

August 2023 | Volume 1

# Women's Wellness Network Newsletter



## About Women's Wellness Network

The Women's Wellness Network is Share Health Southeast Georgia's newest Coalition! The purpose of the Women's Wellness Network (WWN) is to improve health outcomes for underserved women in rural southeast Georgia, specifically Evans and Tattnall Counties, by engaging community stakeholders to develop and implement strategies and activities that improve access to preventive health and wellness services and resources. WWN primarily focuses on chronic disease prevention and management because from 2017 to 2021, cancer, diabetes, and hypertension were the leading causes of death and disease. Currently, WWN has 10 Network partners representing non-profits, government agencies, public health, federally qualified health centers, hospitals, and collaboratives. If you have any questions about the Network, contact Tanesha L. Slocumb, Program Manager, at [t.slocumb@sharehealthsega.org](mailto:t.slocumb@sharehealthsega.org).

## Upcoming Events:

### Women's Wellness Network Meeting:

August 21st | 12pm  
UGA Extension Tattnall County Office, 114 North Main Street Building F Reidsville, GA 30453

### Evans Community Center Food Distribution:

Thursday, August 24th | 10am  
720 Church Street Claxton, GA 30417

## Did You Know?

Women's health can be a little more complex than you might think. There are many mental and physical health conditions that disproportionately affect women, including breast cancer, insomnia, osteoarthritis, stroke, depression, and anxiety.

- **26%** of young women experience a Common Mental Disorder, such as anxiety or depression, almost three times more than young men.
- More than **38%** of U.S. women over the age of 20 live with obesity.

## National Breastfeeding Month

This August we join the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee in recognizing National Breastfeeding Month. Help us spread the word about the benefits of breastfeeding!

Rates of breastfeeding in the U.S. vary widely due to multiple and complex barriers new parents face when starting and continuing to breastfeed. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that infants be exclusively breastfed or chestfed for about the first six months with continued feeding while introducing appropriate complementary foods for one year or longer.

Many mothers and birthing people struggle to reach their breastfeeding goals, and 60% do not breastfeed as long as they intend. Equity gaps in access to resources and support create troubling disparities for breastfeeding mothers and birthing people. It is important to work to close the gaps and achieve equity in all forms, including race, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability in your community.

For more information regarding National Breastfeeding Month, please visit: <https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/blog/august-national-breastfeeding-month>



Connect with us!



@womenswellnessnetworkga

# Women's Wellness Network Newsletter



## Partner Spotlight: *Rebecca Spahos, MD*



Each month, our Newsletter will feature a Network member as a Partner spotlight. It was only right to start with the person who is the reason our Network now exists, Dr. Rebecca Spahos. Dr. Spahos is a general surgeon practicing at Evans Memorial Hospital in Claxton, Georgia. She is also a member of the Board of Directors of Share Health Southeast Georgia. She is the mother of two beautiful children, ages 4 and 6, and thoroughly enjoys family time when not at work. She loves to travel with them, seeing the world anew through their eyes. Dr. Spahos has a special interest in treating breast cancer in Evans, Tattnall, and surrounding communities. It was her vision for more breast health education that has blossomed into our Women's Wellness Network that we are building.

In September 2020, Dr. Spahos proposed a Share Health Board community project in which she desired to increase community awareness of breast cancer in the African American and Latinx communities. This would involve promoting programs that were readily available, including free mammograms with DPH, through community and faith outreach. Due to the pandemic, the project was delayed. Throughout the next two years, Share Health's Program Manager, Tanesha L. Slocumb, met with partners at Family Connection meetings and through outreach to churches in each community to hear their perspectives about breast cancer, cervical cancer, chronic diseases, stress, and mental health. The consensus was that there was a need for women's wellness services and activities in the counties.

Therefore, in January of 2023, Share Health applied for the Rural Health Network Development Planning grant to improve access to, coordinate and improve the quality of preventive health and wellness services to rural women living in Evans and Tattnall Counties. In June, Share Health received notice that they had been awarded the one-year, planning grant. We look forward to growing our Network over the next year and are appreciative to Dr. Spahos for her vision which led to this new Coalition. Find out more about Dr. Spahos's passion for women's wellness below.

Dr. Rebecca Spahos was born and raised in a small town called Hampton, Georgia, just south of Atlanta in Henry County. She is the baby of six children. All of her siblings served in the Navy, Marines, or the Air Force. They are a proud and patriotic family. Her father was a mechanic for Delta Airlines, and her mother was a high school English teacher. Her father had a passion for flying, and in 1985 he bought a J-3 Piper Cub built in 1941. All of his children learned to fly, and three out of six still fly for a living today. A fun fact about Dr. Spahos is that she is a pilot, scuba diver, sky diver, kayaker, and spelunker!

**What is your vision for the Women's Wellness Network?** "I have strong passion for women's health in rural communities. I think it is possible to have top of the line medical care outside the larger cities. I aim to bring breast cancer awareness to the community, and reinforce the importance of yearly screening breast mammograms. I also wish to provide excellent outcomes for treatment of breast cancer through various types of breast surgery and reconstruction with my associate, Dr. Horn. We are able to do breast conserving treatments, lumpectomies, mastectomies, and nipple sparing mastectomies." Dr. Spahos has a strong vision that all of our community's health needs can be managed with outstanding outcomes at Evans Memorial Hospital.