

MCDUFFIE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER TO LAYOFF 12 PERCENT OF STAFF



McDuffie Regional Medical Center isn't a large hospital. It sits in the heartland of Georgia and it serves a small population. The facility has about 25 beds and it serves about 11,000 patients each year. By all standards it is a small community hospital. One that employs about 170 people. Or at least one that used to. The facility has recently made an announcement that it will layoff 21 of its workers and that is a loss of about 12 percent of the workforce of the facility. The hospital is looking to make up a massive budget shortfall that the facility has lost in a relatively short period of time. Since October of last year the facility has lost about \$900,000, which is a significant amount when you consider that the amount has been lost in less than six months by such a small facility. The hospital is still looking to grow its admissions and save itself from further job cuts. The management of the facility outlined a tentative plan to bring more admissions, and hence more money, to the facility by courting a greater number of local physicians and increase the number of admissions to the facility. The cuts will come from every unit in the hospital, except for the operating room. The majority of the affected employees have been notified, though a few will find out when they come off of vacation. The workers who are being laid off are not the only ones who will be impacted by the budget cuts. Workers who are paid by the hour will have their schedules cut down by two hours a week, on average. Employees who enjoy an exemption will simply take a five percent cut in their pay, and work the same number of hours. So it looks like everyone is having to tighten their belts in order to keep the facility open. The facility is looking to solve its financial problems in another way. The board is looking to sell the hospital to the University Health Care System. A notice was recently filed with the Georgia Attorney General's Office about the potential sale. While this does not guarantee that the sale will go through, it is just being discussed. Of course this is not the only hospital in fiscal distress. Some of you may have caught our coverage of the recent problems for a Florida hospital, but for those of you who did not here is an excerpt: "...the President and CEO of Jackson Health System Carlos Migoya officially announced the cuts on Tuesday at a press conference. He said, "This is not about a profit and loss, this is about efficiency ... What we're looking to do at this point is right-sizing the organization, so we have the right number of employees for the kind of volumes that we have." Already 195 positions have been eliminated (one would like to say 'compromised' in the language of Frederick Forsythe), and 920 are in the pipeline amounting to 1,115 jobs. This would mean that Jackson Memorial had been overstaffed by 10% all along. Jackson's representatives confirmed that the cuts would create a savings of \$69 million including the savings in benefits."

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