



2020–2021 Annual Report

Mission

To improve access to health care for the uninsured of Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union counties.

Vision

To spark sustainable health system change that results in better health outcomes and 100% access to effective, efficient, safe, timely, patient-centered and equitable health care throughout the region.



Dear Friends and Partners,

At this time a year ago, we were still in the early stages of facing a public health challenge unlike any in our lifetimes. The COVID-19 pandemic forced all of us to make a number of changes, and AccessHealth Spartanburg (AHS) was no different.

We learned how to work remotely so we could continue connecting low-income, uninsured adults in Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union counties with health care, behavioral health and other essential services. It was a daunting challenge, but our team rose to meet it, all while mitigating the risks COVID-19 presented both to ourselves and the population we serve.

Now, as we find ourselves in 2022 and with COVID-19 still a part of our lives, AccessHealth Spartanburg is more prepared than ever to serve its unique role in our three-county service area. We have learned from the world of remote work – and it has made us an even better, more responsive, more resilient and accessible organization.

While we still meet with clients face-to-face in our office, we are also comfortable using technology to stay connected. Transportation is no longer a barrier to enrolling new clients and helping them stay on track with appointments while addressing the other barriers to care they face.

For the first time since AccessHealth opened its doors in 2010, it has dedicated staff and office space in Cherokee and Union counties, a priority for both AHS and Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System. This presence and investment are making a significant difference in the lives of uninsured, low-income adults in those communities, an impact that will only grow over the coming years.

None of this would be possible without the continued support of Spartanburg Regional and its Community Health department. When AHS opened 11 years ago, it did so with a staff of just four people and a mission “to improve access to health care for the uninsured through sustainable health system change that will result in better health outcomes and 100% access to effective, efficient, safe, timely, patient-centered and equitable health care.”

Since then, a lot has changed. We have:

- Grown to more than 20 full-time employees
- Moved our main offices (twice!)
- Expanded to include Cherokee and Union counties
- Participated in national learning collaborative and grant-funded programs to improve complex care management and improve health outcomes nationwide
- And the list goes on

We have learned much, grown in many ways and are prepared to continue to identify new and better ways to serve our communities.

Through all the growth and changes, our mission has remained the same – to improve access to health care for the uninsured.

Summer Tebalt

Former Director, AHS

Note: After three years serving as director of AccessHealth Spartanburg and five years before that as a nurse care manager with the organization, Summer Tebalt accepted a leadership position with ReGenesis Health Care in late 2021. AHS will miss her leadership and enthusiasm for serving the people of Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union counties.





STAFF HIGHLIGHT

Corlis Childs

Corlis Childs is a nurse care navigator at AccessHealth Spartanburg, and she has been with the program since its founding in 2010. Childs is responsible for conducting medical needs assessments, developing care plans, interventions and education with clients. She also assists with placing clients in medical homes, reviewing medical records for emergency utilization and follow-up and coordinating specialty and ancillary services. Childs has an extensive background in home health nursing and community case management.

She is a graduate of Lander College and received her Bachelor of Science in nursing from Gardner-Webb University in May 2013. Childs and her husband reside in Spartanburg. She enjoys reading, listening to music, singing and spending time with her two grandchildren.

AccessHealth Spartanburg started in 2010 with a staff of four operating out of the first floor of a former two-story dental office on the campus of Spartanburg Medical Center. Today, the team has grown to more than 20, including care navigators, community health workers and enrollment specialists. AccessHealth has expanded its geographic footprint with the opening of full-time offices in Cherokee and Union counties, and it has moved its main office twice. Today, AccessHealth Spartanburg resides in the Northside neighborhood of Spartanburg.

Through it all, there has been one constant: Corlis Childs. One of AccessHealth's nurse care navigators, Childs is the last remaining member of the original four-person team that launched the organization and pioneered the concept of

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

Corlis Childs

care navigation and complex case management in Spartanburg.

Childs had long since built a respected career with Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System when she heard about the creation of AccessHealth Spartanburg. At the time, she had been a nurse for 30 years. Meanwhile, a coalition of local leaders had conceptualized AHS as a new approach to helping low-income, uninsured adults access to health care and other services. Though there was a lot to figure out and no playbook to go by for such an effort, Childs knew she wanted to be a part of it.

“Most of my career had been as a nurse in home health, and so when I found out about AccessHealth, I was very interested because I felt like I had the tools. I had the foundation to work with that population of clients

who had no insurance, had no way to get their medicine,” Childs said.

Over the years, AccessHealth has been recognized repeatedly with awards. Today, it is considered a national model for its approach to complex care management and navigation. And the program continues to evolve and grow.

That success is built on a foundation that Childs played a key part in laying. From the beginning, AHS has focused on problem solving and intentional program building, and Childs credits that focus for AHS’s growth.

“You know, they were showing up at the hospital because they had no doctor,” Childs said. “So, transitioning from home health to AccessHealth was pretty smooth in terms of some of the work. There was still a lot of providing education to the clients

that I was accustomed to.”

“The program really was a blank sheet of paper. We had to come up with care plans. We had to determine what our mission and vision were going to be. It was an exciting time, but it was also a hectic time because we had to create everything as we were going along because we didn’t have a roadmap,” she said.

No one in South Carolina had ever done this before.

“We all worked very hard. Because of the clientele that we served and the needs they had and the lifetime of trauma they faced, we knew that kind of work would take a toll,” Childs said. “That seems like a lot, but it was necessary. We used that time to talk about clients we were having challenges with, what kind of barriers we were running into and how we

could overcome those barriers.”

In the years that followed, Childs has, in many ways, become the conscience of the program and a mentor to many of the staff.

Corlis is one of the most empathetic and professional people I know ... She is uniquely skilled at keeping the patient and the patient’s needs at the forefront of all discussions. Corlis maintains a positive attitude and helps remind us all why we do this work.

– Summer Tebalt, former AHS Director

Cherokee and Union Expansion

AccessHealth Spartanburg has completed a long-planned expansion into Cherokee and Union counties. The move has enabled AHS to enroll hundreds of low-income, uninsured residents in the two rural counties, which make up a significant part of Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System's core service area.

To date, AHS has enrolled more than 800 individuals in Cherokee County and 300 in Union County. Just like the AccessHealth clients enrolled in Spartanburg County, Cherokee and Union clients are connected to primary and specialty care, along with a host of other social services that collectively improve health outcomes.

When AHS was launched, the focus was Spartanburg County with a long-range vision that included expanding into neighboring counties. The program first started serving clients in Cherokee County in

2018, followed by Union County in 2020.

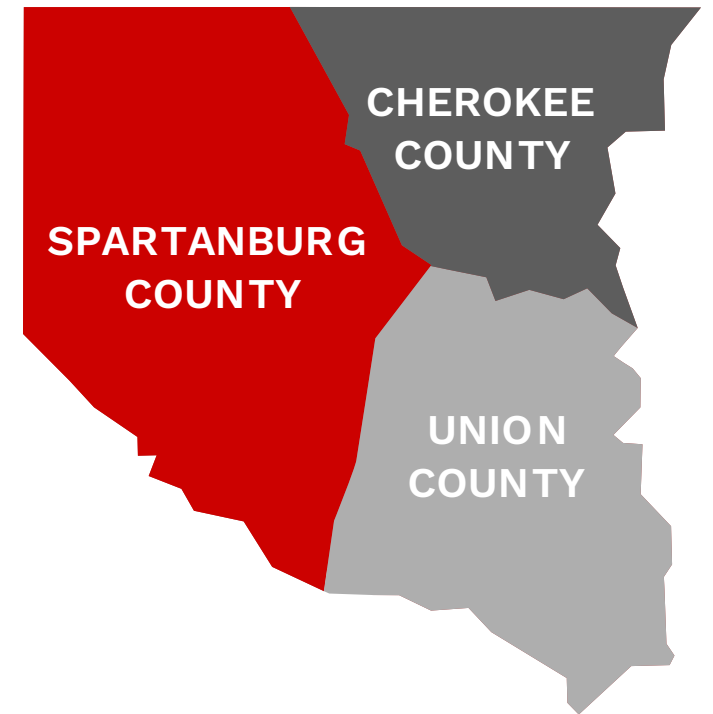
Early expansion efforts were led by community health workers based out of the organization's Spartanburg office. They would spend a couple of days a week in the rural counties, conducting outreach and enrolling eligible clients. Today, AHS has a dedicated community health worker in each county five days a week, with office space in Cherokee Medical Center and Union Medical Center. In addition to increasing program enrollment, ongoing efforts include bolstering care management services in the two rural counties.

Addressing health disparities in rural areas will remain a focus for AHS and its partners. The Duke Endowment — the leading funder for AHS — has encouraged AccessHealth Spartanburg and

other AccessHealth networks in the Carolinas to expand their services into rural areas. Doing so requires careful, deliberate planning. AHS worked with its other Spartanburg-based partners to develop the infrastructure in both Cherokee and Union. ReGenesis Health Care, in particular, has been a crucial partner in this effort. A Federally Qualified Health Center, ReGenesis' expansion into Cherokee and Union ensures a "medical home" for the clients AHS enrolls in those counties.

Even so, like most rural areas, there remains a shortage of providers in Cherokee and Union. AHS continues to help with this challenge.

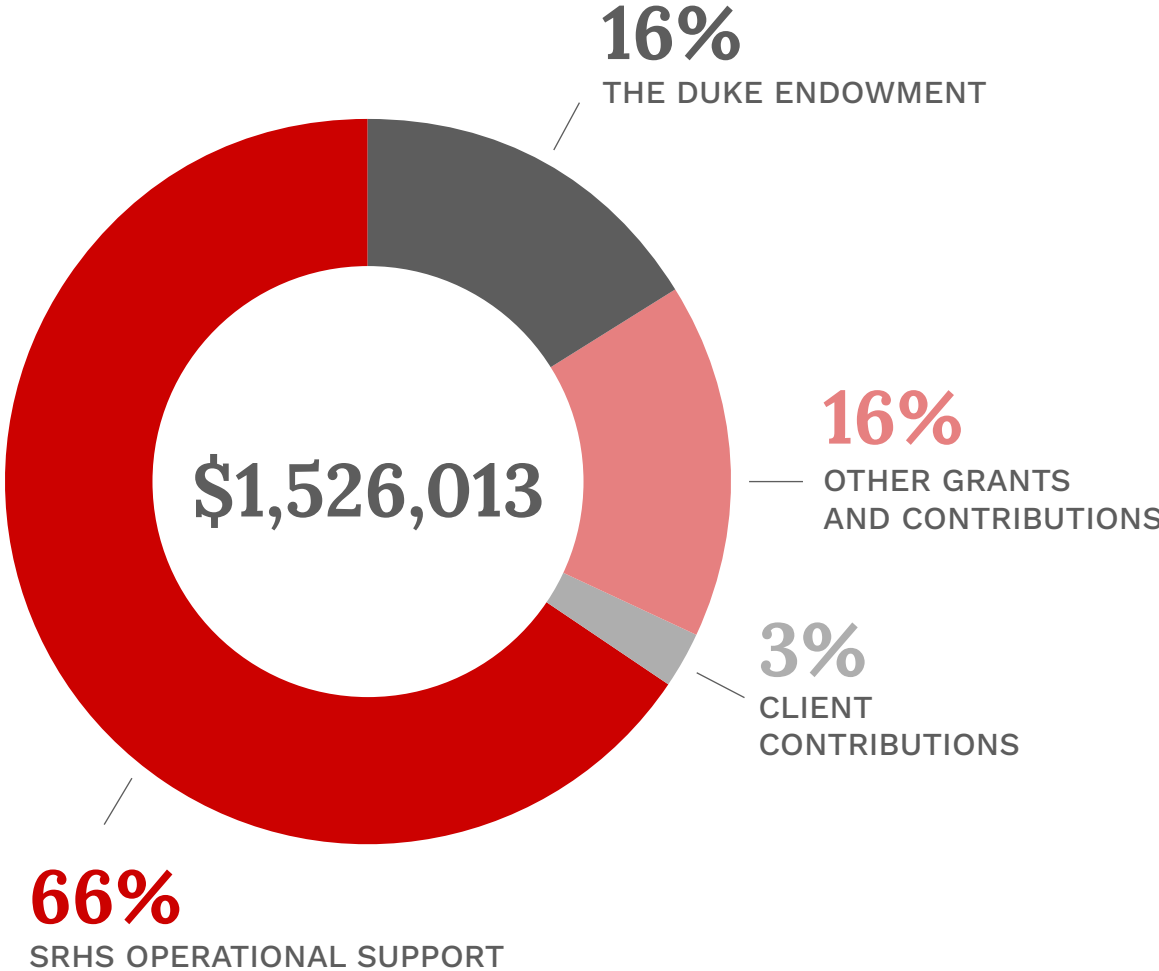
"The expansion of AccessHealth into Cherokee and Union counties has been very important, and we've made some great initial strides with our partners," former AHS Director Summer Tebalt said. "Addressing



rural health disparities is one of the most vexing challenges we face in our region, state and nation. I am proud of Spartanburg Regional, AccessHealth Spartanburg, The Duke Endowment, ReGenesis Health Care and our other partners who have coalesced around this issue."

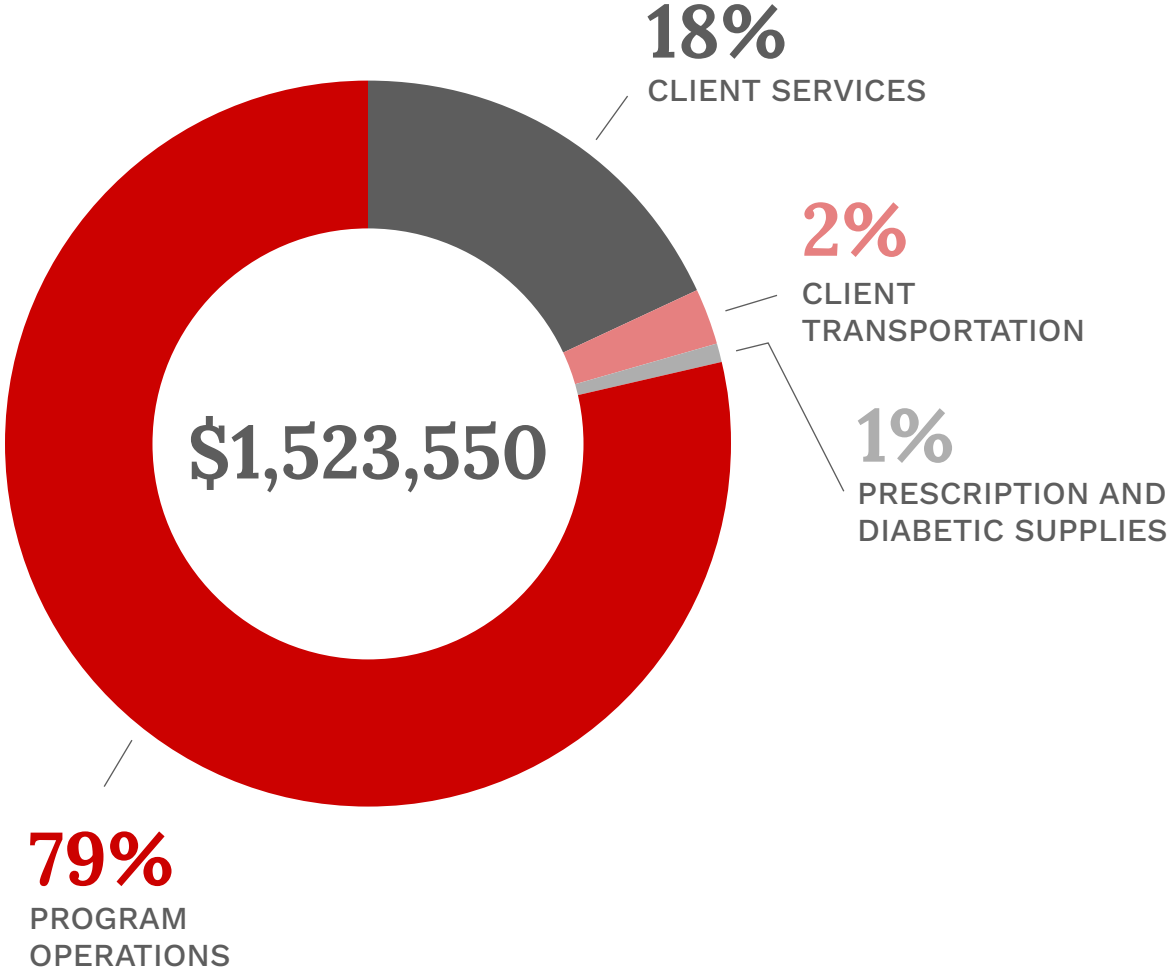
2021 Revenue

The Duke Endowment	\$250,000
Other grants and contributions	\$237,769
Client contributions	\$38,244
SRHS Operational Support	\$1,000,000
Total Support and Revenue	\$1,526,013



2021 Program Expenses

Program operations	\$1,199,054
Client services	\$274,988
Client transportation	\$37,037
Prescription and diabetic supplies	\$12,471
Total Expenses	\$1,523,550



2021 By the Numbers

1,936

new clients enrolled
in AccessHealth

243

patients enrolled in
smoking cessation classes

1,896

patients received
prescription assistance

1,643

specialty care appointments
were completed

548

AHS clients received
transportation assistance

40,000+

services were provided
through AccessHealth

PATIENT STORY

Laura Wright

When I enrolled in AccessHealth, I was at a very low point in my life. I had experienced a tragedy and, six months later, went through a divorce. I felt like I was falling apart. On my first visit to AccessHealth, I met with the nurse and told her what I was going through. She was very empathetic, and I could tell that she cared. She connected me to St. Luke's Free Medical Clinic, where I was able to receive the treatment I needed for my health. She also connected me with a hypertension program and diabetes education through Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System. There I was taught how to check my blood pressure, blood sugars and learn what foods to eat to better control my diabetes and hypertension.

AccessHealth also has household items on hand. Food stamps don't

cover non-food items, and it was such a big help to get things that I needed at home but couldn't afford.

I was so glad to have AccessHealth and St. Luke's. Between these two facilities, I felt like all my needs were being met and they had provided a safety net for my health.

I was only in the program for about a year until I was approved for Medicare and Medicaid. I'm so grateful that they were a bridge for me until I got insurance. I'm healthier because of AccessHealth. They saved my life.

I felt like all my needs were being met and they had provided a safety net for my health.

- *Laura Wright, AccessHealth patient*





VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Amber Chopelas

Through a partnership with the United Way of the Piedmont, AccessHealth Spartanburg hosts an AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) each year. VISTA is an anti-poverty program designed to provide needed resources to nonprofit organizations and public agencies to increase their capacity to lift communities out of poverty. Learn more about the program at [AmeriCorps.gov](https://www.americorps.gov). Amber Chopelas was the AccessHealth Spartanburg 2021-22 VISTA.

“I joined AccessHealth Spartanburg in August of 2021 as the program and engagement VISTA. Although I’m from New Hampshire originally, I went to college at Clemson University and fell in love with Upstate South Carolina.

After completing a master’s degree at Georgetown University, I decided to

pursue a service year and found the AmeriCorps VISTA to be the perfect way to serve a community while continuing to develop professionally and gain experience.

Serving at AccessHealth interested me, partly because I always hoped to return to the Upstate but mostly because of my interest in health care disparities. I wanted the opportunity to work with the medically underserved and to learn about the issues this population faces, and AccessHealth has provided me just that.

During my time at AccessHealth, I’ve most enjoyed the connections I’ve been able to make with all the incredible people I’ve been able to work alongside. The entire AccessHealth team has taught me so much about care coordination and the barriers to adequate

Patient Quotes

I would not have been able to afford medical care without AccessHealth's help.

P.S.

The AccessHealth staff addressed all my questions and concerns. They helped me get SNAP so I can afford healthy foods. They even helped me with transportation to get to my doctor's appointment.

J.W.

Without AccessHealth, I would not be able to see my doctor or afford my medications.

K.P.

AccessHealth helped me get access to mental health care during my time of need.

T.M.

I'm healthier because of AccessHealth. They saved my life.

S.R.