



Shepherd Center

SHEPHERD 360° Community Benefit Report

FY 2021 (April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021)



Dear Friends,

Community involvement has been a vital part of Shepherd Center's culture since its founding in 1975. After a challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our dedication to the communities we serve has proven more important than ever. At the beginning of the pandemic, we prioritized uninterrupted care and programs and services for our patients and their families by launching medical, rehabilitative and psychological telehealth services. You can read about our patient-centered care on page five.

We simultaneously supported our community partners like Side by Side Brain Injury Clubhouse. This unique, community-based program provides a supportive environment where adults living with brain injuries can redevelop social and work-related skills at their own pace in a meaningful way. Shepherd Center provided in-kind donations to Side by Side to offset their staff salaries during the pandemic's start. Partners like this address crucial community needs, and we want to make sure we do our part to champion them. Learn about more of our community partners on page 14.

Of course, none of the work we do for the people and communities we serve would be possible without our amazing staff. As a premier neurorehabilitation hospital, I'm proud that Shepherd Center was recognized as a 2021 *"Best Place to Work for Disability Inclusion,"* by Disability:IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities. Shepherd has introduced creative solutions to help eliminate some of the barriers that keep people with disabilities out of the work force, and, in fact, multiple past patients

have joined our staff team. These individuals received rehabilitation at our hospital, and I'm honored that they wanted to give back by providing their time and talents as employees and volunteers.

Shepherd Center is committed to addressing the needs of our unique patient population while we embrace our vital role in improving health outcomes in the communities we serve. This document outlines the various services and programs we offer to achieve this goal.

Learn more about our mission and how we aim to achieve it at shepherd.org.



Sarah A. Morrison, PT, MBA, MHA

Sarah A. Morrison

Chief Executive Officer

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility



“ We achieve great things when we all work together as an inclusive organization that values diversity and recognizes inequities. ”

The past year sparked a wave of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives across America. Leaders in all industries searched for the right thing to say or do as their employees emotionally processed ongoing acts of systemic racial injustice. At Shepherd Center, Sarah Morrison, PT, MBA, MHA, chief executive officer, pledged to seek a better understanding and create solutions for a more diverse, inclusive, equitable and accessible workplace. She accomplished this by conducting months-long focus groups where safe spaces allowed for candid conversation. She listened to almost 150 employees from across the organization who shared their personal experiences and meaningful ideas to promote change within Shepherd Center. Their feedback was invaluable in creating Shepherd Center's four-point plan to address diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA): education and awareness, leadership, human resources and community.

Shepherd Center's Plan for Increasing Equity in the Workplace



Education/Awareness

- Goal:** Expand awareness of unconscious bias and its effect on Shepherd culture
- › Create mandatory diversity and inclusion educational sessions
 - › Provide voluntary education sessions with outside speakers
 - › Continue center-wide focus group discussions
 - › Develop standards and key words for staff and patients

Human Resources



- Goal:** Create lasting behavioral change
- › Improve recruiting practices
 - › Ensure equitable career pathways of opportunity
 - › Continue career development discussions during performance reviews
 - › Continue cultural information e-mails



Leadership

- Goal:** Foster an environment of trust, compassion and inclusivity
- › Refurbish Diversity and Inclusion Committee
 - › Increase diversity at all leadership levels
 - › Initiate mandatory diversity and inclusion leadership training
 - › Re-institute 360 feedback for leaders



Community

- Goal:** Link Shepherd Center's diversity efforts to community engagement
- › Continue Shepherd Serves with focus on underserved communities
 - › Initiate food drives
 - › Create opportunities/partnerships aimed at developing stronger pipelines of diverse talent.



Shepherd Center at a Glance

740+ Inpatients

46,000+ Outpatient Visits

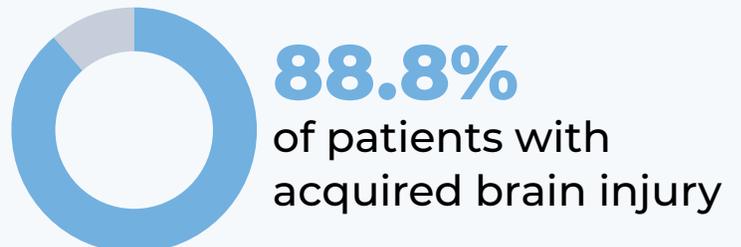
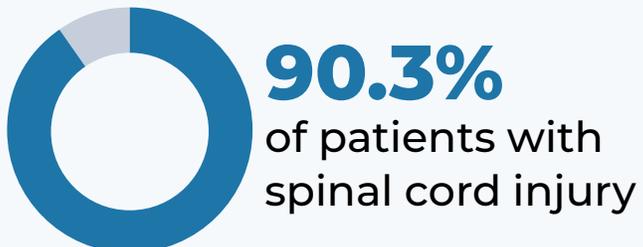
270+ Day Program Patients

50%+ Inpatients from Outside Georgia

7,100+ Outpatients

70%+ Inpatients from Outside Metro Atlanta

Discharged to the Community



Shepherd Center by the Numbers

152

Licensed
Beds

1,808

Employees

16

Attending
Physiatrists

550

Nurses

454

Therapists

About Us

Founded in 1975, Shepherd Center is a private, not-for-profit hospital located in Atlanta, Georgia. It is one of the nation's leading hospitals specializing in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, multiple sclerosis, chronic pain and other neuromuscular conditions. In more than four decades, Shepherd Center has grown from a six-bed rehabilitation unit to a world-renowned, 152-bed hospital that treats more than 740 inpatients, 270 day program patients and more than 7,100 outpatients each year in more than 46,000 visits. Our mission is to help people with a temporary or permanent disability caused by injury or disease rebuild their lives with hope, independence and dignity, advocating for their full inclusion in all aspects of community life while promoting safety and injury prevention.

Objective

Patients come to Shepherd Center from across the United States and the world seeking the best care and resources unique from other hospitals treating patients with similar injuries. Community benefit funding partially supports various value-added programs and services such as recreation therapy, animal-assisted therapy, patient outings, chaplaincy, assistive technology, peer support, back-to-school programs, and family programs. We also offer specialized programs tailored to adolescents, patients with dual diagnoses (both brain and spinal cord injuries), patients who use ventilators and patients with disorders of consciousness.

Shepherd Center was again recognized among the top 10 Best Hospitals for Rehabilitation by *U.S. News & World Report* and has been in the top 10 since 2008. For more than 30 years, the annual Best Hospitals rankings and ratings have been designed to assist patients and their doctors in making informed decisions about where to receive care for challenging health conditions or for common elective procedures.

In the 2021-22 rankings, Shepherd Center was ranked No. 7.



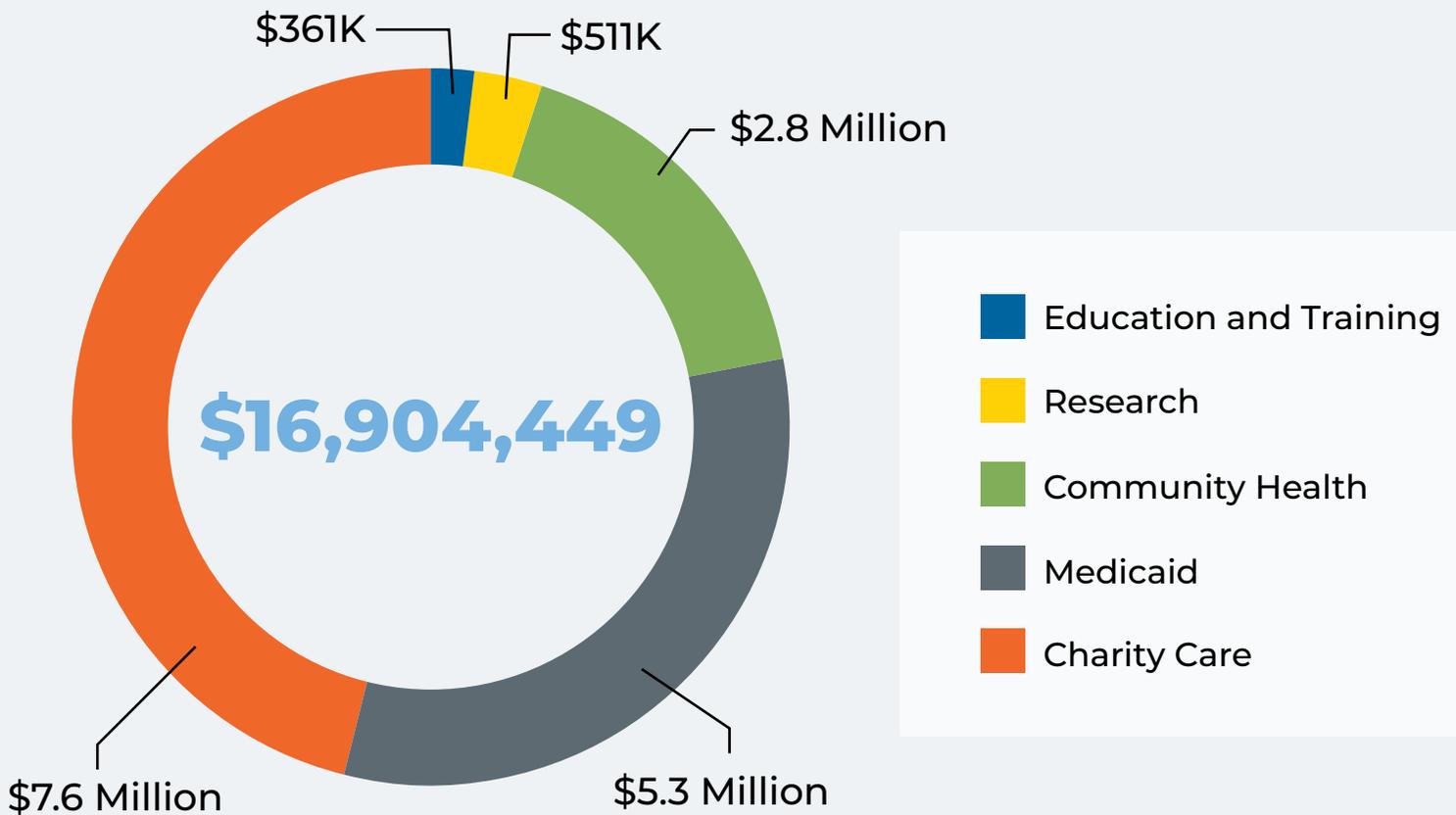
Patient-Centered Care

Shepherd Center focuses on patient-centered care and offers a broad continuum of care and exceptional quality that is unique in the setting of an acute care rehabilitation hospital. Our continuum of care includes an intensive care unit (ICU), acute care, Day Program, research programs, outpatient programs and more. Our value-added, or “community benefit,” programs provide our patients with the resources to relearn activities of daily living and achieve the goals they have set for themselves post-injury. Those goals include returning to home, school and work as independently as possible. They also include regaining the ability to enjoy life through social events, hobbies and leisure activities, as well as providing for themselves and their family. While these value-added programs help our patients restore their hope and rebuild their lives, they often are not reimbursed by insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid. We believe these programs are essential to a patient’s successful recovery and directly contribute to our much-greater-than-average clinical outcomes that lead to greater independence for the patient. We pay for these programs through the generous support of thousands of donors annually and from any excess revenue the hospital earns through conservative financial management.

Shepherd Center defines community benefit as a planned, organized and measured approach to services and activities that specifically address the healthcare needs of people with spinal cord and brain injury, multiple sclerosis, chronic pain and other neuromuscular diseases, as well as the family or loved ones affected. Patients at Shepherd Center get more than medical care – they receive the full continuum of care from evaluation and medical treatment to rehabilitation and lifelong support programs that extend back to their communities. Our patient population has unique needs that are typically underserved, making Shepherd an important lifeline and resource for our patients throughout their life. Shepherd Center’s community includes current and former patients, as well as their families and loved ones.

Community Benefit: By the Numbers

April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021



This report focuses on the following areas of impact:

- 1 Community-Building Activities:** Programs that provide opportunities to address the root causes of health problems in our community.
- 2 Health Professional Education:** Programs that provide scholarships or funding for professional education.
- 3 Financial and In-Kind Contributions:** Services donated to individuals or the community-at-large.
- 4 Subsidized Health Services:** Clinical services that meet a community need and are provided despite a financial loss.
- 5 Community Health Improvement:** Activities carried out to improve community health and do not generate inpatient or outpatient bills.



Shepherd 360°: David

David, right, connects with a patient in the Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program as part of his role as a peer support liaison.

David loves all things outdoorsy, from swimming to fishing to street bike racing. However, his love for speed led to a grievous event after a weekend expedition with friends. Although David does not remember the actual incident, he knows he was racing ahead when he lost control of his bike. Along with good Samaritans, his friends helped David in the minutes after the accident, and David was ultimately airlifted to Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. David sustained a spinal cord injury with a mild traumatic brain injury (TBI).

After spending a month in the ICU at Grady, David transferred to Shepherd Center. Interestingly, when David worked for Georgia Power, his route took him by Shepherd Center for five years, and he never noticed it. As a patient at Shepherd Center, his initial therapy was a big blur for the first week or two because of his brain injury. David stayed quiet most of the time after his accident because he was still dealing with aphasia, which can make speaking a challenge. He was extremely weak during therapy and took some time to regain weight and rebuild muscle mass. David credits his care team at Shepherd for his recovery, as well as the love and compassion of his therapists and peer support liaisons, who showed him that independence was achievable.

A pivotal moment for David came when his peer support liaison, Pete, was able to do a transfer without breaking eye contact. David really struggled with learning how to transfer from his wheelchair to another surface or location. Seeing someone living with similar physical issues demonstrate this task successfully, proved to him that such things were possible.

“That changed my perception of what is possible even though I have limited control of my body,”
David recalls.

Eight years later, David received a bachelor's degree in healthcare management and now works at Shepherd Center as a peer liaison. David helps patients with those critical transfers, in addition to making research presentations, performing community outreach, teaching self-care classes and posting on social media. He is also an active member of Shepherd's water ski team and has represented the United States in four world championships. David has traveled the world, and he still loves speed bikes, but he is most proud of his five-month-old son.



Shepherd 360°: Claire & Amelia

Claire, center, volunteers at a peer support event with her daughters Megan, left, and Amelia.

Claire is a busy mom with two beautiful daughters. Her oldest, Amelia, was born with a rare congenital condition, hydrocephalus, and Dandy-Walker syndrome, which required surgeries to remove excess fluid and pressure on her brain. Aside from the surgeries, everything seemed on track for Amelia, a senior in high school. Three weeks after her acceptance into college in a singer/songwriter program, Amelia and her mother headed to New York for another surgery. During this surgery Amelia had a stroke. Amelia was non-responsive and having seizures. Claire notes that this was a scary time for the family, but she vividly remembers saying to her husband, who was back home taking care of Amelia's sister, "it seems like a brain injury; we gotta get to Shepherd."

Claire, a nurse, was familiar with Shepherd Center because she worked for a nearby hospital.

With perseverance and many prayers, Amelia was finally admitted to Shepherd Center. Once at Shepherd, Claire felt that she could finally breathe because of the hope and calm presented to the family and a "we got this" attitude, which is unique to Shepherd Center. Shepherd Center co-founders, Alana and the late James Shepherd, greeted them, which gave them friendly faces and a

family welcome. Claire admits there were many ups and downs during Amelia's rehabilitation, but it was the little things, like having a wheelchair ready for her or even helping her take a shower and getting her dressed after months of not doing these things that made all the difference. Therapy was very aggressive for Amelia and she advanced very quickly, so much so that Amelia even got to go to her senior prom.

A year after Amelia's discharge, Claire started volunteering at Shepherd Center by serving on the brain injury caregiver board. Her volunteerism led to employment as a Brain Injury Peer Support Coordinator, where she supports families whose loved ones have sustained a brain injury. Claire teaches inpatient and outpatient classes and supports research projects on the efficacy of peer support. Claire notes that Shepherd Center empowers patients and family members to embrace life in the moment. And today, Amelia has graduated from college with honors and is now pursuing a master's degree in child life.

Andee's Army and Adolescent Patient Programs



“Hope is the most important value. I've seen extraordinary change in children's ability to believe and suspend what is happening in their current situation and focus on the future.”
– Nina Cheney, Executive Director, Andee's Army”

True partnerships are born out of bonds of trust and shared purposes. A key partner that aligns with Shepherd Center's Adolescent Rehabilitation Program is Andee's Army, sharing a desire to help children and young adults with brain and spinal cord injuries. Our collaboration, launched in 2014, leverages our collective expertise and interest in spinal cord and brain injury to create positive opportunities, combat the stigma surrounding disabilities for our patients and their families and improve overall outcomes.

Shepherd Center offers specialized programs tailored to adolescents with spinal cord and brain injuries. Our adolescent rehabilitation program treats approximately 60 adolescent patients aged 12 to 17 each year. The program begins in the intensive care unit for most patients and focuses on a healthy lifestyle and the highest level of function and independence possible. Our outcomes exceed national averages. For adolescents with a brain injury, 95 percent return to school within three to six months.

Andee's Army is a non-profit organization founded by the Poulos family in 2011. Teenager Andee Poulos had an extremely rare condition called arteriovenous malformation (AVM) that required surgery and extensive rehabilitation. Fortunately, they had a community to support them through this trauma, so when Andee recovered, they founded Andee's Army to give back. Andee's Army serves those 23 and younger with spinal and brain injury, with the goal of having children live as fully as possible. Since its inception, Andee's Army has graciously helped Shepherd Center by identifying critical gaps in service and unmet needs and has launched special initiatives to create innovative solutions for children and adolescents living with brain and spinal cord injuries. To encourage this rediscovery of what normal means for our patients, Andee's Army sponsors several social events at Shepherd Center.



1

Halloween Haunted Gym at Shepherd Center is one of the spookiest days of the year. Adolescent patients are invited to help design and execute an impressive haunted house, complete with jump scares and great acting from patients and staff.



2

Graduations at Shepherd Center are often held for our youngest patients who might otherwise miss their own graduation. These were especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic. Jackson Stafford enjoyed an outdoors and hunting-themed graduation planned for him by his care team.



3

Project Rollway at Shepherd Center is an annual fashion show that features fashion modeling by current and former adolescent patients and current staff members. In conjunction with Project Rollway, Shepherd hosts an adolescent reunion in Atlanta every five years.

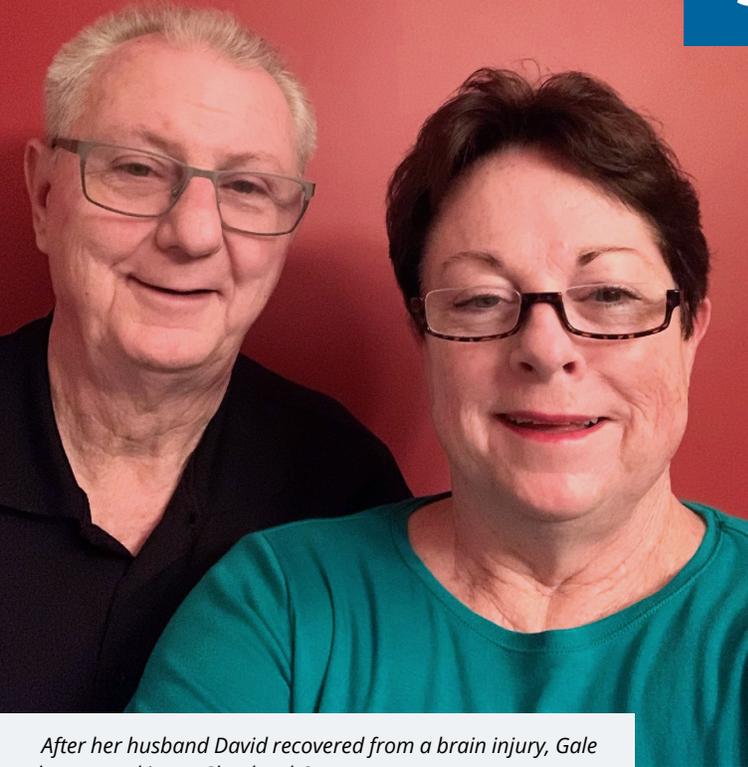


4

Prom Night at Shepherd Center is a special event and rite of passage for our adolescent patients, complete with formal wear, florals and food.

In addition to these wonderful social programs, Andee's Army has also funded peer mentoring for teens, a study on driving while concussed and a new mental health initiative.

Shepherd 360°: Gale & David



After her husband David recovered from a brain injury, Gale began working at Shepherd Center.

A month before her husband's brain injury, Gale's life seemed fairly predictable. She was working full-time in a support role she enjoyed for a pastor at a megachurch in Roswell, and her husband, David, was working in sales. Gale and David's three children had completed college and worked in their respective fields. They had just downsized to a smaller home the year before and were finally able to save a more significant portion of their income towards retirement because the kids were out of the nest. Church and family were important, and they were active with both.

During a business trip, David was found unresponsive, the result of developing staph sepsis. He was given a 15% chance of survival. After the initial prognosis, David suffered complications that threatened his life further. A few days before Gale and David arrived at Shepherd Center, David started to emerge from his coma, but he

was still fed through a feeding tube, unable to sit up by himself and could hardly communicate. Gale spent 99% of every day for six weeks by his side in his acute care hospital room, sleeping on a pallet on the floor at night. She was physically and emotionally exhausted and soon had to worry about finances as both Gale and David lost their jobs. Nevertheless, those six weeks of challenges brought Gale to have an even stronger faith in God. That faith sustained her.

David spent weeks as an inpatient in the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program and three months in the Day Program. Gale struggled with some longer-term questions like "Could I alone provide enough of an income to sustain us? Would I need to make our home wheelchair accessible?" But, it was very stabilizing to see their immediate challenges being met. David was getting outstanding care and rehabilitation, and he was applying himself 100%. The therapists were organized, productively demanding and encouraging. The nursing staff was friendly, efficient and compassionate to them both. From David's physician to the environmental services staff that cleaned his room every day, the employees were engaging and treated the couple with warmth and respect.

During the four months David was rehabilitating at Shepherd, several people on staff told Gale she would make a great Shepherd employee. After David's discharge, he started looking for appropriate work, and so did Gale. One day a position was advertised on the Shepherd website, and when she read the description, Gale was stunned. It was as though a position had been designed exactly for where Gale's heart and strengths aligned. To support the family members of patients at Shepherd as they go through the indescribable journey of navigating their world being turned upside down like hers was a dream job. Currently, Gale is the Family Support Services Coordinator, where she supervises volunteers who help connect family members of current patients to her. Gale and her team of volunteers visit families in the patient's room soon after admission to welcome them and tell them about what she can do for them, deliver patients' mail and packages every day, help the family with local errands, give haircuts to patients and much more. Gale also plans monthly events and publishes them to an event calendar for families. In addition, Gale is the point person for Shepherd's local housing partners, and she organizes Shepherd's Red Cross blood drives on-site three times each year.



Shepherd 360°: Jared

Jared was enjoying his freshman year in college – pledging, immersing himself in new classes and activities while learning how to live on his own. His ultimate goal was to graduate with a degree in engineering. Jared loved being outdoors – roaming and exploring, fishing and climbing trees. One day, Jared and a group of friends were climbing trees on campus when the unexpected happened – Jared fell. Friends rushed to help him. Jared was taken to UMass Memorial Health, where he spent three weeks recovering from his injuries.

Jared arrived at Shepherd Center the weekend of Memorial Day and spent a few days in the ICU getting his blood pressure stabilized. While at Shepherd Center, Jared was offered the opportunity to participate in a research study while still completing daily therapy. Because of Jared’s age, he was part of the Adolescent Rehabilitation Program, designed specifically for adolescents and young adults who have sustained a spinal cord injury. One of the goals of this program is to give young people the self-assurance to enjoy social outings and be prepared if something unexpected happens. Jared remembers going to the Chick-fil-A headquarters for fun Friday soon after. It was rough, having just had surgery, but he did it. He continued therapy for the next three months, making it his goal to get in a manual wheelchair and ultimately fully regain his independence.

Jared’s final outing was to the airport to prepare for flying, which gave him the confidence to make his journey home. Before leaving, he received his chair and graduated feeling ready to live his new life.

“For Jared, Shepherd “definitely provided me a solid education on life with a spinal cord injury and set me up for success.”

After leaving Shepherd, Jared returned to school to complete his degree. After college, he worked in computer-based engineering for an aerospace company. While he enjoyed the work, Jared felt somewhat unfulfilled. "Getting ready for work takes a lot of energy, so I wanted to be sure that what I decided to do was equally fulfilling," Jared explains.

A position opened up in Shepherd’s Assistive Technology Program, which Jared applied for and got. He moved from Massachusetts to Atlanta, and now, he provides assistance using technology, like 3D printing, with Shepherd’s patients and their family members. Often, a therapist will see a challenge, and Jared will create the solution, such as custom modifications for wheelchair users or custom orders for adaptive driving.

Community Benefit Report: Programs

Shepherd Center is a leader in educating healthcare professionals who specialize in spinal cord and brain injury rehabilitation. We also serve as a strong community advocate, monitoring legislation and related issues that impact the disability community. Shepherd Center’s reach extends beyond metro Atlanta to all of Georgia, the United States and the world as the leading specialty hospital for this patient population. For 45 years, Shepherd has served as an advocate for people living with disabilities and has changed the landscape in Atlanta and beyond to be more accommodating to people with disabilities living in our community.

Community Building Activities



Advocacy – People Served: 10,650

Shepherd Center strives to create an inclusive environment for our patients, employees and others who access our facility, including volunteers, community members and visitors. In addition to organizational practices that cultivate diversity and inclusion, we work to promote those principles through active engagement in advocacy and public policy.

Shepherd Center is available to help put you in touch with the individuals, lawmakers and groups that affect policy and decision making.

Community Health Improvement

	People Served		People Served
Sports Teams	43	Recreation Therapy	1,505
SHARE Military Initiative	29	Vocational Services	40
SHARE Life Coach	37	MS General Support	3,187
Wellness/Promotion Program	30	Chaplaincy	1,375
Adolescent Program	20	Noble Learning Resource Center	987
Transportation	1,532	Ambulance Fund	32
		Patient Assistant Fund	321

Health Professional Education

	People Served
Summer Nurse Extern Program	39
Residency Program	318

Community Building Activities

	People Served
Rescue Program	60
Housing	640
Injury Prevention	110
Gaps in Coverage Spinal Cord Injury	115



MS Wellness and Rehab – People Served: 138

The Eula C. and Andrew C. Carlos Multiple Sclerosis Rehabilitation and Wellness Program at Shepherd Center uses rehabilitative treatment to improve wellness for patients diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) and related conditions. Rehabilitation and wellness provide tools MS patients need to take control of their condition.

Our comprehensive MS Rehabilitation and Wellness Program includes:

- Educational classes
- Exercise and mobility classes
- Social activities
- Community outings

The program empowers patients to stay active and decreases the effects of deconditioning. Clients benefit from MS-specific group fitness classes, including gym and aquatic classes. When the MS wellness programs meet, Shepherd Center’s pool is cooled to allow participants to enjoy the water with a decreased risk of heat-related symptoms.

Subsidized Health Services

	People Served		
Transition Support	325	SCI Program Fun	260
Shepherd Pathways	363	Horticultural Therapy	1,242
Acquired Brain Injury	215	Assistive Tech Program	1,762
Animal Assisted Therapy	800	Patient Equipment	32
		Andee's Army	79

Community Partnerships

Community partnerships are integral to the success of Shepherd Center. Shepherd Center has more than 200 industry and academic partnerships to advance research and innovation. Sharing knowledge is the key to making progress on behalf of the people we serve. We collaborate with leading universities, including Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia to advance brain and spinal cord injury medicine and technology. Shepherd researchers also collaborate with international corporate technology partners, such as Parker Hannifin, to test and enhance new assistive and therapeutic technologies, including robotic devices, to help restore function and assist with walking. Our partners understand our consumers are extremely underserved and need as much support as they can receive to achieve the fullest level of recovery and quality of life.

Our partners include, but are not limited to:



Shepherd Center, located in Atlanta, Georgia, is a private, not-for-profit hospital specializing in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injury, brain injury, stroke, multiple sclerosis, spine and chronic pain, and other neuromuscular conditions. Founded in 1975, Shepherd Center is ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* among the top 10 rehabilitation hospitals in the nation. In its more than four decades, Shepherd Center has grown from a six-bed rehabilitation unit to a world-renowned, 152-bed hospital that treats more than 740 inpatients, 280 day program patients and more than 7,000 outpatients each year in more than 46,000 visits.



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