



Candice L. Saunders, FACHE

President & CEO, Wellstar Health System



Candice L. Saunders is president and CEO of Wellstar Health System, based in Marietta, Ga., and is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE). As president and CEO of one of the largest and most integrated health systems in Georgia, Saunders provides leadership for the 31,000 team members that oversee the health and well-being of people and communities across the state. Under Saunders' leadership, Wellstar has been recognized as a leader in safety and quality measures, and as a great place to work.

Saunders, who began her career as a critical care nurse, joined Wellstar as president of Wellstar Kennestone Hospital in May 2007. As a result of her experience and strong leadership, she was promoted to executive vice president and chief operating officer for Wellstar Health System in 2013. In 2015, she assumed the role of president and CEO.

Saunders has built her career around improving community access to vital healthcare needs, implementing new care models and programs to address consumer health issues, and integrating health delivery processes to improve operational efficiencies and enhance the patient and team member experience. From the boardroom to the operating room, and across Wellstar Health System, Saunders is a champion for delivering world-class healthcare for every person, every time.

Saunders served on the American Hospital Association (AHA) Board of Trustees and as chair of AHA's Regional Policy Board (RPB) for Region 4, the Vizient Southern States Board of Directors, and the Georgia Hospital Association where she also served as Chair. She remains engaged in not-for-profit and philanthropic organizations through her service on the Coalition to Strengthen America's Healthcare Board of Directors, the Metro Atlanta Chamber Board of Directors, Cobb Chamber Executive Board, Kennestone State University Foundation Board of Trustees, and University of South Florida School of Nursing Board of Advisors. She also serves on the Engage Board of Directors. Saunders has been recognized by numerous organizations for her leadership and has been named to Modern Healthcare's Top 25 Women Leaders and Top 50 Most Influential Clinical Executives, Atlanta Business Chronicle's Most Admired CEOs lists, and Becker's Hospital Review's list of Women Hospital Presidents and CEOs to Know and Great Leaders in Healthcare lists. In 2022, she was recognized by the Atlanta Business Chronicle as the Most People-Focused CEO and by Modern Healthcare as one of the 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare. She has been honored as one of The 25 Most Influential Atlantans by The Atlantan Magazine and a Woman of Distinction by Atlanta Magazine, Healthcare Champion by the National Association of Female Executives and was a recipient of the W. Daniel Baker Leadership Award by the Georgia Hospital Association.

Saunders has a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of South Florida and master's degrees in business administration and health services administration from the University of Alabama-Birmingham. She and her husband Don live in Cobb County and have two adult sons.