



Blue Distinction Centers for Knee and Hip ReplacementSM

Southeast Georgia Health System Has Been Designated as a Blue Distinction Center for Knee and Hip ReplacementSM

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Georgia (BCBSGA) has designated Southeast Georgia Health System as a Blue Distinction Center for Knee and Hip Replacement.

Blue Distinction Centers for Knee and Hip Replacement demonstrate their commitment to quality care, resulting in better overall outcomes for knee and hip replacement surgery patients. Southeast Georgia Health System meets evidence-based clinical criteria, developed in collaboration with expert physicians' and medical organizations, and is subject to periodic re-evaluation as criteria continue to evolve, who undergo knee and hip replacement procedures. These facilities have also demonstrated experience in offering comprehensive inpatient knee and hip replacement services, including total knee replacement and total hip replacement.

"Our Joint Replacement Center opened in October 2009 and in that brief period of time our team has already proven that they can provide the best there is to offer in the care of patients needing knee and hip replacements in a comfortable, relaxing setting," says Health System President & CEO Gary R. Colberg, FACHE. "Having this recognition proves that members of our community do not have to travel elsewhere to have the latest treatment options. I am so proud of our team for earning this outstanding distinction."

Southeast Georgia Health System's Joint Replacement Center offers a full range of knee and hip replacement services, including inpatient care, post-operative care, outpatient follow-up and patient education. For those needing surgery, care begins with pre-operative classes preparing the patient and his or her support person (coach) on what to expect and how to best prepare for the procedure. These preparations include learning and performing gentle exercises designed to strengthen muscles and improve mobility for faster recovery.

"Our goal for putting the Joint Replacement Center together was to create a unique patient experience based on a wellness philosophy," says J. Kevin Brooks, M.D., board certified orthopaedic surgeon and medical director of the Joint Replacement Center.

After surgery, patients begin their rehabilitation in a supportive, friendly environment in the Center that includes daily goals, fun exercises, and activities with fellow patients. The Center's "A Joint JourneySM," is an island-themed program that features activities from picking up objects such as "Jekyll Island" sea turtles with a grabber, to "traveling" to Sapelo and St. Simons islands. This unique, customized program prepares patients to return home as quickly as possible. Continued outpatient rehabilitation and follow-up care is monitored by each patient's orthopaedic surgeon and the Joint Replacement Center team.

"Blue Distinction will assist members in choosing a facility or physician that best meets their medical needs," said Dr. Bob McCormack, medical director, BCBSGA. "This program provides easy access to evidence-based health information about physicians and institutions that meet clinically-validated, quality standards, and deliver better overall outcomes in patient care – giving members the confidence needed to make important decisions surrounding their health."

To be designated as a Blue Distinction Center for Knee and Hip Replacement, Southeast Georgia Health System met the selection criteria posted at www.BCBS.com, which includes:

- An established knee and hip replacement program, performing required annual volumes for certain procedures each year, with a minimum of 25 each for total hip and total knee replacements

- An experienced knee and hip replacement surgery team, including surgeons with board certification subspecialty fellowship training and case volumes meeting specified requirements
- Pre-operative patient education
- Multi-disciplinary teams and clinical pathways to coordinate and streamline care
- Use of an internal registry or database to track patient outcomes over time
- Participation in the Surgical care Improvement Project with ≥ 90 percent performance on process measures

The full list of Blue Distinction selection criteria is available to the public at www.BCBS.com/bluedistinction.

Blue Distinction is a designation awarded by Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies to medical facilities that have demonstrated expertise in delivering quality healthcare. The designation is based on rigorous, evidence-based selection criteria established in collaboration with expert physicians' and medical organizations' recommendations. Today, more than 1,000 Blue Distinction Center designations have been awarded to facilities nationwide, providing consumers with a framework for making informed decisions on where to go for specialty care in the areas of bariatric surgery, cardiac care, complex and rare cancers, transplants, and now spine surgery and knee and hip replacement.

About Southeast Georgia Health System

Southeast Georgia Health System is a not-for-profit health system with multiple locations and services. The Health System has served the residents and visitors of the beautiful Golden Isles of Coastal Georgia and surrounding areas of Southeast Georgia since 1888. Headquartered in the historic port city of Brunswick, the Health System serves the health care needs of residents from eight counties in Southeast Georgia - Brantley, Camden, Charlton, Glynn, Long, McIntosh, Pierce, and Wayne. For more information call 912-466-7000 or visit www.sghs.org.

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Georgia:

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Note: Designation as Blue Distinction Centers means these facilities' overall experience and aggregate data met objective criteria established in collaboration with expert clinicians' and leading professional organizations' recommendations. Individual outcomes may vary. To find out which services are covered under your policy at any facilities, please call your local Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield Plan.