

**CASE STUDY**

# St. Joseph's/Candler leverages Atlas Health's AI-powered technology to improve medical financial aid for its patients

**St. Joseph's/Candler** is a 714-bed Magnet-designated facility for nursing excellence, with a focus on the latest technologies and research. Anchored by St. Joseph's Hospital and Candler Hospital, its comprehensive network includes centers of excellence for neurosciences, women's and children's services, orthopedics, pulmonary medicine, oncology, cardiovascular services, and a variety of other disease specialties.


St. Joseph's Hospital and Candler Hospital is the only not-for-profit health system in Savannah serving 33 counties in southeast Georgia and three in the South Carolina Low Country and it's the largest and only faith-based institution in the region.

## The Challenge

As a health system that delivered more than \$46 million in charity care for the uninsured and underinsured in its community in 2019, St. Joseph's/Candler sought solutions that would not only help support its most vulnerable patients, but also help secure reimbursements so they could continue delivering lifesaving care. -They wanted a partner that could deliver an end-to-end solution that would fill the gap in their existing medical financial aid reimbursement strategy and offer a holistic approach to managing medical financial aid across a multi-hospital health system. Across different practice areas and teams, St. Joseph's/Candler aimed to address several challenges:

- Their commitment to providing care with compassion, courtesy and integrity means they've developed a robust charity care program that supports patients in need—but leaves them unreimbursed for care delivered.
- Lack of uniformity across health system processes impedes St. Joseph's/Candler ability to tap into copious financial aid programs (10,000+).
- Manual processes led to inefficient medical financial aid management and revenue leakage.

## Results Summary

**192%** Increase in Financial Aid for Patients 

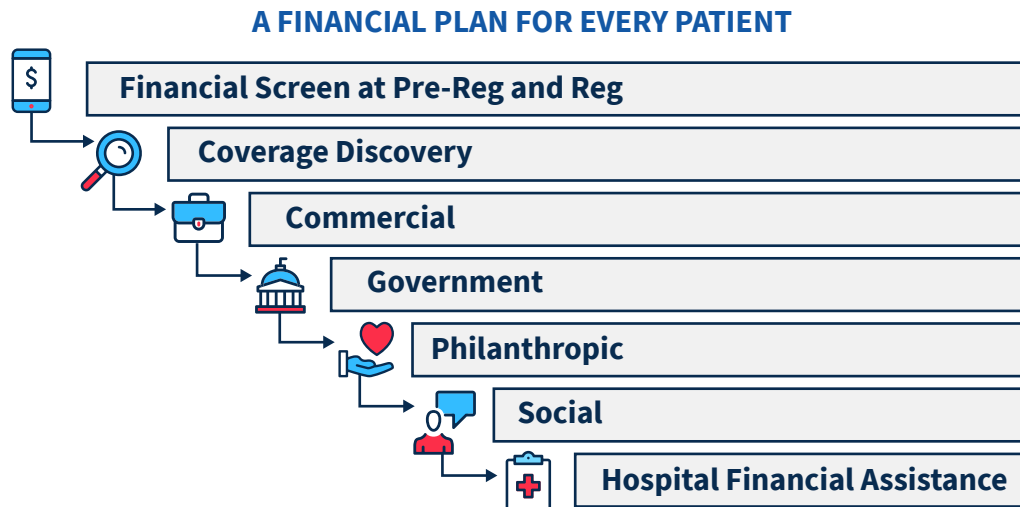
**2,000+** Patients Enrolled in Financial Aid Programs

**\$5.7M** In Financial Aid Support for Patients Annually



## The Solution: Atlas Health

St. Joseph's/Candler chose Atlas Health (Atlas) as an active partner to deliver an end-to-end financial aid solution that could be implemented easily and quickly – with no capital investment, resources or personnel required. Atlas' proprietary AI-powered technology, along with its culture of responsive innovation, enabled St. Joseph's/Candler to move beyond paper-based approaches to a digital automation approach to ensure all medical financial aid programs are evaluated to help patients access and afford care.



In order to fill all coverage gaps to ensure that no patient is left behind, and no reimbursement opportunity missed, St. Joseph's/Candler adopted a holistic approach. The health system has partnered with Atlas to predict the optimal eligible coverage options based on historical EMR data and the results of a simple questionnaire administered at registration. Determining the right financial plan for each patient at registration enables efficient routing of tasks and automation across a wide variety of financial counselors, financial navigators, patient assistance coordinators and customer service representatives.

*“Atlas is clearly a world apart from competitive offerings that are mired in legacy systems and encumbered by the stale, status quo approach to securing financial aid.”*

**Marti Strand, vice president of revenue cycle, St. Joseph's/Candler**

## The Results

In less than a year, St. Joseph's/Candler helped more than 2,000 patients afford their care with the support of medical aid, increasing the amount of medical aid provided to patients by 192%, and the number of patients receiving aid by 34%. St. Joseph's/Candler is now on track to support their patients with more than \$5.7 million annually, helping to reduce financial burdens for patients and maintain financial sustainability for the health system.

*“Our team needed a standardized approach to financial aid that included the ability to track productivity. With Atlas, we are now firing on all cylinders, finding more aid opportunities for patients and measuring our progress.”*

**Joseph Zehler, director of physician revenue cycle operations, St. Joseph's/Candler**



Completely digital and pre-populated applications along with digital communications to secure patient authorization and information have contributed to a 75% reduction in the amount of time it takes to submit a clean claim and 50% reduction in time it takes to submit a philanthropic aid application. This means St. Joseph's/Candler financial counselors are able to help more patients and secure more reimbursements in their limited time.

St. Joseph's/Candler results demonstrate how health systems that partner with Atlas will benefit from reduced uncompensated care, increased patient satisfaction and referrals, improved reputation in the community, operating margin improvements and higher levels of compliance.

*“Now that we have all patient information in one place and a digital form for financial assistance, we don't have to waste paper, do everything by hand, and scan everything into the system. The capability to email and text patients information also makes it easier to obtain information to submit claims more quickly than before.”*

**Morgan Sosa, financial resource coordinator,  
St. Joseph/Candler**



atlas.health

#### **ABOUT ATLAS**

Atlas Health improves and saves lives by connecting patients and health systems to the best financial aid programs available. Patients receive the care they need and health systems secure reimbursement for those struggle to afford out-of-pocket medical expenses.

Health systems benefit from increased net patient revenue, reduction in medication spend, reduction in patient A/R days, lower operating overhead, improved workflow automation, enhanced financial counselor and patient experience, higher levels of compliance, and a better reputation in the communities they serve.