

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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**Contact: Megan Morris, Director**  
**Development and Community Relations**  
**Morgan Memorial Hospital**  
**706-752-2237**

**Mike Pilcher, Director**  
**System Relations Department**  
**Athens Regional Medical Center**  
**706-475-3336**

### **Morgan Memorial and Athens Regional Formalize Partnership**

Madison, GA – Morgan Memorial Hospital (MMH) in Madison, along with Athens Regional Health System (ARHS) in Athens, today announced that leadership from both organizations have signed a formal agreement and entered into a clinical collaboration that will allow the hospitals to develop and enhance specialty healthcare services for Morgan County and the surrounding region.

“As we have worked with our Authority members to develop a strategic plan to ensure a local, community hospital in Morgan County for the next 100 years, the continual themes were the realization of a new hospital building and the expansion of specialty services,” said MMH Chief Executive Officer Ralph Castillo. “This enhancement of our relationship with ARHS reflects those same priorities. Both initiatives are important for a continued partnership with ARHS, and both are essential for the continued viability of our local healthcare system.”

Both Castillo and Chuck Peck, MD, Interim CEO and President of ARHS, are clear that the clinical collaboration agreement is a partnership, not a sale, acquisition or merger.

“Accessible and locally-delivered healthcare is vital to the communities we serve. This collaboration, along with the realization of a new hospital for the citizens of Morgan County, will strengthen the already outstanding primary care delivery of Madison’s medical staff and combine it with the superior specialty care from our hospital and physician groups,” said Peck. “We look forward to working with the leadership at MMH to move the new hospital project forward.”

Morgan Memorial Hospital is a 25-bed non-profit hospital located in Madison, Georgia. Certified as a Level IV Trauma Center, the facility hosts a 24-hour emergency room, wide array of diagnostic outpatient services, and serves patients through acute care and swing bed programs.

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Athens Regional Health System is one of Northeast Georgia's largest healthcare systems. The System is comprised of an acute care facility with 350-plus beds, four urgent care centers, a superior network of physicians and specialists, a health maintenance organization and a home health agency.

"Athens Regional and Morgan Memorial have had a strong, mutually beneficial relationship for years. This collaboration not only solidifies that relationship, but truly expands and enhances access to care for the patients in this region for years to come," said Fred Young, MD, Executive Director, Athens Regional Physician Group.

"Local access to specialists will be a great benefit for our patients and our community hospital," said Dan Zant, MD, Chief of Staff for MMH. "By making it easier for patients to receive specialty care right here close to home, we are improving the overall health of our community and ensuring that we are able to grow healthcare services here in Madison."

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***About Morgan Memorial Hospital***

Morgan Memorial Hospital is a 25-bed non-profit Critical Access Hospital located in Madison, Georgia. Certified as a Level IV Trauma Center, the facility hosts a 24-hour emergency room, wide array of diagnostic outpatient services, and serves patients through acute care and swing bed programs. For more information, visit [www.mmh.org](http://www.mmh.org).

***About Athens Regional Health System***

The cornerstone of the Health System is Athens Regional Medical Center. Athens Regional is a regional referral center, offering services such as maternal/child, advanced imaging, minimally invasive surgeries, an American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer approved oncology department and a nationally recognized cardiovascular program. Athens Regional was recently recognized for the second time as a TOP 100 hospital in the nation by WomenCertified; among the best hospitals in the region for gastroenterology, pulmonary and surgical procedures according to US News and World Report; and named the 2011 Large Hospital of the Year for the State of Georgia by the Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals. Athens Regional is the only locally owned and governed hospital in the region it serves. For more information, visit [www.athenshealth.org](http://www.athenshealth.org).