



Healing Closer to Home

Meadows Adds \$136 Million to Vidalia Economy

Nurses the Secret to Success

For Life



MEADOWS

REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Healing Closer to Home

at the New Meadows Advanced Wound Care Center

John Spence, M.D., Medical Director of Meadows Advanced Wound Care Center, stated that there have already been a number of success stories associated with the facility even though it's been open just a few weeks.

"We've seen mild to moderate wounds that have already healed, and very large wounds that we've been able to make some real progress on since we've started here," said Dr. Spence.

The concept of a chronic wound – a wound that doesn't heal in a timely fashion and in a predictable amount of time the way most wounds do – isn't new, but the aggressive treatment of chronic wounds with facilities such as Meadows Advanced Wound Care Center is a new concept, Spence said.

"Chronic wounds can be present for years. They've become such a big cost to Medicare and insurers because of patients being readmitted time and time again, and sometimes requiring amputations," he said. "It's better for patients and cheaper to treat wounds aggressively from the beginning.

"Meadows Regional caregivers no longer have to refer patients to other health facilities, and having the same professionals on hand to work with patients on a regular basis has been shown to improve healing rates," Spence said. "The doctors and nurses know the patients and they know what to look for and how things are going."

The center, which also is staffed with two RNs and one LPN, will improve the quality of life for patients who previously had to travel significant distances for treatment.

"I've already seen several patients over 70 years of age who would have otherwise been treated in Statesboro or Savannah," Spence said. "We're talking about a 90-minute trip each way to Savannah, so that's an extra three hours each day. This is exhausting, particularly for an older person who is dealing with a chronic wound."

Wound Care Specialist John Spence

Meadows Regional Medical Center is proud to welcome John Spence, M.D., M.S., as the Medical Director for Meadows Advanced Wound Care Center.

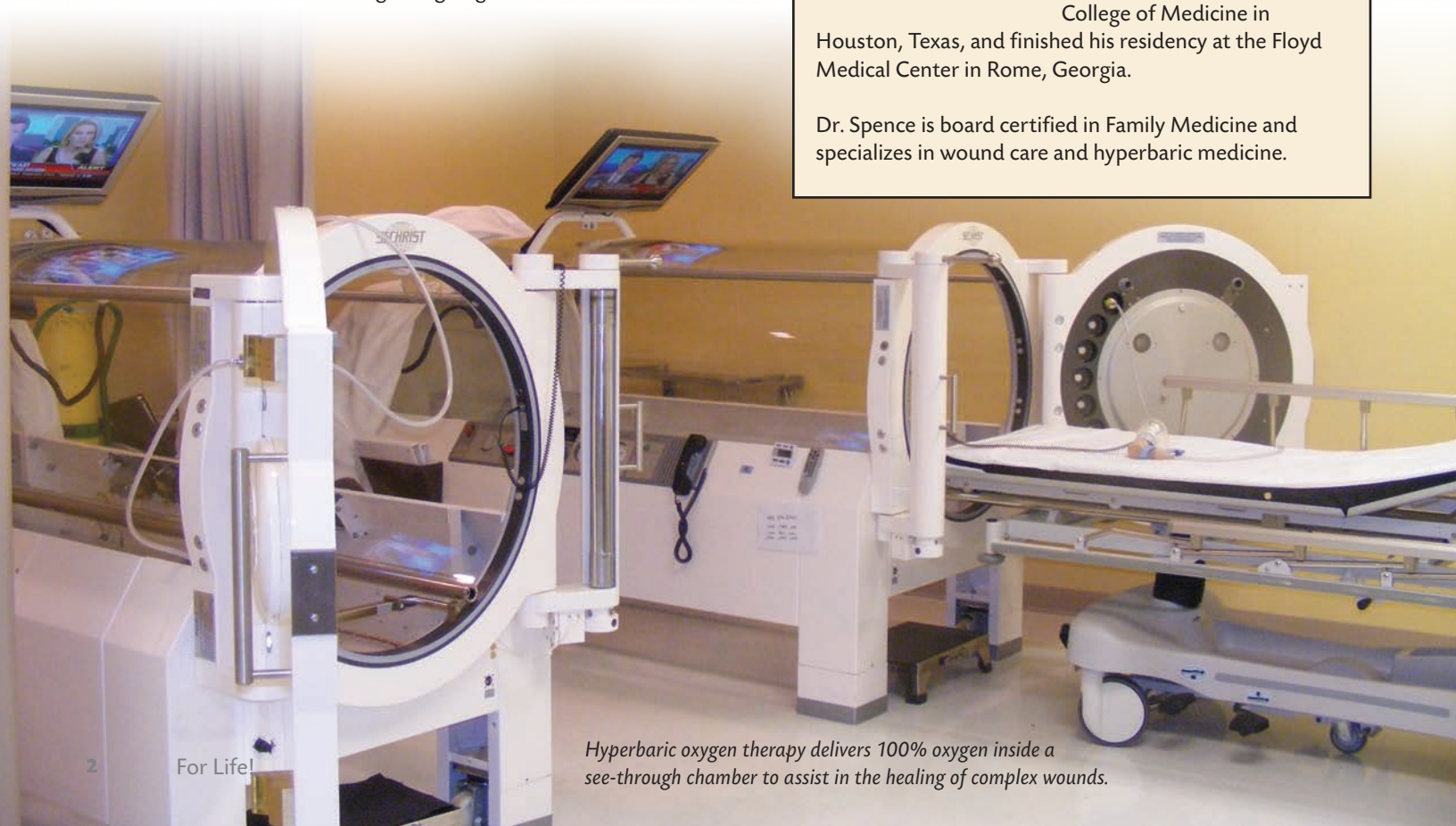


John Spence, M.D., M.S.

Dr. Spence completed his undergraduate degree at Emory University in Atlanta. He attended medical school at the Saba University School of Medicine in the Netherlands Antilles.

Dr. Spence completed his internship at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, and finished his residency at the Floyd Medical Center in Rome, Georgia.

Dr. Spence is board certified in Family Medicine and specializes in wound care and hyperbaric medicine.



Hyperbaric oxygen therapy delivers 100% oxygen inside a see-through chamber to assist in the healing of complex wounds.



Groundbreaking ceremony for the new Meadows Advanced Wound Care Center took place on June 9, 2011.

Spence stated that often individuals are unable to travel great distances because their circumstances prevent them.

"I've already seen people here who had wounds for two years and they just wrapped it up instead of getting the treatment they needed," he said.

Spence said that it's not necessary to live with chronic wounds. There are several negative aspects to having a chronic wound, including an increased potential for infection and nutrition loss because the body uses a large amount of energy to try and heal the wound.

Common conditions treated at the center include diabetic wounds, pressure ulcers, lower extremity ulcers, non-healing surgical wounds, wounds showing no improvement after four weeks, wounds related to circulatory problems, minor burns and osteomyelitis, which is an infection of the bone.

Meadows Advanced Wound Care Center utilizes hyperbaric oxygen therapy, in which patients breathe pure oxygen inside a pressurized chamber. The therapy quickly and safely delivers high concentrations of oxygen to the bloodstream, which helps increase the body's own wound-healing abilities.

The center has two hyperbaric oxygen chambers, which are used to treat diabetic foot ulcers, PAD (peripheral artery disease), radiation injuries, compromised skin grafts and flaps, crush injuries and osteomyelitis.

Other treatments offered at the center include negative pressure wound therapy, compression therapy, specialized dressings and bio-engineered tissue grafts to enhance wound healing and improve circulation.

To learn more about Meadows Advanced Wound Care Center, contact 912.277.2077.

New Physicians Join Meadows Regional

Orthopedic Surgeon Charles P. Catron

Meadows Regional Medical Center welcomes board-certified Orthopedic Surgeon Charles P. Catron, M.D., to the Vidalia Orthopedic Center and the hospital's medical staff.



Charles P. Catron, M.D.

Dr. Catron attended medical school at the University of Kentucky College of Medicine in Lexington, Kentucky, and graduated with high distinction. He completed his residency in Orthopedic Surgery at the Greenville Hospital System in Greenville, South Carolina.

Dr. Catron has completed multiple workshops and symposiums on such topics as Total Hip and Knee Replacement, Surgical Technology and Musculoskeletal Pathology.

He is board certified by the American Board of Orthopedic Surgeons and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons.

Dr. Catron is moving to the area with his wife and their two daughters.

Otolaryngologist Phillip Billings Flexon

Meadows Regional Medical Center welcomes board-certified Otolaryngologist Phillip Billings Flexon, M.D., F.A.C.S., to Vidalia ENT Associates and the hospital's medical staff. Dr. Flexon recently joined Vidalia ENT Associates from a hospital-associated cancer institute in Savannah.



Phillip Billings Flexon, M.D., F.A.C.S.

Dr. Flexon graduated *magna cum laude* from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, with a degree in biology. He earned a master's degree in genetics from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, before earning his medical degree from Case Western Reserve

University School of Medicine in Cleveland, Ohio.

Dr. Flexon performed his internship at Case Western in General Surgery. His residency was at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary and Harvard School of Medicine. This included Massachusetts General Hospital, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Beth Israel Medical Center and Children's Hospital Boston.

Among his appointments, Dr. Flexon was chair of Head and Neck Oncology at the Anderson Cancer Institute at Memorial Health University Medical Center in Savannah, Georgia. In addition, he served as section chief of the Otolaryngology Department of Surgery and vice chair of the Department of Surgery from 2002 - 2004.

A native of West Virginia, Dr. Flexon served on the board of directors of the Savannah Science Museum and spent a year as vice president of the Savannah Science Museum.

Meadows Pumps \$136 Million into Area Economy



As Georgia's economy continues to limp along, Meadows Regional Medical Center can take pride in the fact that it has pumped some \$136 million into the Vidalia-area economy in 2009 alone.

That's the findings of a recent report commissioned by the Georgia Hospital Association, the state's largest hospital trade association. And the impact of Meadows Regional didn't include the new hospital construction project, worth more than \$50 million alone.

The report also found that during the same period Meadows Regional provided nearly \$6.5 million in uncompensated care.

And, as one of the largest employers in the area, Meadows employed more than 700 individuals, providing jobs and income for area families.

In addition, one of the largest businesses in the area, Meadows Regional added to the local and state economy through direct expenditures of more than \$55 million in 2009.

The ripple effect of direct hospital expenditures on other sectors of the economy, such as medical supplies, durable medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, generates additional revenue throughout our community.

"This new report shows that, even in these difficult economic times, Meadows has an enormous positive impact on our local economy," stated Meadows Regional President and Chief Executive Officer Alan Kent. "We thank our community for its unwavering support of their local hospital and will continue to work hard to ensure that the citizens of this community have access to healthcare services that are second to none in quality and affordability."

... as one of the largest employers in the area, Meadows Regional employed more than 700 individuals, providing jobs and income for area families.

Health care is a significant economic force that contributes to economic stability and growth across all regions of the state. Hospitals often serve as a main part of the overall package used to attract industry to the community. The absence of quality health care can make or break efforts to secure new businesses and retain existing companies.

"A strong healthcare system can help attract and maintain business and industry growth, attract and retain retirees, and create jobs in the local area," said Bill Mitchell, president of the Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce.

While Meadows Regional remains a key cog in the area's economy, the hospital's leadership is concerned about financial challenges, such as continued cuts in Medicare and Medicaid payments and a fast-growing uninsured population, factors that have made it increasingly difficult to meet the community's healthcare needs.

"We're extremely concerned with the current operating environment for hospitals," Kent said. "We've made a commitment to every citizen of this community to be on call for them 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. But our ability to do so is being compromised when, in many cases, we're seeing an increasing number of uninsured patients while the state is paying us far less than what it actually costs to treat Medicaid patients.

"Our local healthcare system is indispensable," he said. "It is the primary guardian of health in our community and is the key building block for everything else in our community including education and economic vitality.

"It is our hope that, even in these challenging economic times, our elected officials will do what is necessary to protect our local healthcare system and preserve access to health care for every resident of Toombs, Montgomery and surrounding counties," Kent added.

New Physicians Join Meadows Regional



Charles A. Gordon, M.D., F.A.C.P.

Internist Charles A. Gordon

Meadows Regional Medical Center is proud to welcome board-certified Internist Charles A. Gordon, M.D., F.A.C.P., to the hospital's medical staff. He will be joining Drs. Brick Acosta and Amulya Sinha as a hospitalist at Meadows Regional.

Dr. Gordon earned a Bachelor of Science in chemistry from SUNY Binghamton in Binghamton, New York, before completing his medical degree at the Thomas Jefferson University Medical College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He completed his internal medicine residency at the Allentown Hospital Association in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Gordon then entered the United States Naval Reserve, where he became a Lieutenant Commander and was stationed at the Navy Regional Medical Center in Newport, Rhode Island.

He is a member of the American College of Physicians and is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians.

Dr. Gordon and his wife Beverly are enjoying living in the Vidalia community.

Pulmonologist Robert A. Scanlon Jr.

Meadows Regional Medical Center welcomes board-certified Pulmonologist Robert A. Scanlon Jr., D.O., to Vidalia Pulmonology Center and the hospital's medical staff.

Dr. Scanlon earned his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine in Old Westbury, New



Robert A. Scanlon Jr., D.O.

York, and earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Scranton in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He spent the past nine years with a respiratory health and critical care facility in New Jersey.

Dr. Scanlon performed his residency at Winthrop University Hospital in Mineola, New York, and his internship at Good

Samaritan Hospital in West Islip, New York. He then took part in a three-year fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Cleveland, Ohio, in pulmonary, critical care and sleep medicine, and received additional training in interventional pulmonology.

Dr. Scanlon is board certified in four areas: internal medicine; pulmonary medicine; critical care medicine; and sleep medicine.

Dr. Scanlon and his wife Jami, D.O., have twin boys. He also plays guitar and enjoys hiking.



Accomplished & Devoted Nurses Secret to Success

Residents of Vidalia and surrounding areas may be aware of the benefits of Meadows Regional Medical Center's new Women's Pavilion with its oversized labor and delivery suites and state-of-the-art nursery.

But unless they've had the opportunity to use the Women's Pavilion, they may be unaware of the experience and dedication of the nurses there.

"Care is the most important part of what we do here, but customer service is a close second," said Vickie Gaultney, Director of Labor and Delivery, and Assistant Chief Nursing Officer for Meadows Regional. Mothers and mothers-to-be are supported by experienced professionals, including certified lactation consultants and childbirth experts.

The Women's Pavilion has 26 nurses, ranging in experience from three years up to 35 years. "The experienced nurses are able to pass their knowledge on to nurses who are more recently out of school," Gaultney said. "We have so many nurses who have seen and done so much that younger nurses can learn and grow from those who have been around longer."

The Women's Pavilion nursery can provide care for more than a dozen babies at a time, and had 15 newborns at one point this spring. Last year, approximately 750 babies were delivered at Meadows Regional.

Women's Pavilion nurses regularly take classes to keep up with constant advances in medicine.



290 births
and counting
at the new hospital
(since February)



Vidalia Women's Center Provides a Warm, Personal Touch

Ask any woman who's been to an Ob/Gyn center and they'll tell you that while access to state-of-the-art equipment and innovative procedures are important, the biggest role in determining if a visit is positive is how you're treated by care providers.

That's why the nurses' dedication and compassion at the Vidalia Women's Center have helped set the practice apart since its inception.

The nurses are focused on providing quality care to their patients in a very warm and caring manner, said Elise Harlin, practice manager at Vidalia Women's Center.

"Everyone here has children of their own and I think that makes a difference in what it takes to understand our patients," she said.

As the area's largest and most advanced women's health center, Vidalia Women's Center combines advanced medicine with a personal touch to help women of all ages lead healthier lives. Some of the services offered in-house include digital mammography, bone-density testing, specialized 3-D and 4-D ultrasounds, and non-invasive tubal ligation.

Many of the nurses have been with the practice since it opened in 2007. That's important because it allows patients to build relationships with nurses, Harlin said.

"The nurses work closely as a team and are like family with one another, which helps put the patients at ease," Harlin said.

Dr. Susanna Meredith, an Ob/Gyn with Vidalia Women's Center, stated, "The nurses and staff here go out of their way to answer questions, return phone calls, and provide invaluable assistance to both doctors and patients. They are what makes our office work, and they sincerely care about our patients."

How much confidence does Harlin have in the staff she works with? Her daughter is currently planning for the birth of her very own daughter this summer with the specialists at Vidalia Women's Center.

From left to right: Jackie Miller, Vickie Gaultney, Valerie Pittman, Amber Griffin and Sherrye Thomas

"I would put the nurses at the Women's Pavilion up against nurses anywhere; that's how much I think of their ability and performance," Gaultney said.

Each of the more than two dozen nurses is a certified neonatal-resuscitation provider and a number are in the process of becoming certified in Obstetric Advanced Cardiac Life Support.

Nearly every single nurse has had at least one baby of their own, so they understand how important quality care is, and how compassion and attentiveness play such an important part in the overall patient experience.

"I would put the nurses at the Women's Pavilion up against nurses anywhere; that's how much I think of their ability and performance," Gaultney said.

To learn more about the Women's Pavilion at Meadows Regional Medical Center, contact 912.535.5023.



On the cover:

In early 2011, Anna Franklin, M.D., a radiologist at Meadows Regional, welcomed her first child, Alec, into the world. Along with her husband, Meadows Regional nurses Valerie Pittman and Sherrye Durden were with her every step of the way. Even doctors who are first-time moms appreciate the reassurance of the experienced nurses at Meadows Regional for guidance and support.

**"I could not have asked for better care for myself or Alec during our stay."
— Anna Franklin, M.D.**

Anna Franklin, M.D., with her son, Alec.

For Life!
Summer 2011 Edition
For Life! is published as a community service by Meadows Regional Medical Center. Meadows Regional Medical Center is located at One Meadows Parkway in Vidalia, GA, online at www.meadowsregional.com and by phone at 912.535.5555.

You are receiving this information because it is mailed to members of the community. If you do not wish to receive further newsletters, contact Elizabeth Harvill, Director of Marketing and Community Relations at Meadows Regional Medical Center, at 912.538.5892.

If you have specific concerns about your health, please contact your doctor.

©2011, Meadows Regional Medical Center
A division of Meadows Healthcare Alliance, Inc.



REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

For Life!

One Meadows Parkway
Vidalia, GA 30474

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COLUMBIA SC
PERMIT 236

Meadows HealthPlay

Scores with Another Great Year

The HealthPlay Golf Tournament, one of Meadows Healthcare Foundation's best-known annual fundraising events, was held April 21 at Rocky Creek Golf Course in Vidalia.



Ansley Threlkeld,
Director of the Meadows
Healthcare Foundation

The tournament featured two different divisions and 124 participants, with the team of Jason Craig, Jason Palmer, Craig Adams and Michael Kay taking first place in the Net Division, while the foursome of Jody Neal, Brant Long, Chris Seabolt and Ben Lee took top honors in the Gross Division.

In the Net Division, the team of Bill Torrance, Chris Bloxham, Frank Waits and Eddie Tyson took second place, while the foursome of George McLendon, Carl Gay, Mae Jones and Garry Adams captured third.

In the Gross Division, Justin Kolumber, Jay Hales, Frank Palmer and Mitch Shook finished second, while Cathie Mitchell, Andrew Crane, Steve Spivey and Bill Mitchell took third.

The proceeds of the 17th annual HealthPlay will be donated to the Foundation's scholarship and education fund at Meadows Regional Medical Center.

"We are grateful for the support of our sponsors, volunteers and spectators who help to make this tournament a success," said Vidalia City Manager Bill Torrance, who serves as chair for the HealthPlay Board.

"I am always overwhelmed by the generosity and support of our wonderful community," added Ansley Threlkeld, director of the Meadows Healthcare Foundation. "Because of their support, we will continue to bring the best in health care to our community."

The Meadows Healthcare Foundation promotes awareness of healthcare issues, develops financial resources and helps secure the future health of our community.

To become involved with Meadows Healthcare Foundation, contact Ansley Threlkeld at 912.277.2139.



Ansley Threlkeld with the winners of the Net Division in this year's HealthPlay Golf Tournament.