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**NORTHEAST GEORGIA HEALTH SYSTEM'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT AS SUCCESSION PLAN STARTS**

GAINESVILLE, Ga. – After more than two decades of leading Northeast Georgia Health System (NGHS) from a single hospital to one of the largest health systems in the state, its chief executive officer has announced her plans to retire after a smooth leadership transition is established.

“I met with our board of trustees this week and informed them of my plans to retire within the next year or so, though I’m committed to serving until a successor is identified and there’s a clean handoff,” said Carol Burrell, NGHS president & CEO. “It will be business as usual for me and our team while the board starts its succession planning process.”

“Carol is a visionary leader who is always planning ahead to meet the community’s healthcare needs, as evidenced by NGHS’ tremendous growth during her tenure, so it’s only fitting that she’s giving us plenty of time to plan ahead and identify her successor before she retires,” said Spence Price, chair of the NGHS Board.

Price said a CEO search committee will soon be established to choose a national executive recruitment firm. The committee will then lead the rigorous process to evaluate candidates and ultimately choose Burrell’s successor.

“Carol is one of the most respected CEOs in the state, regardless of industry, and the communities NGHS serves have been blessed to have her at the helm,” said Price. “While she

can never be truly replaced, we are going to move prudently to find the right leader to continue pursuing the level of excellence Carol has achieved.”

Burrell was born and raised in Barrow County, where NGHS now operates one of its five hospitals. She started her career as a medical technologist in the late 1970s and later received her master’s degree in healthcare administration from Central Michigan University. After serving as a vice president at St. Vincent’s Health System in Jacksonville, Florida, Burrell returned to Georgia in 1999 to lead NGHS’ network of primary care clinics. She was eventually named chief operating officer in 2004 and CEO in 2011.

Under Burrell’s leadership, NGHS has grown from one hospital in Hall County to a total of five hospitals across the region, including one of the state’s only Level I Trauma Centers. The system also now includes the sixth largest multispecialty physician group in the state (Northeast Georgia Physicians Group) and the state’s most forward-thinking heart and vascular program (Georgia Heart Institute), as well as one of Georgia’s largest graduate medical education programs. NGHS’ estimated annual impact on the state and local economy has grown from around \$1 billion in 2011 to more than \$4 billion in 2021.

“It is an honor to serve NGHS and the communities across our region, alongside a team of healthcare workers who bring their best every day, and I’m not ready to say goodbye just yet,” said Burrell. “The year ahead will be extremely busy as we continue growing the greater good by opening our future NGMC Lumpkin hospital campus along Georgia 400 and multispecialty medical plazas in Dawsonville and Bethlehem this spring – as well as breaking ground on a dedicated rehabilitation hospital and a medical office park in Gainesville, finalizing construction on the first phase of our hospital campus expansion in Braselton and preparing to open a new patient tower on our hospital campus in Gainesville.”

“Carol’s mantra is ‘be better tomorrow than you are today,’ and she’s certainly positioned NGHS and our next CEO well for the future,” said Price.

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ABOUT NORTHEAST GEORGIA HEALTH SYSTEM

Northeast Georgia Health System (NGHS) is a non-profit on a mission of improving the health of our community in all we do. Our team cares for more than 1 million people across the region through five hospitals and a variety of outpatient locations. Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) has campuses in Gainesville, Braselton, Winder, Dahlonega and Demorest – with a total of more than 850 beds and more than 1,300 medical staff members representing more than 60 specialties. Learn more at www.nghs.com.

