At home with St. Mary’s:  
50 years of bringing care home
Enhancing your access to care

Please join us in welcoming these physicians to St. Mary’s Medical Group

Lauren Hearn, DO
Lighthouse Family Practice
Dr. Hearn is a primary care physician providing family medicine for patients ages infants to senior adults as well as obstetrical care. She comes to Lighthouse from Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System. She holds a bachelor’s degree in human nutrition, food and exercise from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, medical degree from Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine, and completed her family medicine residency at Self Regional Healthcare in Greenwood, S.C.

12134 Augusta Road, Suite A, Lavonia. 706.356.1422

Davis Horkan, MD
Athens General & Colorectal Surgeons
Dr. Horkan is a general surgeon providing traditional and minimally invasive surgical care for a wide range of conditions, from appendix removal to breast cancer to gastrointestinal problems. He comes to AGCS from Jackson Health System/University of Miami (JHSUM), where he was Administrative Chief Resident for Surgical Education. He earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Georgia and his medical degree from the Medical College of Georgia.

740 Prince Ave., Building 2, Athens. 706.548.5488

Catherine Lockhart, DO
St. Mary’s Neurological Specialists
Dr. Lockhart provides care for people with neurological conditions such as headache, epilepsy, dementia, sleep disorders, brain and spinal injuries, and stroke prevention and follow-up. She comes to SMNS from Advocate BroMenn Medical Center in Normal, Ill., where she was Chief Neurology Resident. She earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and her medical degree from the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine.

2470 Daniells Bridge Road, Building 200, Suite 261, Athens. 706.310.1859.

Learn more about St. Mary’s Medical Group physicians at stmarysmedicalgroup.com.
St. Mary’s Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation has launched a $3 million capital campaign to enhance cardiac, stroke and diagnostic services.

“Since the day St. Mary’s acquired the hospital in 2012, our goal has been to keep high-quality health care local,” says Good Samaritan President Tanya Adcock. “This campaign will make it possible for us to provide enhanced services that patients currently have to travel to Athens, Atlanta or Augusta to receive.”

“The greater Greene County and Lake Oconee communities have consistently made it possible for St. Mary’s Good Samaritan Hospital to offer services that are extraordinary for a small rural hospital,” said Ansley Martin, foundation director. “The way this community rallies to improve local health care is awesome.”

The expansion helps Good Sam meet increasing patient volumes, especially for cardiac services and stroke care. Because cardiologist John Layher, MD, and telemedicine services allow more patients with cardiac complications to remain at Good Sam, the hospital needs better diagnostic capabilities to fully meet their needs – as well as the needs of emergency stroke patients and outpatients.

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Tanya Adcock, President
Good Samaritan

The campaign will fund:

- 320-slice CT system. So fast it can image the inside of the heart’s arteries in a single heartbeat, the system improves diagnosis of heart disease, stroke, and more.
- 16 Channel MRI system. Provides more detailed diagnostic images without ionizing radiation. Wider patient tube, noise suppression and an indoor location will enhance comfort and allow more options for scheduling.
- Cardiac Stress Lab. Currently, Good Sam’s cardiac stress lab is housed in the nuclear medicine room. A dedicated stress lab will double the number of patients both services can help.
- New construction. A 2,200-square-foot addition will house the new MRI unit, stress lab and staff support areas.

All donations are appreciated and tax deductible. To donate, contact Ansley Martin, Foundation Director, at 706.389.3926.

Graphic by EA Architects shows areas to be added to St. Mary’s Good Samaritan Hospital.
Celebrating 50 years of bringing care to patients’ homes

1969. Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walk on the moon. The Vietnam War roils America. John Wayne’s iconic Western “True Grit” hits theaters. The Beatles release “Abbey Road” but skip Woodstock. Locally, the Bulldogs beat Clemson, South Carolina and Vanderbilt, but tie Florida and lose to Georgia Tech on the way to a 5-5-1 season.

Amid it all, St. Mary’s became the first hospital in Northeast Georgia to extend care into patients’ homes.

“It was a tumultuous time,” says Sandra Stephenson, director of St. Mary’s Home Health Care/Hospice Services. “Everything was changing. St. Mary’s was on the forefront of understanding that a better model of care was coming. Instead of spending weeks in the hospital, most patients would be going home sooner and would need more care at home.”

Home: the best place to recover
The hospital’s foresight proved to be 20/20. Today, innovations such as minimally invasive surgery allow patients to go home sooner than ever. St. Mary’s continues to be there, ready to help.

“Unless a patient needs acute care services, home is the best place to recover. It’s where patients are most comfortable and have the most support from family and friends,” Sandra says.

St. Mary’s home health care staff are backed by 50 years of experience in helping patients maximize recovery, avoid emergency department visits and prevent unplanned hospital admissions. St. Mary’s home health services are physician-directed and include:

• **Nursing** – Registered nurses monitor vital signs and medications, help manage pain, watch for changes, and communicate with the patient’s physician to modify the plan of care as necessary. St. Mary’s home health care nursing services also include wound and ostomy care.

• **Rehabilitation** – Physical, occupational and speech therapy help patients regain function and mobility, from rebuilding strength after a total joint replacement to learning new ways to cope with activities of daily living after an amputation to improving speech and swallowing after a stroke.

• **Home health aides** – Help patients remain in their homes with services such as bathing, dressing and grooming.

• **Education and dietary counseling** – Helps patients learn about their condition and ways to better manage it, including through diet and exercise.

• **Medical social work** – Assesses the patient’s support network and helps connect the patient and family with community resources.

• **Telehealth** – For patients who qualify, provides medication reminders, weight and other vital signs monitoring.

• **24/7 coverage** – Our team is always just a phone call away.
“Every year, our services help thousands of patients and their caregivers,” Sandra says. “We love getting to know our patients and helping them achieve their goals.”

St. Mary’s Home Health Care Services are available through a physician order in Athens-Clarke, Barrow, Franklin, Greene, Jackson, Madison, Morgan, Oconee, Oglethorpe and Walton counties. To be admitted patients must:

• live in one of these 10 counties
• be under the care of a physician licensed to practice in Georgia
• require short-term intermittent, skilled care
• be homebound (in most cases)
• have a willing and capable family member or substitute to provide care between visits.

A major expansion: 30 years of hospice care

In the late 1980s, the nation underwent another healthcare transformation: more and more people wanted to restore dignity to the process of dying.

“Americans still tend to avoid talking about the end of life, but hospice grows out of the realization that death is a natural and inevitable part of life,” Sandra says. “The growing understanding is that most people don’t want to spend their last weeks, days or hours hooked up to machines. Most of us want to go naturally and peacefully when the time comes, in our home, surrounded by the people we love.”

Hospice helps make that possible. It’s a special kind of care for individuals and families facing end-of-life issues. St. Mary’s team of hospice nurses, social workers, home health aides, pastoral counselors, physicians and volunteers work together to meet the physical, spiritual, mental and emotional needs of the patient and their family. Services continue for at least a year after the patient’s death.

Hospice care is available without regard to ability to pay for patients with a limited life-expectancy due to illness – for example, cancer, end-stage heart disease, Alzheimer’s or AIDS. St. Mary’s hospice services are available for patients of all ages, including infants and children. When symptoms can no longer be managed in the home, or the caregiver needs some time off, St. Mary’s also offers the region’s first inpatient hospice house.

St. Mary’s home hospice care is available in Athens-Clarke, Banks, Barrow, Elbert, Franklin, Greene, Hart, Jackson, Madison, Morgan, Oconee, Oglethorpe and Walton counties.

To learn more, call 706.389.2273 or visit St. Mary’s Home Health Care/Hospice Services pages at www.stmarysathens.org.

To become a Hospice volunteer, visit www.stmarysathens.org/careers/volunteering/hospice-volunteer-program

Licensed by the State of Georgia #029-057 and #029-035
Palliative Care

Program celebrates 10th anniversary with expansion into homes

Palliative care is a medical specialty that helps people living with sudden or chronic illness reduce symptoms and relieve stress.

St. Mary’s began its hospital-based palliative care program 10 years ago and is now also bringing palliative care to patients in their homes across a 13-county area, says Petti-Jeanne Sheldon, St. Mary’s Hospice and Palliative Care Services manager and America’s 2018 Palliative Care RN of the Year.

St. Mary’s team of expert specialists is led by a physician and includes nurse practitioners, registered nurses, social workers and chaplains. The goal is to improve quality of life by focusing on the things that are most important to the patient and their family.

“A lot of people confuse palliative care with hospice care,” says Petti-Jeanne. “Hospice care is for people with advanced disease and a life expectancy of six months or less. Palliative care is for anyone at any stage of illness or recovery, regardless of how long they are expected to live.”

“Another difference from hospice is that active treatment can continue for the underlying illness,” notes Jaideep Patel, M.D., the program’s medical director.

Palliative care is most helpful for patients with long-term illnesses such as heart failure, cancer, stroke, ALS, or lung, liver or kidney disease. St. Mary’s palliative care team can help patients manage pain and symptoms such as shortness of breath, constipation, nausea, and anxiety.

“Left untreated, these symptoms may reduce a patient’s quality of life,” says certified nurse practitioner Laura Moon. “Our whole team is available to help patients and families have peace of mind and a better quality of life.”

“Patients with these conditions often live for years after diagnosis, but many may also suffer pain, anxiety, depression and other problems that can take the joy out of living. We want everyone to know that help is available.”

For more information call 706.389.2273 or visit www.stmarysathens.org.
What if there were a way to help people with serious medical conditions stay healthy at home and reduce the number of times they need to visit the hospital?

There is!
St. Mary’s and National EMS in 2018 teamed up to offer the Healthy @ Home program in Athens-Clarke and Oconee counties. Specially trained paramedics with National EMS go into the homes of patients with a history of frequent emergency visits or hospitalizations. Their goal: help the patient reduce their need for hospital care.

Healthy @ Home is part of a growing movement nationwide called Community Paramedicine.

“Community Paramedicine allows paramedics to expand their traditional roles in emergency response and transport,” said John Sartain, a paramedic and St. Mary’s EMS Liaison. “It enhances access to primary care for medically fragile patients and helps facilitate more appropriate use of emergency care resources.”

To qualify, patients must be living with asthma, diabetes, hypertension, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and/or heart failure.

“Our goal is for the patient to become increasingly confident in their own care so that they can graduate from the program within three months, but enrollment can last as long as the patient needs it,” says Emergency Department Social Worker Samantha Dyar.

Paramedics in the program focus on:
- Providing and connecting patients to primary care services
- Completing follow-up care after a hospital discharge
- Supplementing existing programs such as public health and home health care services
- Providing education and health monitoring
- Helping the patient improve self-management of their condition

The service is free for patients evaluated by St. Mary’s Social Work Department and referred by a St. Mary’s physician. There is no age limit.

Healthy @ Home partners: Samantha Dyar, social worker; John Sartain, EMS Liaison, and community paramedics Angela Wade and James Harris.
Beating breast cancer

We’ve been there. We know how you feel.

At St. Mary’s, we understand the breast cancer journey. Many of us have been there, so we know what you’re going through. The flood of feelings on being diagnosed. The difficult choices. The need for connection with others. The comfort of family, friends, and faith. The importance of being able to trust your doctors and nurses. For every stage of your journey, we are here for you.

• 3D mammography
• State-of-the-art diagnostics
• Dedicated breast cancer radiologists
• Breast health navigators
• Compassionate surgical services
• Cardio-oncology program to protect heart health

Susan Blalock
Susan is a collection analyst with St. Mary’s Financial Services. She was diagnosed with stage 1 breast cancer at the age of 48.

“After my oldest brother passed of a heart attack, another brother wanted me to go for a full health check-up. I had not had a complete health check-up in 3 years and I was past-due for a mammogram. Thanks to St. Mary’s Women’s Center, the mammogram found the cancer.”

After going through a period of denial, Susan opted for a double mastectomy. Today she is cancer-free.

Her faith that God has a plan, the support of family and friends, and staying positive helped her on her journey. “I learned how truly blessed and strong I am.

“Everyone is scared at first of the unknown,” she says. “Even with faith, we are human. Stay positive and remember this is just a chapter in your life, not the whole story.”

Denise Blaschke
Denise is the activities coordinator at St. Mary’s Highland Hills Village. She was diagnosed with Stage 2B infiltrating ductal carcinoma in 2008 at the age of 49.

“My dog helped me discover the lump,” she says. “He always layed on my chest and I was trying to push him away when I felt this lump. I recently learned that dogs can detect cancer by smell.”

Denise recalls the many dates associated with her cancer journey: her diagnosis, lumpectomy, start of chemo, start of radiation therapy. “The treatment was scary at first,” she admits. “I stayed positive by reading motivational quotes and finding strength with others who were also fighting cancer.

“I find myself saying that I am cancer-free. But there is always that thought in the back of your mind that cancer can recur. I think that once you have had cancer you just make sure you live every day to the fullest.”

You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing you think you cannot do.

-- Eleanor Roosevelt
Chrissy Bradley
Chrissy is the administrative coordinator for St. Mary’s Case Management Department. She was diagnosed with stage 1A breast cancer two weeks after her 40th birthday.

“If I had come in any later for my mammogram, I would have had a much different result; my tumor was very fast-growing,” she says, noting that while she has some family history, she had tested negative for the breast cancer gene.

The diagnosis was scary. “My mother had died the year prior and there are two times when you really want to call your mom: when you find out you’re pregnant and when you find out you have cancer.”

Treatment involved a lumpectomy, radiation, and a five-year course of Tamoxifen. Her stepson in Army Basic Training, her husband, her 2-year-old son, and her family at work helped her stay strong. She advises, “Take it one day at a time. There will be blessings in your life despite your diagnosis.”

Pamela Shaw
Pam is a scribe for Dr. David Gaines at Georgia Family Medicine. She was diagnosed with stage 2 breast cancer at the age of 51 after a routine screening mammogram in May 2012 detected a suspicious lesion. A follow-up diagnostic mammogram with biopsy confirmed she had cancer.

“I feel like God had prepared me,” she says. “I already knew a group of breast cancer survivors and I had just started a new relationship.”

Sue Greenway
Sue is a Transcriptionist/Administrative Assistant in St. Mary’s Laboratory Pathology Department. She was diagnosed in April 2013 at the age of 56 with stage 1 breast cancer.

“I felt a mass in my breast on a Sunday,” she says. “I got an order from my doctor to have a mammogram and biopsy on Monday. I got my diagnosis the next morning. Although I was devastated, the love and support of my family and my lab family gave me the courage to face the challenges ahead.”

Sue was treated with a mastectomy and chemotherapy. Chemo was arduous but manageable.

“What meant the most to me was that my son came to be with me. He lives all the way in Denver. My husband was always with me during chemo, so he helped keep me distracted.”

Today, Sue takes Tamoxifen and sees her oncologist regularly. Her advice: “Stay strong. Believe in the people who are taking care of you.”

Amber Mize
Amber is a certified medical assistant with Johnson and Murthy Family Practice. She was diagnosed with stage 1 breast cancer the week of her 40th birthday after she felt a lump.

“In my head, I knew,” she says. “I don’t know how I knew, but I did. It was still very shocking.”

Amber chose to have bilateral mastectomy and reconstruction without chemo or radiation. She takes Tamoxifen and has been cancer-free for three years.

“I was absolutely scared of my surgery,” she says. “I dealt with it by keeping myself busy. I worked up until the day before my surgery. I couldn’t sit home thinking about it.”

She advises: “Write down all the things that you’re worrying or wondering about because you’re not going to remember to ask when you go to the doctor.” She also notes, “I learned to ask for help when I needed it. I’m not usually that type of person.”

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Kirsten Porter

Kirsten is a financial counselor and pre-registration coordinator with St. Mary’s Patient Access Services. She was diagnosed with stage 0 breast cancer on Jan. 21, 2019, at the age of 36.

“I had severe pain in my right breast in October,” she says. “My gynecologist ordered a mammogram at St. Mary’s, but I waited until January to have it done. Then I had all the necessary procedures that detected the cancer. When I heard the news, I fell down crying. I just kept thinking about my 10-year-old daughter.”

Kirsten’s cancer was addressed with lumpectomy and radiation treatment, which ended on June 7. All signs are looking positive.

“I was nervous, but not afraid. My faith helped me stay strong, and I had the support of my family, friends, church, and the staff I work with. My mom is a cancer survivor. She would send me scripture every day, and I would pray and listen to Gospel music.”

Cheryl Sexton

Cheryl is the administrative assistant in Patient Financial Services. She was diagnosed in March 2013 at the age of 48 with stage 3 breast cancer, which she discovered when she noticed an odd shape on her breast.

“I was shocked,” she says. “You sort of go numb.”

For treatment, Cheryl says, “I had it all: double mastectomy, chemotherapy and radiation. Starting chemo was especially difficult, but the nurse and my husband kept me calm.

“It took a village to get me through this,” she says. “My husband told me he was going to love me through it, and he did. He was my anchor.”

Cheryl has been in remission for six years but continues to take medication to suppress the risk of another cancer. “I never realized how strong and tough I could actually be,” she notes. “I learned what my priorities in life are.”

Care where you are

St. Mary’s provides 2D- and 3D screening mammography services at all four of our imaging locations. To schedule your mammogram, call the numbers below or visit www.stmarysathens.org. Saturday appointments available at some locations. Call today!

- St. Mary’s Hospital, 1230 Baxter St., Athens. 706.389.2700
- St. Mary’s Outpatient Center, 2470 Daniells Bridge Road, Athens. 706.389.2700
- St. Mary’s Good Samaritan Hospital, 5401 Lake Oconee Parkway, Greensboro. 706.389.2700
- St. Mary’s Sacred Heart Hospital, 367 Clear Creek Parkway, Lavonia. 706.356.7808 (online scheduling not yet available)
Celebrating excellence

Please join the entire St. Mary’s ministry in congratulating recent recipients of our excellence awards.

**Catherine McAuley Award and Sr. Antonette Leadership Award**

Laura Crowe, community perinatal educator, received St. Mary’s highest honor for staff, the 2019 Catherine McAuley Award, for exemplifying St. Mary’s values to her patients, colleagues and the community: Reverence for Each Person, Commitment to Those Who are Poor, Justice, Stewardship and Integrity.

Ann Gomes, director of Orthopedics and Neurosciences, received the 2019 Sister Antonette Excellence in Leadership Award, St. Mary’s highest award for ministry leaders, for continually demonstrating commitment, compassion and dedication at all times to all people, and inspiring her staff to do the same.

**DAISY Award for nursing excellence**

The DAISY Award is an international recognition program celebrating the skillful, compassionate care nurses provide every day.

Sam Greene, RN
Neurosciences Critical Care Unit
St. Mary’s Hospital

**St. Mary’s Spirit of Mercy Award**

The Spirit of Mercy Award is presented monthly in the spirit of our legacy sponsors, the Sisters of Mercy, to non-management colleagues who go above and beyond the call of duty.

L to R: Robert Motte, emergency department clinical technician
Todd Drake, RRT, cardiac rehabilitation coordinator
Josini Mathew, area cleaner, environmental services

L to R: Susan Meadow, RN, neonatal intensive care unit
Denise Blaschke, Highland Hills Village activities coordinator
Margie Nicolaus, RN, intensive care unit

Aaron Howard, RN
Orthopedics
St. Mary’s Hospital

Jan Embry, RN
Quality & Safety Coordinator
St. Mary’s Good Samaritan Hospital
In a stroke, blood flow is suddenly interrupted to parts of the brain. Up to 2 million brain cells die every minute. Most strokes (about 85 percent) are caused by a blood clot that gets stuck in a blood vessel. The sooner the clot can be dissolved or removed, the better the patient’s outcome is likely to be, with lower risk of disability or death.

"Because time is so important, we not only urge people to call 911 immediately when symptoms appear, but we also work hard to speed up our processes and deliver care fast," says St. Mary’s Stroke Coordinator Joanne Lockamy.

Before a patient can have the clot-busting drug Alteplase (tPA), they must have tests done to ensure tPA is appropriate and safe, including blood tests and a CT scan to assess the stroke and ensure there is no internal bleeding (which tPA can make worse). St. Mary’s is nationally recognized for providing tPA within 60 minutes of arrival to at least 50 percent of qualifying patients.

In addition, St. Mary’s and neurosurgeon Dr. Neil Woodall of Georgia Neurological Surgery and Comprehensive Spine offer mechanical thrombectomy to physically remove the large blood clots that cause most major strokes. The procedure can help stroke patients whose blood clots are too large for tPA to dissolve. Mechanical thrombectomy is available at St. Mary’s anytime Dr. Woodall is available.

**Is it a stroke? Think F.A.S.T.**

Face drooping or numb, especially on one side
Arm weakness, especially on one side
Speech difficulty: slurred, soft, not making sense
Time to call 911!

On Sept. 30, Emergency Department nurse Garrett Cheek set a St. Mary’s record, administering tPA just 20 minutes after the patient arrived. His record didn’t stand long, though...

On Oct. 4, Emergency Department nurse Whitney Barfield (center) beat Garrett’s record, administering tPA just 14 minutes after the patient arrived. Both patients are doing well.
When people think about heart health, they tend to think about heart attacks.

"Emergency care is absolutely vital, but it's just the tip of the iceberg," says Clay Chappell, MD, medical director of St. Mary's Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory. "The best and most effective care is to work with the patient to keep the heart healthy and prevent life-threatening emergencies."

**St. Mary's offers a heart-warming continuum of cardiac care. Here's a quick overview:**

**Cardiac physician specialists** – The nine cardiologists of Oconee Heart and Vascular Center provide one-on-one outpatient care to help you maximize wellness, control risk factors, detect heart problems, follow-up after emergencies, and manage chronic heart conditions. Offices in Athens, Oconee, Greensboro, Monroe and Lavonia. 796.389.3440.

**Emergency care** – Partnerships with EMS and direct-to-cath-lab admission speed care when every minute matters. Full balloon angioplasty and stent implantation available for heart attack treatment.

**Electrophysiology** – EP laboratory provides diagnosis and treatment of heart rhythm disorders.

**Telemedicine** – Telehealth services at St. Mary’s Good Samaritan Hospital and St. Mary’s Sacred Heart Hospital allow many inpatients with cardiac complications to stay at their local hospital.

**Device implantation and follow-up** – State-of-the-art pacemakers, implantable cardioverter defibrillators and other cardiac devices help improve safety and quality of life. Pacemaker implantation available at St. Mary’s Good Samaritan Hospital, too.

**Cardiac Rehab** – Education and exercise to maximize recovery, boost quality of life and reduce risk after cardiac events and/or procedures. Phase II classes held at St. Mary’s Hospital for maximum peace-of-mind. 706.389.2915

**Smoking cessation** – Offering the highly successful American Lung Association Freedom from Smoking program to help smokers and vapers break their addition. Led by an ex-smoker. 706.389.2915


**Wellness Center** – Clean, fully equipped exercise center staffed by knowledgeable professionals. Features fitness classes, Phase 3 Cardiac Rehab, strength-training and cardiovascular equipment, and therapeutic massage. 706.389.3355

Learn more at [www.stmarysathens.org](http://www.stmarysathens.org).
Community Internal Medicine of Athens

Your partner for better health

Photos by Ian McFarland

Do you want...

• Regular medical care from a skilled physician?
• Plenty of time to discuss your concerns with your doctor?
• A primary care team that works with you to maximize your health?
• A place to easily access care when your primary care physician is not available?
• To help educate the next generation of physicians?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of these questions, then Community Internal Medicine of Athens – CIMA – might be right for you.

CIMA is a medical practice offering comprehensive outpatient care for adults, with care provided by resident physicians and physician faculty. It's part of a collaborative effort between St. Mary's and the Augusta University/University of Georgia Medical Partnership to address the shortage of physicians in Georgia by preparing newly graduated doctors for independent practice.

Resident physicians are doctors who have graduated from medical school and are completing the final stage of their medical training. Fully capable physicians, they work with physician faculty in an intensive three-year program to prepare to become board-certified internal medicine physicians.

During the course of their three-year residency, the physicians provide progressively independent care, under the supervision of physician faculty, to patients at St. Mary’s Hospital in Athens and St. Mary’s Good Samaritan Hospital in Greensboro. They also provide outpatient care in their clinic at CIMA in Athens and at the TenderCare Clinic in Greensboro. Residents gain further training in several subspecialties of medicine, such as gastroenterology and pulmonology, at clinical practices in Athens.

Caring physicians. Quality care.

"The diversity of experience provided by the Internal Medicine Residency Program provides our residents with a comprehensive skill set,” said Achilia Morrow, MD, Program Director. "Our residents practice in settings ranging from critical care to outpatient clinics, which gives them tremendous insights into realities and possibilities as they move forward in their careers.”

CIMA operates as a traditional primary care practice for adults age 16 and over, with physicians getting to know patients as individuals. But there are some added benefits:

• Resident physicians at CIMA often take more time with new patients, conducting a more detailed history and physical than is typical at most primary care practices.
• Care is normally handled by two physicians: the resident and the supervising faculty member. This is especially important for patients with multiple or complex conditions.
• Residents are supervised by experienced physician faculty from the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University.
• In addition to traditional appointments, CIMA normally can handle walk-ins (though it’s better to call first).
• Patients are helping to educate the next generation of physicians who may help address the shortage of doctors in Georgia.

"For first-year residents, physician faculty not only review and approve clinical decisions but are often directly involved in evaluating patients side-by-side with the resident," Dr. Morrow says. "As residents gain experience over
Resident physician Yousef Treki, MD, center, and medical student Jacob Feeney discuss care with a patient at CIMA.

the course of their residency, they assume greater responsibility and independence, though always with physician faculty supervision available.”

The Internal Medicine Residency Program is fully accredited with up to 34 physician residents at a time. Each June, third-year residents complete the program, moving into private practice or continuing their medical education, and 10-11 new residents begin their three-year journey.

“It is great to watch these residents recognize their passions in medicine, then set the goals and do the work to achieve them,” says Dr. Morrow.

Services CIMA offers

CIMA provides full internal medicine care for adults, including routine wellness visits, treatment of minor acute illnesses and injuries, and management of certain chronic conditions such as high blood pressure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and diabetes. CIMA physicians can prescribe medications and order tests, including lab work and imaging, and refer patients to specialists as needed.

While CIMA accepts some walk-in patients, most visits are by appointment. The practice strives to create a partnership between each patient and a resident physician who will be that patient’s personal physician during the resident’s tenure at CIMA.

CIMA is located in the Resource Medical Office Park, 1500 Oglethorpe Ave., Building 200, Suite C. The location is served by Athens Transit and is just off Loop 10, making it convenient to all of Northeast Georgia. As part of St. Mary’s Medical Group, it accepts most private and government insurance plans and offers a sliding scale or charity care for those who qualify.

To make a new patient appointment, please call 706.389.3875.

For more information, visit www.cimathens.com.
Brighten the holidays

Love Lights benefits all three hospitals year round

Every year, the Auxiliaries of all three St. Mary’s hospitals sponsor Love Lights programs to raise funds for equipment and services.

Love Lights is a beautiful way to start the holiday season while helping to advance St. Mary’s Mission to be a compassionate and transforming healing presence in the communities we serve.

Each light represents a gift made to benefit that hospital. Gifts can be made year-round in remembrance or in honor of family and friends; to celebrate anniversaries, birthdays, or special occasions, and for special acknowledgment of a person or association. All donations are acknowledged in the local Love Lights Book, which is displayed in the hospital lobby during the holiday season.

Funds raised locally stay local. Learn more at:

St. Mary’s Hospital
“Donate” page at www.stmarysathens.org

St. Mary’s Good Samaritan Hospital
“Donate” page at www.stmarysgoodsam.org

St. Mary’s Sacred Heart Hospital
Please call 706.356.7824