



Rural Development • Rural Housing Service • Community Facilities Direct Loan Program

## 10 Bed Mental Health Unit Stabilizes Hospital’s Employment

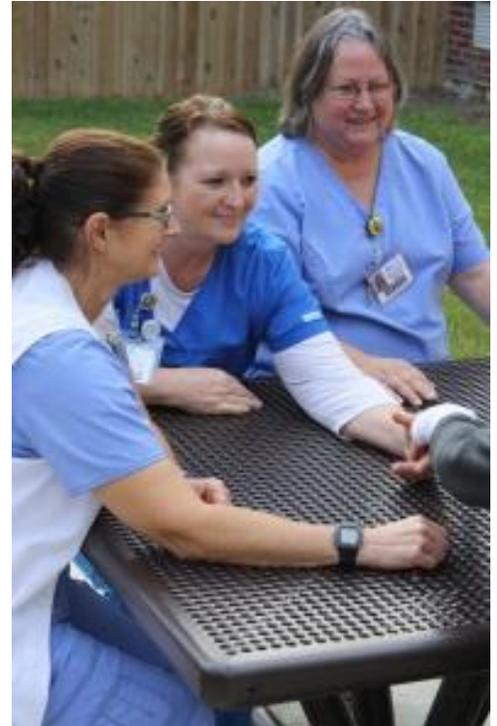
Emanuel Medical Center’s strategic implementation of USDA’s Community Facility Direct Loan Program has stabilized the hospital’s cash flow and staffing levels while meeting a critical mental healthcare need for senior citizens in rural Emanuel County, Georgia. Emanuel is a persistent poverty, [StrikeForce](#) designated county.

In March, 2015 USDA Rural Development obligated a \$1,426,250 Community Facility Direct Loan to the Emanuel County Hospital Authority for renovations and improvements to the Emanuel Medical Center in Swainsboro, Georgia, and to add a 10 bed Geriatric Psychiatric Unit to the Center. The services of the new Geri Psych Unit have been constantly in demand, since it opened in July 2015; it’s 10 beds are occupied by patients from one of the 28 nursing homes or senior citizen population within 48 miles of the Center.

Because Medicare reimburses the hospital for services provided to Medicare patients, the unit provides a secure payment source for services rendered and is stabilizing the hospital’s cash flow. Additionally, staffing levels have stabilized because with the 10 Geri Psych beds filled continuously, the hospital can now maintain a nightly patient census at levels avoiding emergency staffing protocol. The new Geri Psych Unit also helps meet the great need for geriatric mental healthcare.

One in four older adults has a significant mental disorder, and these groups of citizens are at increased risk for receiving inadequate and inappropriate care. At Emanuel’s Geriatric Psychiatric Unit, patients requiring hospitalization receive health services by a multi-disciplinary team working to evaluate mental and physical needs, coordinate care and apply an array of resources. Patients are supported by social workers, psychologists, nurses, and therapists all dedicated to improving patient health.

This collaborative effort of the hospital authority and the hospital management team, ERHealthcare strategically used Community Facility Loan funds to stabilize the hospital’s cash flow and staffing levels while meeting a critical mental healthcare need for senior citizens.



*Inpatients at EMC’s Geri Psych Unit can receive individual therapy, group therapy, coping therapies, art, crafts, exercise and more.*

**Obligation Amount:** \$1,426,250 Community Facility Loan (Direct)

**Date of Obligation:** March 20, 2015

**Congressional District:** Representative Allen, District 12; Senators Isakson and Perdue

**Partners:** Emanuel County Hospital Authority, \$171,389

**Demographics:** STRIKEFORCE Emanuel County Georgia population 22,598 and 9.8% unemployment rate

**Impact:** Helps fill community’s need for mental health care and the high demand for services creates staffing level stability at the hospital.