One of the values my parents instilled in me while growing up in the small town of Eunice, Louisiana, is that people matter much more than material possessions or individual awards or financial gains. I may not have appreciated that wisdom then, but it is a value that has resonated with me for years now.

At EAMC, we strive daily to build upon our patient-centered culture. Our strategic goals place a premium on quality initiatives and patient safety, and our physicians and employees realize that doing the right thing always means doing what's best for the patient and the community.

Over the years, decisions have been made that exemplify that philosophy. When the state of Alabama had to reduce funding for prenatal care to uninsured or underinsured women, we opened the Prenatal Clinic. This state/local partnership serves about 350 mothers-to-be a year. When it seemed that AIDS Outreach (now known as Unity Wellness Center) would close its doors due to a shortage of funds, we were able to add them as a hospital department. Unity Wellness provides HIV education and services to more than 5,000 people a year.

For many years now, we have produced a fact card annually. It's a wallet-size card that lists various statistics such as patients admitted during the year, the number of employees in each hospital department, our annual operating expenses and even the number of meals served (644,413 last year).

These statistics are important to us for various reasons. However, our existence is more clearly defined by, for example, the number of additional birthdays and anniversaries a heart attack patient will celebrate because our cardiology team has improved its processes to rival most any facility in America.

This year's annual report includes some of those statistics, but more importantly, it takes a look at some of the lives impacted by the services offered here. And, celebrating the lives of others is something that my 96-year-old mother who now lives here in Opelika certainly values.

Terry Andrus
President and CEO
Numbers are important in health care, which would explain why nurses and doctors always focus on a patient’s vital signs. Even away from the hospital or doctor’s office, it’s important that individuals live out a healthy lifestyle; doing so will help each of us control our weight as well as our blood pressure, heart rate, cholesterol and blood sugar. As an organization, we must watch many numbers closely as well. There are statistics we endeavor to keep low, such as infection rates.

On the other side, we strive for high patient satisfaction scores. Our mission statement underscores these efforts in five simple words: high quality, compassionate health care. Throughout this report, you will read about initiatives we participate in with the sole purpose of improving patient care. You will also hear from patients whose lives were changed for the better in fiscal year 2013.

EAMC recognized for excellence...again

EAMC is among the best in the nation at providing safe, reliable and efficient care, according to America’s largest healthcare performance improvement alliance. In April, EAMC was named a “top performer” in the Premier healthcare alliance’s QUEST: High Performing Hospitals® collaborative, marking the second year in a row to be named a top performer.

Of the 333 hospitals that participated in Year 4 of QUEST, only 48 of them — including EAMC — were named top performers. “EAMC’s participation in this collaborative reinforces our commitment to reliably deliver the best care experience to the communities we serve,” said Terry Andrus. “We’re proud to have achieved top performance in QUEST as we continue down our path of improving patient outcomes.” Premier and QUEST members are achieving impressive results. Data for the first 4.5 years of the collaborative show that participants:

- Prevented an inpatient death nearly 92,000 times
- Reduced health care spending by almost $9.1 billion
- When compared to what is expected, the observed mortality rate of QUEST hospitals is 10 percent lower than national averages.
- Nationally, costs of inpatient care have increased by about 28 percent, versus 11 percent for QUEST hospitals.

April 2013

Achieving high marks in the following four domains allowed EAMC to earn this distinction:

- Reducing the average cost of care to less than $5,690 per discharge
- Reliably delivering all evidence-based care measures to patients in the areas of heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia and surgical care at least 95 percent of the time
- Improving the hospital experience so that patients favorably rate their stay and would recommend the facility to others at least 73 percent of the time
- Reducing preventable harm events
Patients and family members love this process. They feel much more informed, much more pampered and have the sense—as they should—that when they are being admitted, they are the center of all of our attention.” Those are the words of Dr. Steven Presley, medical director of IMA hospitalists at EAMC and team leader for the Collaborative Care initiative that began at EAMC in February.

Collaborative Care (CC) is a patient care model that guides inpatient care, promotes self-care, and supports transition of care into the home. The Collaborative Care model started with a redesign of the admission process. The revised process involves the physician, primary nurse, pharmacist, and care coordinator meeting together with the patient upon admission.

The collaborative care model is quality driven and has been proven to result in better outcomes and decreased readmissions. “The transition to a Collaborative Care process on 7T has gone exceptionally well,” says Dr. Presley. “The nursing staff and hospitalists have embraced the change, and patients seem to be responding well to this more patient-centered approach to the admission process.”

When the initiative was piloted on the 7th floor, the CC team started with three rooms. Over the subsequent months, the team slowly transitioned additional rooms, and now all 36 beds on that unit use the Collaborative Care model. As the fiscal year was ending, the Collaborative Care model was being introduced on the intensive care unit (ICU).

“After it is rolled out in the ICU for the admission process, we will begin looking at a collaborative discharge model on 7T,” says Dr. Presley. “Eventually, we will teach a collaborative rounding process.”

Jane B. Moore, EAMC Foundation board member, witnessed the benefits of Collaborative Care when her cousin was admitted to EAMC during the summer. “As a Foundation board member, I had heard a presentation by Dr. Presley on the care model, but then was able to witness it firsthand when my cousin was admitted by Dr. Presley. I was impressed with Collaborative Care in action. There was no doubt that the physicians, nurses and staff were working together every step of the way for the benefit of my cousin and that was very comforting to me. We had nothing but positive experiences through every dimension of the program.”

Above: Dr. Anna Patkowska (hospitalist), Stephanie Causland (nurse), Danielle Waites (social worker) and April Waldrop (multi care tech) speak with a patient upon admission in March (not pictured: Blair Nist, pharmacist). Left: Dr. Steven Presley, Collaborative Care team leader.

DID YOU KNOW? Early indications are that the Collaborative Care model not only improves patient care, but also patient satisfaction. A study of results from two full quarters of surveys indicates that patient satisfaction improved on 9 out of 14 questions. Answers to two questions in particular improved dramatically from 2012 to 2013. On the question regarding “courtesy and respect of nurses,” the percentage of patients providing a positive response jumped from 76 to 94.3. During that same quarter, positive responses to the question on “nurses listening carefully to patients” improved from 64 percent to 86.8.
Patients are occasionally hospitalized on their birthdays. When that happens, staff members are almost always able to recognize the event in one way or another.

So, when it became obvious that Skyla would be celebrating her 11th birthday in our Pediatric unit on July 24, the staff and physicians – along with employees from the Care Network and Case Management – went a little above and beyond. That’s because Skyla has a rare chronic condition that has meant numerous hospitalizations over the years. Under similar circumstances, an older patient might visit various nursing units, but a pediatric patient is always treated on our 10-bed Pediatric unit. As such, the staff and physicians have gotten to know her well.

To make Skyla’s birthday extra special, the staff not only showered her with gifts and cards, they also purchased a Justin Bieber cake for the celebration and arranged for a live performance by country music singer Weston Burt. It was a memorable day for Skyla and her family—and for the staff at EAMC.

THE JOINT COMMISSION NAMES EAMC A “TOP PERFORMER”

The Joint Commission (TJC) names EAMC as one of the nation’s Top Performers on Key Quality Measures. EAMC was recognized for exemplary performance in using evidence-based clinical processes that are shown to improve care for certain conditions. EAMC earned the distinction by attaining and sustaining excellence in accountability measures performance. Specifically, EAMC was recognized for its success on the following measure sets: 1) heart attack; 2) heart failure; 3) pneumonia; and 4) surgical care. “What matters most to our patients is safe, effective care,” states Terry Andrus, EAMC president and CEO. “That’s why we have a commitment to accreditation and to positive patient outcomes through evidence-based care processes. I am extremely proud of our employees and physicians for earning this well-deserved recognition.”
Every Friday begins at 4 a.m. for Kenneth Baker as he rises early to meet fellow volunteer Jim Foil at Hardee’s at 5 a.m. “We eat breakfast and chit-chat every Friday morning at 5 and then come to the hospital at 5:45 to start our shift at 6 a.m.,” says Baker, 53, of Auburn.

Baker has been an EAMC Auxiliary volunteer for five years. He and Foil served on the Admissions Escort team together for a long while, and even though Foil now works in another volunteer area, both treasure their Friday morning ritual.

Another benefit of being an EAMC volunteer for Baker is the physical activity. Being an Admissions Escort volunteer requires a good amount of walking, and that suits Baker just fine. “Sitting down is boring to me,” laughs Baker, who has a “day job” at Sam’s Club. “When I was hired at Sam’s, they placed me as a door greeter and I feel right at home there.”

Whether at Sam’s Club or volunteering at EAMC, Baker never meets a stranger. “The most exciting part about volunteering here at EAMC is you meet new people every day. I try to let them see right away how friendly I am and I always get a good response from that.”

Baker has another routine that allows him to make a difference in the lives of others. On the first Sunday of every month, Baker and his pastor from New Hope Faith Outreach Ministry visit the Lee County Justice Center, where they offer a church service to the inmates. This is a program they have participated in for 10 years, and just in the last couple of years, Baker has seen solid proof that it works.

“I was working at Sam’s one day when a young man came through. He said, ‘aren’t you the man from the jail ministry?’ I told him I was and he told me how helpful we were to him. It was nice to see him and to see that he had his family with him. I don’t get the credit for that - I don’t want the credit for that. That was all God; he just uses me as a vessel.”

Back at EAMC, Baker says other fellow volunteers make it a pleasure to be involved. “I played football for Opelika High, so it’s great to have Coach (Larry) Gore and his wife volunteering at the hospital.” Like many EAMC volunteers, Baker plans to stay for a long time. “This is my passion; I’m not going anywhere.”

**EAMC CONTINUES ACCREDITATION FROM TJC**

Since 1959, East Alabama Medical Center has been accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC). Accreditation from the independent, not-for-profit organization is recognized nationwide as a symbol of quality that reflects an organization’s commitment to meeting certain performance standards. TJC visits at least once every three years and completed a survey at EAMC in October 2012. “We had a fantastic survey,” stated Jayme Gardner, director of Patient Safety/Accreditation Services.

“The surveyors were very complimentary of our staff, physicians, leadership and process improvement efforts.”
You may not be aware of them, but a team of vigilant pharmacists, physicians, and other clinical staff members at EAMC work every day to improve patient care and safety. What they do even impacts the community at large when it comes to monitoring infections. These teams are the pharmacy & therapeutics committee (P&T committee) and the antibiotic surveillance team.

“As the pharmacy clinical manager, I present initiatives to the P&T committee,” says Chris Cicci, PharmD. “The group is comprised of physicians and pharmacists. We look at adding drugs to the formulary, instituting safety initiatives to improve patient care, as well as looking at automatic substitutions to save money. We also review policies, evaluate pharmacists’ interventions, drug costs and medication errors.”

“One recent safety initiative in which the P&T committee played a role involved setting a maximum daily dose of acetaminophen (the pain reliever that is the primary ingredient in Tylenol®),” explains Cicci. “We observed that often patients were taking combination medications that included acetaminophen, so they had no idea they were taking too much. Also, there was no clinical ‘alarm’ that would let nurses know that their patient was taking too much,” adds Cicci. Acetaminophen, in doses of 4 grams or greater, can cause liver damage. “The P&T committee recommended a maximum daily inpatient dose of 3 grams of acetaminophen for adults, and we also purchased a software program that calculates the dose, which is helpful to nurses. This is a big improvement for patient safety.”

The antibiotic surveillance team tracks the use of antibiotics in the hospital as well as infectious organisms identified by the lab. Ricardo Maldonado, M.D., an infectious disease specialist, meets daily with Darrell Childress, PharmD, team leader, to review serious infections in inpatients. “We have worked hard to educate and ensure that patients are receiving the correct antibiotic based on lab cultures and accepted guidelines,” says Childress. “We monitor patients to see that they receive the appropriate duration of therapy. In addition to Dr. Maldonado and me, other team members include pharmacists, physicians, lab personnel and infection control staff.”

Childress explains the importance of using narrow-spectrum antibiotics to target specific infections. “It used to be common for doctors to prescribe broad-spectrum antibiotics – the kind that would work on several different types of infections. What happened over time was that these medications became less effective as the bacteria learned to resist those drugs. Overuse of antibiotics leads to increased rates of C-diff and other infections. The antibiotic surveillance team helps physicians target and choose the best antibiotic for a particular type of infection,” says Childress. “With antibiotics, we have what we have – there are no new antibiotics on the horizon. We must be good stewards of these antibiotics so that they can be effective for the next 20 to 30 years.”
On a visit to the Community Market in June 2013, Ralonda Jackson saw a brochure for the Darden Wellness Center in Opelika. With a family history of colon cancer and current discomfort in her colon, Jackson felt like this could be an avenue for answers. Jackson, who moved to Auburn with her three children in 2012, was a temporary employee for a local industry and therefore did not have health insurance.

Jackson called the number on the Darden brochure and spoke with Judy Guin, RN, who scheduled Jackson for an appointment on June 26 at the Darden Center.

While discussing Jackson’s symptoms, Guin learned that Jackson’s mother had died from colon cancer in 2011 at the age of 57, and that her uncle had passed away from the disease in 2010 at age 47. “Colon cancer risk definitely increases when you have a family history of the disease, but it can be prevented,” says Peggy Hansen, RN, Parish Nurse Coordinator. “However, resources are needed to ensure that the people at risk – like Ralonda – get screened.”

Guin knew that Jackson needed a colonoscopy, but without insurance of any kind, there was no way that she could hope to get the test without some kind of assistance. She was aware that the Cancer Center of EAMC had a colon cancer screening program that receives funds through the EAMC Foundation, so she called Chelsea Kroll, a social worker in the Cancer Center. “Ralonda needed this test, and we (the parish nurses) are dedicated to the patients we work with,” says Guin. “So to have resources from EAMC available is so important - without those resources, we wouldn’t be able to do what we do.”

Kroll worked with Brandon Johnson, M.D., an oncologist in the Cancer Center, to obtain an order for the colonoscopy, and within a couple of weeks, Greg Gilbert, M.D., a gastroenterologist, performed the procedure. “I was very excited about being able to get the test done so quickly,” says Guin. While Jackson didn’t have colon cancer, she did have polyps, which were removed during the procedure. “I looked at it as just a blessing; there’s no way I could have paid for it,” says Jackson.

Guin says that Jackson’s story is just one of many. “The Darden Wellness Center is a blessing to this community, and we love being able to find resources for our clients whenever they really need help. It’s very rewarding to make a difference in people’s lives.”

As for Jackson, she shouldn’t have to worry about future colon cancer screenings – she was hired full-time and now has health insurance. “I’m very appreciative of the Parish Nurses and the Foundation. Without them helping me, I would have stressed wondering how I could get this done,” she says.

DID YOU KNOW? There are currently 24 EAMC Parish Nurses serving in 22 congregations in Lee, Macon and Chambers counties. In FY2013, they had more than 5,000 client contacts while serving as health educators and advocates in their churches. These nurses also provided an additional 1,500 client contacts within the community. They work at numerous health fairs and offer blood pressure screenings and health education at the Community Market and other area agencies. They are also involved with the Christian Women’s Job Corps, organ donation awareness, and respite care ministries, in addition to the Darden Wellness Center.
One of the greatest attributes of social media platforms is the ability to allow individuals to share their personal stories and feelings in various ways. And with most companies also using this avenue now, the connection between customers and businesses can have a positive result.

In August, Tiffany Studenwalt of Phenix City not only took to Facebook to share news about the birth of her baby, she also gave a glowing review on the “recommendation” portion of the East Alabama Medical Center Facebook page. “Thank you so much for genuinely caring about me and my daughter from the second we walked in till the moment we walked out. We are forever grateful.”

Studenwalt, who named her daughter, Temperance, is the mother of five other children as well so she speaks from experience on the topic of hospitals. “Never in my entire life have I been treated so kindly at a hospital!!!!,” she said on Facebook. “Everyone who helped me during labor and delivery, and afterward, was completely AMAZING!!!! I wish there was some way for me to thank each and every one of them again.”

Most people are familiar with the 312 hospital beds at EAMC that are used for physical injuries or illnesses. However, there are 28 other beds and they are equally important in medical treatment. These 28 beds are housed in Psychiatric Services, and this unit underwent major renovations before being completed in the early part of fiscal year 2013.

The renovated unit is more spacious, with more therapy rooms, an expanded activity room, and larger quiet spaces. The outdoor portion of the unit was also revamped and is protected by awnings to allow for shade. Of course, providing a safe child/adolescent area was a top priority. Therefore, this area has a larger, improved play therapy area, multiple classrooms, and a group room.

Meanwhile, over the past 10 years, there has been a national movement to transform the treatment of mental health patients from large, centralized hospitals to community-based facilities. That has led to an even closer partnership between EAMC and East Alabama Mental Health in meeting the needs of our community patients who suffer with chronic mental illness, and has allowed for increased funding to care for patients as well as the addition of psychiatric assessment clinicians. The clinicians are able to assess patients who come in to our Emergency Department (ED), and then work with the ED physician as well as a psychiatrist to determine the best intervention for those patients.

With these changes and more, EAMC is poised to become a model for community-based psychiatric care. The physicians and staff are committed to providing high-quality, compassionate care for patients with chronic mental illness right here in the community... just like patients who come to EAMC with any other illness.
Michael Champion of Dadeville says “I’m one of those people where it has to be really bad for me to go to the doctor.” In March 2013, it was that bad. “For a month or so, I was extremely thirsty all the time, I was urinating all the time and when I lay in bed at night, I would get cramps in my legs.” Champion even admits that his eyes were blurry when he finally did decide to go to the doctor.

Knowing the symptoms for diabetes, the doctor immediately performed an A1C blood test to check Champion’s blood sugar. The normal range for such a test is 5.6 percent or less; however, Champion’s blood sugar level topped the charts at 12.3 percent. Champion, who said he left the doctor’s office with a handful of needles he was to use twice daily for injections, says “it was kind of scary at first, but I learned a lot about my condition when I started attending classes at the Diabetes and Nutrition Center.”

“These people probably saved my life,” states Champion when referring to his new-found friends at the Diabetes and Nutrition Center (DANC). “After going through the classes, I came out knowing more about my body and about what I needed to do.”

One thing Champion learned he needed to do was alter his eating and drinking habits. “Last year, when I was working 12 to 16 hours a day, it wasn’t uncommon for me to drink 3 or 4 energy drinks a day.” Champion has kicked that habit and steers clear of soft drinks as well.

As for food, the 39-year-old father of three says he and his wife have taken this diagnosis as a wake-up call for the entire family. “Not only did I change my diet, we changed our diet.” And while there was no history of diabetes in Champion’s family before now, he wants it to stop with him. “The last thing I want is for one of my kids to be going through what I’m going through.”

Through medication, diet and exercise, Champion is feeling a lot better about himself and his prognosis. Within three months, his A1C had been reduced to 5.8 percent. Within six months, Champion had dropped 12 pounds. “I really want to thank the ladies at the (Diabetes and Nutrition) Center,” says Champion. “I don’t think I could have done it without them. I know I wouldn’t be controlling it as good as I am without them.”

Managing Your Diabetes

Some patients with diabetes also need to see an endocrinologist. In October 2012, Endocrinology and Metabolism of East Alabama (EMEA) opened, and earlier this year, this practice and the Diabetes and Nutrition Center (DANC) both re-located next door to each other in Opelika. Amie Hardin, the manager at DANC, says the move has been mutually beneficial. “Dr. (Neil) Schaffner has had patients who are newly diagnosed with diabetes and he has been able to send them straight to us for education on the same day. On the flip side, we are able to talk to him quickly regarding his patients and make needed medication changes while they are in our office.” Helping to further provide care for patients with diabetes is Lynn Hudson, a nurse practitioner and certified diabetes educator, who recently joined Dr. Schaffner at EMEA. The two offices are located on Village Professional Drive, near The Pediatric Clinic and RehabWorks-Opelika.

DID YOU KNOW? During fiscal year 2013, a total of 114 patients with diabetes returned for their three-month follow-up at the Diabetes and Nutrition Center. On average, the initial A1C of those patients was 9.1 percent. At their three-month follow-up, their average A1C was 6.9 percent.
Caring about others is not just a job for our employees—they participate in various programs throughout the year to improve the quality of life for residents throughout the region. Here’s a snapshot of some of their activities over the past fiscal year:

- Each fall, employees donate new or gently used coats to the One Coat Campaign. Once the campaign ends, the coats – and even some scarves and gloves – are distributed to agencies in and around Lee County so they can share with people in need prior to the winter season.

- Several years ago, transporters from EAMC’s Transportation department began hosting an Annual Food Drive to benefit elderly residents in need. Departments throughout EAMC donate non-perishable foods, and the items are gathered by the transporters. In December 2012, the food drive netted 5,968 pounds of food and $3,125 in donations, of which all was donated to the area agency on Aging, a division of the Lee Russell Council of Governments.

- More than 200 employees participated in Employees Give Back by giving of themselves in service to various organizations. Among the organizations that benefited were the Food Bank of East Alabama, The Salvation Army, The Miracle League, Storybook Farm and the BigHouse Foundation.

- For the 5th straight year, our team of employees involved in the March of Dimes campaign raised the most money in the local March for Babies campaign. With $15,536, the team led by Dennis Thrasher became the first Lee County team to ever raise more than $15,000. While the majority was raised by EAMC employees, $2,250 was raised by students in the Trinity Presbyterian YMCA Club (Montgomery). Their involvement comes through Dennis’ wife, Lucy, being a teacher there, and Lucy’s colleague, Rebecca Helms, led their fundraising efforts.

- Perhaps the activity that draws the most employee participants each year is the American Cancer Society’s annual Relay for Life. Not only are there department-based teams of employees, but employees also get involved through service sororities and through their churches. Our employees were among the 592 registered participants from 69 total teams who helped raise more than $140,000 for the American Cancer Society. The event was chaired by Randy Causey (EAMC Support Services) and other employees served in logistics, activities, silent auction committee, sponsorship committee, site prep and clean-up committee.

- Summer camp can be a rite of passage for many children, but those with physical disabilities can sometimes feel left out. Thanks to our employees at RehabWorks-Opelika, children facing these physical limitations now have a local outlet for fun during a 5-day festival called Camp Mountain Top. Held at Lakeview Baptist in Auburn, Camp Mountain Top is coordinated by the various therapists at RehabWorks-Opelika.
“I’m convinced that I wouldn’t still be here today if I had not joined HealthPlus,” says Ralph Harris, 84, of Auburn. “This arrhythmia or stroke or something would have gotten to me.” Harris, who has lived in a cottage at Camellia Place for the past two years, began exercising in 1993 after being diagnosed with arrhythmia. “My heart wasn’t beating regularly like it should,” states Harris.

Dr. Ross Davis referred Harris to EAMC’s Cardiac Rehab program and it set Harris on a course of exercising that he has continued for 20 years now. Harris is a charter member of HealthPlus Fitness Center and makes exercise a priority in his life. “I typically exercise five days a week. I have been consistent with it and I think that’s very important.”

Harris, who has a Ph.D in Animal Nutrition and taught in the Animal Sciences department at Auburn University for 41 years, admits that exercise hasn’t always played such an important role in his life. “Earlier on, I didn’t have time for exercise—let me correct that; I didn’t take time for exercise.”

In addition to being diagnosed with arrhythmia, Harris later suffered a stroke, but it hasn’t stopped him from being active. For the past 10 years at HealthPlus, he has participated in senior functional training classes with Mike Moye, and he now works with Emily Ansick as well. Between his workouts with them and his individual training, he tackles cardio, lower body exercises, and flexibility training.

“They (Mike and Emily) are very attentive and know exactly what they are doing” says Harris, who was married for 62 years before his wife passed in November 2012. “They enjoy their work and they make it fun.” Ansick had praise for Harris as well. “Ralph is very punctual and rarely misses an appointment. He is a great client and we all love him.”

Thanks to a consistent exercise routine over the last 20 years, Ralph Harris has been able to minimize the debilitating effects of arrhythmia and stroke. Harris is shown here with Emily Ansick and Mike Moye, two of the HealthPlus trainers who provide oversight to him on his tailored exercise program.

EAMC TABBED AS “HEALTHSTRONG” HOSPITAL

The Hospital Strength Index, a national ratings and analytics program developed by iVantage Health Analytics, ranks all 4,400+ U.S. general acute care hospitals based on eight performance pillars comprised of 56 different performance measures. When iVantage released their list in July, it sent a letter to EAMC officials saying “Congratulations to your facility for earning recognition as a 2013 Top 100 HealthStrong Hospital.” The letter went on to say that this recognition meant that EAMC was “one of our country’s Top 100 strongest hospitals.” In further explaining the award, iVantage stated that “HealthStrong hospitals represent the nation’s strongest in institutions for performance under the New Healthcare and set benchmarks for: optimal population demand, operational and clinical outcomes, patient satisfaction and financial performance.”
For several years, EAMC has been working toward implementing a completely electronic health record (EHR) system. Since 2005, when the Cerner Millennium program went live, EAMC has been systematically taking steps that will lead to a paperless system. The aspect of healthcare reform known as “meaningful use” - in which healthcare providers must demonstrate how they are using electronic medical records to improve patient care - has been one of the drivers toward the adoption of EHRs. Sarah Gray, a former bedside nurse, was the manager for the Millennium project, and is now assistant vice president of information services.

“It has been beneficial to EAMC – and our patients – to have achieved meaningful use for the past three years,” says Gray. “It’s also a big change for many of us as we transition from the paper medical record to paperless.” Gray explains that meaningful use consists of three stages, and EAMC has attested for Stage 1 and is now implementing Stage 2. “There will be a Stage 3; however, we will most likely have maxed out our financial awards by then. Moving forward, hospitals will face penalties for not meeting meaningful use.” Thus far, EAMC has either received or accrued around $8 million in federal funds for reaching electronic health record implementation goals. This money has been reinvested in the hospital to purchase new equipment and technology as well as ensure the level of care during a time when funding from other sources has decreased.

Gray says that EAMC had made a strong commitment to the electronic medical record years prior to meaningful use. “We were pioneers, really,” says Gray. “I remember when I was a floor nurse back in the late 1980s, and I was tasked with teaching nurses – and learning as well – how to use computers to send orders to the lab and other clinical departments. It’s just evolved from there.” In 2005, EAMC launched Cerner Millennium and the PACS system in radiology, going to filmless x-rays. “We were the second hospital in Alabama and one of the first 150 in the nation to attest for Stage 1 meaningful use,” Gray says. “Our early commitment to the electronic medical record as well as teamwork in implementing it has made our efforts successful. With Stage 1, we had one large, dedicated team and we made our goal, and now, for Stage 2, we have six teams working on the various projects. Our EHR teams are made of all kinds of people – nurses, physicians, MIS staff, and others.

“I am confident that we will succeed and that it will improve our quality of care.”

-Sarah Gray, Assistant Vice President of Information Services
Just days before the end of the fiscal year, EAMC officials signed an agreement with Lanier Health Services to begin management of George H. Lanier Memorial Hospital in Valley. As part of the agreement, the hospital as well as its nursing home and all physical facilities will continue to be owned by Lanier, but will be leased to – and operated by – EAMC. The hospital will still bear the name of George H. Lanier Memorial Hospital even after the transaction is complete, which is expected by the end of 2013.

The consolidation of hospitals is not unique to our area. In Alabama, Huntsville Hospital has taken over the management of a handful of smaller hospitals in their area. Nationally, health care mergers have become more of a norm rather than an exception. Part of the reason for this transformation is the on-set of the Affordable Care Act as well as Medicaid reform and other reimbursement changes industry-wide.

Joining forces with existing health care facilities isn’t a foreign concept for EAMC. Over the years, the hospital has become affiliated with health care services such as the ambulance service, Unity Wellness Center, Azalea Place, Magnolia Place and Oak Park.

Terry Andrus, EAMC president and CEO said, “We are excited about extending the reach of EAMC to all of Chambers County and aligning ourselves with Lanier Health Services with its long history of service to Chambers County and the Chattahoochee Valley. A combined operating philosophy should benefit the citizens of Chambers County greatly and continue to provide the quality of health care everyone has come to expect. The increased volume for the combined entity should allow us to achieve even greater efficiencies in delivering health care across a broader area.”

Lanier opened in 1950 and was the first U.S. hospital to be built under the Hill-Burton Hospital Survey and Construction Act. Lanier Health Services also operates a 103-bed skilled nursing home facility attached to the hospital. In 2012, Lanier opened a new medical pavilion and urgent care facility on Fob James Drive. Like EAMC, Lanier is accredited by The Joint Commission. More information on Lanier is available at www.lanierhospital.com.

CVICU RECOGNIZED FOR BEACON AWARD

Employees and physicians in our cardiovascular intensive care unit (CVICU) were conferred a silver-level Beacon Award for Excellence from the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN). The Beacon Award recognizes unit caregivers who successfully improve patient outcomes and align practices with AACN’s six standards for a healthy work environment. Units that achieve this three-year designation meet national criteria consistent with Magnet Recognition, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the National Quality Healthcare Award. “The AACN Beacon award is a tremendous accomplishment and recognition for the staff,” says Kate Ruud (CVICU manager). “They are an exceptional group and completely deserving of such a prestigious honor.”
INCOME STATEMENT 2013

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries &amp; Benefits</td>
<td>137,736,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity Care &amp; Bad Debt</td>
<td>44,730,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical &amp; Other Supplies</td>
<td>54,736,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest &amp; Depreciation</td>
<td>23,543,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Services</td>
<td>28,773,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities &amp; Repairs</td>
<td>16,449,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Operating Expenses</td>
<td>8,986,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$314,953,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Net Income             | $9,457,000  |

East Alabama Medical Center has been continuously accredited by The Joint Commission since 1959.

The following departments achieved a monthly 100% mark on patient satisfaction surveys at least one time during the fiscal year:

**Inpatient Departments:**
- 2SW (cardiovascular step-down unit)
- 7T (internal medicine)
- 8SE (progressive care unit)
- 8SW (cardiac special care)
- Mother-Baby unit
- Pediatrics

**Outpatient Departments:**
- Auburn Diagnostic Imaging
- Auburn MRI
- Cancer Center Infusion
- Cancer Center Radiation
- Cardiac Rehab
- Cardiology (invasive)
- Cardiology (non-invasive—Auburn)
- Cardiology (non-invasive—EAMC)

- Diabetes and Nutrition Center
- Endoscopy
- Pain Clinic
- Radiology
- RehabWorks-Auburn
- RehabWorks-Opelika
- Respiratory Care
- Sleep Disorders Center
- Wound Treatment Center