are transforming a wing of Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton into a new, one-of-its-kind resource.

A 20-bed comprehensive inpatient rehabilitation facility will provide intensive rehabilitation for patients who have suffered strokes or who must otherwise relearn how to perform everyday household tasks. It also will serve patients who have undergone orthopedic procedures, such as joint replacements, and have other underlying health issues that could impair their recovery, like rheumatoid arthritis. The facility will offer occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech therapy.

The largest area for growth in our region's population is among residents ages 65 and older — a segment of the population that is forecast to grow almost 20 percent by 2015. So it's important to have convenient access to a unit like the one under construction in Carrollton.

The unit will include a 320-square-foot transitional living apartment, a 1,000-square-foot therapy/activity space and a

more than 900-square-foot dining/day room. The transitional living apartment will be in the model of an efficiency apartment, with a kitchen, living space and standard-style bed, along with standard-style cabinets, a washer and dryer, sofa and more that will enable occupational therapists to help patients transition back to a regular, nonhospital environment. Each of the 19 other rooms will be private.

The facility will be able to provide step-down care for more intensive rehabilitation centers throughout the Southeast, enabling residents to continue their recoveries closer to home, and also will serve younger patients recovering from physical trauma — such as that caused by an automobile accident or a sports injury.

For Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton, which has already been lauded as No. 1 in Georgia for overall orthopedic services by the hospital ratings firm HealthGrades for over three years, the new inpatient rehabilitation facility will be the gold standard to help ensure patients have the best possible outcome.

## OPEN THE DOORS TO A NEW LEVEL OF SERVICE



The new outpatient surgery atrium along Clinic Avenue at Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton is now open, affording patients a new level of comfort and accessibility. The new atrium offers easy access to the Lamplighter gift shop and Bistro '49, as well as outpatient and surgery registration services.

## SWING BED PROGRAM COMING TO HIGGINS GENERAL HOSPITAL

When a patient is on the way to recovery but not yet ready for discharge, a swing bed at Higgins General Hospital in Bremen is an excellent option.

The swing bed program at Higgins General Hospital is designed for patients who require less intensive care than they received while in the hospital but who are not yet ready to leave treatment.

By using a swing bed, a physician can provide a patient with up to two weeks of additional care, including skilled nursing care, physical therapy, education about living with a condition or recovery from an injury and more. The program reduces the risk that a patient will require further hospitalization.

Rooms are comfortably appointed with additional cabinet space for storage, wood paneling, specialized recliners and couches with pull-out beds to allow a loved one to comfortably room-in with the patient.

## ENDOVASCULAR LAB COMING TO TANNER MEDICAL CENTER/VILLA RICA

Exceptional vascular care is becoming more accessible for residents in Carroll, Douglas and Paulding counties as a new endovascular lab comes online at Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica in early 2013.

The lab will allow vascular surgeons to check for problems and provide interventions to help keep patient's blood flowing properly through their veins. In addition, the lab will permit Tanner's team of cardiologists to perform advanced diagnostic procedures, such as angiography, that can help identify blockages to arteries around the heart. When blockages are found, patients can receive cardiac interventions—such as angioplasty and stenting—at Tanner Heart and Vascular Center in Carrollton.

Along with nuclear medicine, cardiac stress tests, 128-slice CT, ultrasound, full-time MRI services on one of the region's most powerful systems and more, advanced diagnostic imaging for cardiac and vascular care is closer to home.

Tanner Medical Center  
705 Dixie Street  
Carrollton, GA 30117

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Tanner Medical  
Center

# NEW EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT COMES TO TANNER MEDICAL CENTER/CARROLLTON



BY THE NUMBERS  
**108,942**  
EMERGENCY  
DEPARTMENT VISITS

Soon the new emergency department (ED) at Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton will begin serving the community, joining an expanded surgical services unit that has been phased in during the past year as new operating suites and patient rooms came online.

The new space was originally scheduled to open in September, but a failure in a fire suppression line released more than 12,000 gallons of water into the facility. The flood damaged drywall, cabinets, flooring and some clinical equipment, all of which have been replaced.

The Carrollton Fire Department

responded within minutes. More than 60 Tanner employees worked side by side with fire department personnel until well into the night, rescuing furniture and artwork and moving clinical equipment out of harm's way.

With renovations nearly complete, Tanner is making plans again to showcase the new unit to the community in the spirit of cooperation that was shown the night the water line ruptured.

Please continue to check [www.tanner.org](http://www.tanner.org) for the latest on the new, 40-bed emergency department and for the community open house announcement.