

*2024 Community Benefit Summary*

Blue Ridge Medical Center is a nonprofit Rural Hospital located in the heart of the Appalachian foothills, proudly serving the residents of Fannin County and neighboring rural communities. As a healthcare provider, we are deeply committed to improving the health and well-being of those we serve through compassionate, high-quality, and accessible care.

Our mission is to provide exceptional healthcare services with compassion, integrity, and respect—every patient, every time. That mission extends beyond our hospital walls and into the heart of our community through targeted investments, strategic partnerships, and a deep understanding of local needs.

In 2024, BRMC provided extensive funding and services in community benefit initiatives, with the goal of reducing health disparities, improving access to care, and supporting long-term community wellness. These efforts included:

* $3,336,168 in charity care and discounted services to uninsured and underinsured patients
* $473,509 in unreimbursed costs for Medicaid patients
* $1,539,951 in unreimbursed costs for Medicare patients
* $160,000 supporting health professions education
* $125,000 in community health improvement services
* $410,000 to maintain essential subsidized services, such as behavioral health and telehealth
* $45,000 in donations and in-kind support to local nonprofits

As a rural provider, access remains one of our most pressing challenges. In response, we have expanded mobile clinic operations, launched transportation voucher programs for patients with limited mobility, and provided 24/7 access to telehealth consults—ensuring patients can connect with care whenever and wherever they need it.

We have also made strategic investments in behavioral health, including suicide prevention initiatives for youth, telepsychiatry services, and addiction recovery support programs that address mental health needs across age groups and backgrounds.

Workforce development is another pillar of our mission. In 2024, we provided hands-on training for nursing students through clinical rotations, created internships for high school students interested in healthcare careers, and awarded scholarships to support the next generation of allied health professionals.

Our community outreach and preventive health services were also expanded this year. These included free flu vaccine clinics, diabetes and blood pressure screenings, and health education sessions held at community fairs, churches, and senior centers—all designed to promote early detection and healthy living.

**Community Health Outreach**

At BRMC, our commitment to health extends well beyond the walls of our facility. Throughout 2024, we provided numerous free opportunities for community health education and launched initiatives to share important health information with our residents. These efforts are designed to empower individuals to take control of their well-being and stay informed about critical health topics, services, and resources.

**January 2024**

* **MAGNETOM Espree Open Bore MRI Launch**
BRMC proudly introduced its state-of-the-art MAGNETOM Espree Open Bore MRI, offering advanced imaging technology that enhances patient comfort and provides faster, more accurate diagnostics.
* **National CRNA Week**
On January 23, we celebrated National Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA) Week, honoring the critical role our CRNAs play in ensuring patient safety and exceptional care during surgical procedures.

**February 2024**

* **American Heart Association Partnership**
We launched a new partnership with the American Heart Association to provide exclusive in-house certification courses for Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS), and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS).
* **Community Blood Drive**
On February 13, we hosted a community blood drive in collaboration with Blood Assurance, emphasizing that a single blood donation can save up to three lives.
* **National Phlebotomists Recognition Week**
We celebrated the essential work of our phlebotomy team, recognizing their skill and dedication to quality care.
* **Heart Health Promotion**
In honor of National Heart Health Month, we offered a $99 CT Calcium Scoring exam through MD Save to help patients detect early signs of heart disease affordably.

**March 2024**

* **Leadership Class Visit**
BRMC welcomed the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Class for a behind-the-scenes tour, highlighting our services and dedication to healthcare excellence.
* **Blood Drive Announcement**
We announced another upcoming blood drive scheduled for April 17, continuing our life-saving collaboration with Blood Assurance.

**April 2024**

* **Lab Week & Health Information Professionals Week**
We recognized Lab Week (April 18) and Health Information Professionals Week (April 19), honoring the unsung heroes behind accurate diagnostics and patient record integrity.
* **Lunch & Learn: Sleep Disorders**
On April 25, we hosted an educational “Lunch and Learn” focused on sleep disorders, a common but often undiagnosed condition impacting overall health and quality of life.

**May 2024**

* **Clay Tournament Sponsorship**
We proudly sponsored the 4th Annual Clay Tournament hosted by the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce, supporting civic engagement and community relations.
* **Nurses Week & Hospital Week**
We celebrated National Nurses Week and Hospital Week by honoring the compassion, dedication, and leadership of our entire hospital team.
* **EMS Week Appreciation**
During EMS Week, we provided breakfast to our Fannin County EMS professionals in gratitude for their lifesaving emergency services.
* **Business Recognition**
On May 23, we recognized local businesses for their generous donations of gifts and certificates in support of Nurses and Hospital Week.
* **Memorial Day Tribute**
We honored and remembered the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation.

**June 2024**

* **Employment Opportunities**
We began June by promoting job openings, inviting skilled professionals to join our growing care team.
* **Her Hope Walk For Life Sponsorship**
We sponsored this community event supporting women and babies in need.
* **Leadership Announcements**
This month featured several leadership transitions:
	+ Promotion of our new Chief Operating Officer
	+ Appointment of a new Health Information Management Director
	+ Promotion of our new Director of Surgical Services
* **Public Officials Visit**
On June 18, we welcomed federal and state legislators, as well as county commissioners, for a hospital tour and healthcare policy discussion.

**July 2024**

* **UV Safety Month**
We shared four essential tips for sun safety in recognition of UV Safety Month.
* **Dietary Appreciation**
Our dietary team was celebrated for preparing a delicious and festive 4th of July meal.
* **Independence Day Tips**
We shared public safety reminders for Independence Day celebrations.
* **International Friendship Day**
On July 29, we celebrated the power of friendship in healing and care.
* **Project Chimps Donation**
We donated patient monitors to Project Chimps, reinforcing our support for local animal care and wellness programs.

**August 2024**

* **Back-to-School Wishes**
We recognized and supported our employees’ children as they returned to school.
* **World Breastfeeding Week & Scholarships**
During World Breastfeeding Week, we promoted maternal health and celebrated the Auxiliary's award of three $1,000 scholarships to students pursuing healthcare careers.
* **Urgent Blood Drive Announcement**
On August 7, we called on the community to support a critical blood drive and offered donation incentives.
* **Cardiac Rehab Program Update**
We provided details about our Cardiac Rehab Program to raise awareness of recovery options for cardiac patients.
* **Employee Spotlight**
We featured our Facility Compliance Officer and Quality/Risk Manager for her dedication to healthcare with over 24 years of service.
* **Olympic Legends Team-Building**
Staff enjoyed a fun “Olympic Legends” team-building event to foster camaraderie.
* **Sponsorships**
We sponsored:
	+ Fannin County High School Cheerleaders
	+ Fannin County Football Booster Club
	+ 28th Annual Kiwanis Rodeo
	+ Copper Basin High School
* **Leadership Highlights**
	+ August 22: Employee Spotlight for Chief Nursing Officer
	+ August 26: Welcomed new Nurse Practitioner (Primary Care & Women’s Health)
	+ August 27: Welcomed new CEO with over 40 years of healthcare leadership

**September 2024**

* **Medical-Surgical Unit Reopening**
We proudly reopened our MedSurg unit, restoring essential inpatient care services for our community.

**October 2024**

* **Ladies Night Out Event**
On October 9, we hosted “Ladies Night Out,” promoting the importance of mammograms and early detection of breast cancer.
* **Leadership Appointment**
Welcomed our new Director of Physical Therapy.
* **Employee Appreciation Cookout**
We held a cookout to express our gratitude for our dedicated healthcare team.

**November 2024**

* **Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway**
On November 7, we provided turkeys to help local families enjoy a festive holiday meal.
* **Veterans Day Tribute**
On November 11, we honored the service of veterans with gratitude and recognition.
* **Public Health Awareness Campaigns**
	+ World Pneumonia Day (November 12)
	+ World Diabetes Day (November 14)
	+ National Epilepsy Awareness Month
	+ Men’s Mental Health Awareness
* **Patient Testimonial Video**
We shared a heartfelt testimonial from a grateful patient and spouse on November 12.
* **Life Support Training for Youth**
On November 20, two of our nurses visited a local 8th-grade class to teach Basic Life Support (BLS) skills.
* **National Rural Health Day**
On November 21, we celebrated the role of rural healthcare providers and challenges they face.
* **Thanksgiving Staff Lunch**
Hospital administration provided a Thanksgiving meal to show appreciation for our staff’s dedication.

**December 2024**

* **Love Lights Program**
On December 5, we honored our “Love Lights” tradition, a scholarship-supporting memorial program established in 1977.
* **National Influenza Vaccination Week**
Observed December 11 to promote flu prevention throughout the community.
* **Community Blood Drive**
Held on December 19 to support local blood banks and patient care.
* **Mock Disaster Drill**
On December 18, we partnered with Fannin County EMS, Fire Department, and U.S. Forest Service for a full-scale emergency preparedness drill.
* **National Impaired Driving Prevention Month**
Throughout December, we promoted awareness around impaired driving prevention to protect lives during the holidays.

As part of our inclusive care approach, BRMC accepts Medicare, Medicaid, and most major commercial insurance plans. We also participate in MD Save, a service that offers transparent, affordable pricing for medical procedures. Additionally, we offer a comprehensive financial assistance program, ensuring that no patient is denied medically necessary care due to inability to pay.

BRMC does not discriminate against any person on the basis of age, sex, race, color, creed, national origin, or disability in admission, treatment, or participation in any of our programs, services, or activities. Our policies and practices reflect our belief that every individual deserves dignity, compassion, and access to quality healthcare.

In keeping with IRS and community health standards, BRMC conducts a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years. This process incorporates community input and identifies the most pressing health challenges facing our population. The CHNA includes a prioritization of local health needs, actionable plans to address those needs, and a detailed listing of local and national resources available to residents—including contact information and referrals for mental health, food insecurity, housing, and more. The assessment serves as a roadmap for our community benefit activities and ensures that our investments align with the real and evolving needs of the region.

We are also proud of the partnerships that amplify our impact. In 2024, we collaborated with Fannin County Schools, the Appalachian Women’s Center, and the North Georgia Health District to provide school-based outreach, maternal care services, and public health interventions.

Looking ahead to 2025, we plan to open a new Rural Health Clinic to expand primary care services, enhance care for veterans, and expand swing bed and post-acute care programs to improve recovery and rehabilitation services for our growing patient population.

At Blue Ridge Medical Center, we believe that health is a community effort. Whether it’s delivering care at the bedside, through a mobile clinic, or through strategic outreach and education, we remain deeply committed to improving health outcomes across every corner of our region—today and in the years to come.