

# Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement

RESILIENT GEORGIA REGIONAL GRANTEE

ANNUAL REPORT OUTLINE 2022





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## About the Resilient Georgia Regional Grants

[Resilient Georgia](#) has been working with 16 regions across Georgia to provide an emphasis on trauma-informed awareness and care, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and child sexual abuse prevention training as a basis to transform systems and procedures crossing both public and private sectors.

- Resilient Georgia serves as a supportive and guiding resource during each region's planning and implementation process.
- These regional action plans each address the behavioral health needs of individuals birth through 26 years old and families in the community and surrounding counties using the Collective Impact framework (a diverse, robust and well-planned public-private partnership).
- Trauma-Informed Care, ACEs and child sexual abuse prevention can be the basis for systemic changes in a community. Each region has identified how one or more of these content areas are delivered to diverse community members through formal training, education, marketing and communications.
- Round 1 grants were awarded in Nov 2019 to regional coalitions based out of Athens, Augusta, Macon, Savannah and surrounding areas. Round 2 grants were awarded in July 2020 to regional coalitions based out of Albany, Columbus, Rome, Thomasville and surrounding areas. Round 3 grants were awarded in March 2021 to regional coalitions based out of Clayton, Cobb, Gwinnett, Valdosta and surrounding areas. Round 4 funding was awarded in December 2021 to regional coalitions based out of Atlanta, Brunswick, Gainesville, and Waycross and the surrounding areas.

## Coalition Mission

[The Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement](#) (ARCHI) is a collaborative of over 100 partners committed to collaborating to address health inequities in metro Atlanta by inverting the burden away from individuals or families seeking support and creating coordinated, person-centered systems of care. Our mission is to support our partners to collaboratively move the needle on health outcomes through a lens of equity, racial and economic justice.



## Summary

ARCHI's efforts support a wide range of communities across the metro Atlanta area, including Fulton and DeKalb Counties, in a variety of health-related areas, including housing. Our current Invert the Burden initiatives that support systems change in the metro Atlanta area include:

- **Community Resource Hubs:** A referral network with data sharing among clinical providers and community-based social services to address the social determinants that negatively impact health among the most vulnerable patients while also addressing underlying systemic root causes.
- **Equity Stories:** A three part process that centers and values lived expertise. The process includes listening to stories, learning from storytellers and elevating insights learned from the storytellers to a larger audience of stakeholders.
- **Coordinated Services:** A collaboration of partners across the social service sector to address systemic barriers that prevent clients from accessing much-needed services, notably rental, mortgage and utility assistance.

## Leadership Team and Contributors

- Jeffrey Smythe, Executive Director
- Aviva Berman, Senior Innovation Manager
- Carrie Oliver, Senior Innovation Manager
- Aisha Williams, Senior Innovation Manager
- Sopen Joseph, Project Coordinator
- Meredith Swartz, ARCHI Consultant



*ARCHI Staff*



## Coalition Partners

- Annie E Casey Foundation
- Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation
- BCM Georgia
- Catholic Charities Atlanta
- Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta
- Crossroads Community Ministries
- Emmaus House
- Emory Healthcare
- Equity Stories Storytellers
- First Step Staffing
- Gateway Center
- Grady Health System
- HouseATL
- Intown Collaborative Ministries
- Mercy Care/St. Joseph's Health System
- Midtown Assistance Center
- MLK Sr. Community Resources Collaborative
- Neighborhood Nexus
- Northside Health System
- Open Doors
- Partners for HOME
- Partnership for Southern Equity
- Partnership for Community Action
- Piedmont Healthcare
- Prearrest Division
- Salvation Army
- Shelters to Shutters
- St. Vincent de Paul
- The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
- The Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Ujima Way
- United Way of Greater Atlanta
- WellStar Health System
- Wholesome Wave Georgia
- Zion Hill Community Development Corporation

## *ARCHI Breakfast*





## Key Impacts/Accomplishments

Some key ARCHI accomplishments in ARCHI's efforts to invert the burden this year include:

### Community Resource Hubs

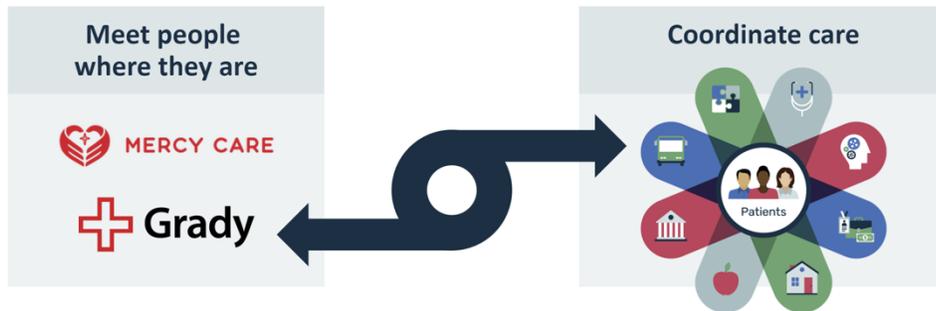
- Graduating our first cohort of **over 100** Community Resource Hub (CRH) patients/clients
- Accessed positive health and social outcomes for first cohort of CRH patients/clients including **lowered blood pressure, A1c, Body Mass Index (BMI), weight, emergency department utilization, inpatient hospital stays and stress and improvement in housing and income**
- Successfully launched a **second cohort of CRH patients/clients** with newly onboarded Community Health Workers (CHW)
- Onboarded **two new partner agencies/resources** to CRH network
- **Expanded CRH geographically** to Mercy Care Chamblee and **diversified the engaged patient population** to include both adults and pediatric patients
- Hired a Spanish-speaking CHW to ensure its ability to be a **cultural and linguistically diverse** person-centered resource

*Community Resource Hub Partner Network*



### Coordinated Services

- Collaborated with 10 social service agencies to create a universal rental, mortgage and utility assistance [application](#) which will launch in early 2023
- Presented to the Georgia Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission on the challenges both our health systems and the Intellectual and/or Developmentally Disabled population face in our current healthcare landscape



### Equity Stories

- Collected Equity Stories from 30 individuals in Fulton, DeKalb and Clayton Counties with past or present experience of homelessness
- Held three Equity Stories Community Panels with a total of 29 participants, including service providers and storytellers. Each panel was a three-day experience to gain a better understanding of the context of homelessness in Metro Atlanta and identify priorities for action.
- Held the Equity Stories Community Forum on for over 60 attendees to elevate the experiences from storytellers and insights learned by stakeholders

## Description of Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)- Related Efforts

### TIC/ACES Services – General

By inverting the burden away from the individual, meeting people where they are, streamlining access to comprehensive care and centering insights from lived expertise, ARCHI aims to build the trauma-informed systems. While ARCHI does not provide direct services, its support of these person-centered systems eliminates silos and strengthen the resilience that Atlanta residents need to thrive.



## Prevention/Intervention

ARCHI supported our partners who serve the metro area within our Community Resource Hub (CRH) Partner Network. At the core of this network are Community Health Workers (CHW) who have been embedded inside two health systems and support referred patients with unmanaged chronic illnesses from clinical teams. Patient priorities are jointly set by the patient and CHW and primarily focus on housing, but also include transportation, job training, assistance with children or benefits, legal issues, and food and nutrition.

The CHW connects the patient to resources in the CRH Partner Network, which is a group of community providers that can receive direct referrals for services. Instead of the patient does receiving a list of phone numbers to call or applications to fill out, they are directly connected to a provider. These warm handoffs reduce wait times, duplicative eligibility screenings and any potential miscommunication that might delay services. The Network also works collaboratively with the CHW to address any concerns, identify and solve problems together and respond to the dynamic needs of patients with complex circumstances. This coordination and wraparound support aims to reduce the burden for those seeking services and minimize the disheartening experience of constantly closed doors of support.

Early data indicates that not only is housing the greatest need of patients, but it is also the need most often resolved. Additionally, critical health measures including A1c scores, blood pressure, BMI, weight, and hospital use are all stabilized and/or reduced during the intervention.

## Advocacy and Policy

As a part of its coordinated services efforts, ARCHI convenes the care coordination teams of six metro Atlanta's health systems with the goal to discuss critical and emerging issues when connecting patients with community services and supports. A common issue that emerged from this bi-weekly convening was that hospital emergency departments and inpatient units were being used for last resort housing for individuals with complex developmental or intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities and/or behavioral health challenges. Some root causes of this issue were an increase in administrative burden for hospital care coordination teams to resolve discharge challenges of complex patients and the inability of patients and families to find support for frail or elderly patients with behavioral health or developmental disabilities needs.

To address these root issues, ARCHI aimed to increase coordination and communication between the health systems and the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, which provided much of the supportive services for patients with complex behavioral health and developmental disability needs. ARCHI also sought out



opportunities for the perspectives of the health systems to contribute to mental health policy development that would address the root issues.

In February 2022, ARCHI and two health systems had the opportunity to present about addressing the needs of patients with complex needs to the Behavioral Health Reform Innovation Commission's (BHRIC) Hospital and Short-Term Sub Committee. During this presentation, the presenters had the opportunity to provide stories of patients that they had challenges finding support for and propose potential systemic changes to support these patients. One of the proposed solutions was to increase the number of available beds that could be used to assist in discharging complex patients and health systems were able to share with the subcommittee an approximate number of beds that would meet their current need. ARCHI plans to continue to support the health systems in advocating for these beds and lending their voice to the discussion of policy and systems changes that will assist in meeting the needs of patients with complex needs.

## Research

Through its ARCHI's Invert the Burden strategy aims to redefine how systems collect data and which data is valued. Specifically, ARCHI aims to expand the parameters of qualitative data to include accounts of lived experience and subject matter experts to include those with lived expertise. To further understand the issues health systems encountered supporting patients with complex needs, specifically related to behavioral health and developmental disabilities needs, ARCHI has collected data from the health systems on the frequency, diagnosis, and stay of patients with complex needs. ARCHI also researched how health systems in similar areas across the country address the needs of these patients. By researching these best practices, ARCHI aimed to provide health systems with guidance on how to collectively move forward in engaging partners and other systems in moving towards change.

As a part of its Equity Stories process, ARCHI collected stories from residents in Fulton, DeKalb and Cobb Counties with lived experiences of homelessness. ARCHI elevated these stories as data and supported stakeholders to use the strategies of deep listening and intellectual humility to learn from the storytellers. The insights learned from this lived expertise data was also used to inform recommendations for systemic change.

## Training

As a part of its Community Resource Hub and Coordinated Services efforts, ARCHI supported trainings for the Georgia Community Health Worker (CHW) Forum. For the Forum, ARCHI convened 80 state-wide Community Health Workers to receive Community Resiliency Model Training under Dr. Jordan Murphy's instruction on June 21, 2022. This training equipped CHWs



with a suite of skills that would help them build resilience within the communities they served as well as for themselves. This training opportunity was made possible by Resilient Georgia's support of the growth of ARCHI's partner network.

## Innovative Partnerships

ARCHI's partner network is centered on cross sector collaboration with partners representing all areas related to health, including housing and employment. The need for a variety of partners is apparent for our Community Resource Hubs, which aim to reach both patients health and social service needs. During our monthly Community Resource Hub network meetings, our partners have lamented about how challenging it can be to help their clients with their unmet needs if they do not have a form of identification. Upon further discussion, it became clear that one organization in particular, Crossroads Community Ministries, does a fantastic job with wraparound services, including assisting clients with obtaining identification. ARCHI forged a relationship with Crossroads' staff, and they are now an established partner in our Hub as well as a participant in our rental assistance working group. Because we collaborate and communicate frequently, ARCHI was able to spot a barrier to access and leveraged our network to create a new and resourceful partnership that would further eliminate another closed door for support. Our CRH partners now have direct access to Crossroads and can easily connect their clients to this organization for assistance with obtaining identification, allowing them to tap into other resources more efficiently.

## Spotlight

In partnership with Global Dialogues, Partnership for Southern Equity, Partners for Home, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement's (ARCHI) collected Equity Stories to elevate the experiences of DeKalb, Fulton, and Clayton County residents who had a past or present experience of homelessness. The aim of the process in collecting these stories was to elevate lived experience and ensure that systems change was led by the expertise of those most impacted.

For the listening phase of this work, ARCHI in partnership with Global Dialogues collected Equity Stories from 30 individuals with past or present experience of homelessness. These storytellers were recruited from homeless service providers in the metro Atlanta area, including Ujima Way, Gateway, COR, and Intown Collaborative Ministries, in the last quarter of 2021. ARCHI and its partners were intentional about ensuring diversity in the Equity Stories and storytellers included individuals living with mental health and substance misuse challenges, living with disabilities, identifying as LGBTQ+, veterans, and returning citizens. Story collection was rooted



in principles that respect the storytellers' autonomy and valued the expertise of their lived experience. Additionally, care was taken not to frame responses to questions from the semi-structured interview guide, which asked storytellers to reflect on their personal experiences, share their aspirations, and propose actions for systems that support them and members of their communities to thrive.

For the learning phase of this work, three Community Panels were held March through May 2022 with a total of 29 participants, including service providers and storytellers. Each panel was a three-day experience to gain a better understanding of the context of homelessness in Metro Atlanta and identify priorities for action. Over the three days, participants were introduced to and applied skills of deep listening and intellectual humility. Of the Equity Stories collected, 25 storytellers gave ARCHI and its partners permission to disseminate and use their Stories for the Community Panels. After applying deep listening skills when listening to a subset of the Equity Stories, participants were tasked to share insights they learned and propose system-focused recommendations based on their insights. A total of twelve recommendations were developed across the three panels with common themes of person-centered and unconditional supports and services, empathy for service providers, and making those who have experienced homelessness leaders in support efforts.

For the elevating phase of this work, ARCHI and its partners held an Equity Stories Community Forum on June 8, 2022. ARCHI and its partners collaborated to curate an invitee list for the Community Forum of 128 people. Of those invited, 95 individuals registered and over 60 attended the event in person. Due to unforeseen schedule changes and changes in the COVID landscape, there were also about 5 participants who were able to watch the event's livestream. Through the livestream, they were able to view presentations about deep listening, the Equity Stories listening and learning phases, and recommendations from the Community Panels. Overall, the Forum was an opportunity for a larger audience to engage with the Equity Stories, share the skill of deep listening, disseminate recommendations from the Community Panels, and develop plans to move recommendations into action. Attendees of the Forum included organizations from ARCHI's current network as well as cross sector partners involved in the system of support for metro Atlantans experiencing homelessness.



*Equity Stories Community Forum*



To continue to promote the strategy of deep listening, ARCHI is storing the videos, transcriptions, and audio recordings of the Equity Stories online in its [ARCHives](#). The ARCHives allow users to listen, read, or watch 23 of the Equity Stories. Additionally, users are encouraged to share insights they gain from engaging with the stories. ARCHI will also continue to promote its partners and decisionmakers across Atlanta to engage with the current set of Equity Stories. Moving forward, ARCHI plans to add to this living body of stories and seek expertise from those with lived experience for projects across its portfolio. Growing the body of Equity Stories will allow ARCHI to promote the strategies of deep listening and intellectual humility while also emphasizing the listening, learning, and elevation of community voice.



## Inspired Action

ARCHI would love for you to stay connected to our continued efforts to Invert the Burden. You can feel free to find out more about our efforts on our website and stay up to date on ARCHI through our [newsletter](#). Also feel free to stay connected with ARCHI on its social media channels:



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