NORTH CAROLINA

Children's

Building a Brighter Future

In 2023, the General Assembly directed UNC Health to construct, on behalf of the State of North Carolina, a new children's hospital in the Triangle area. To provide the best care for our children, UNC Health and Duke Health partnered to form North Carolina Children's as an independent, not-for-profit, academic children's health system. Faculty from both schools of medicine will provide care, conduct research, and train the next generation of pediatric specialists to serve North Carolina, together.

When NC Children's opens in the early 2030s, the 220+ acre campus in Apex, NC will include:

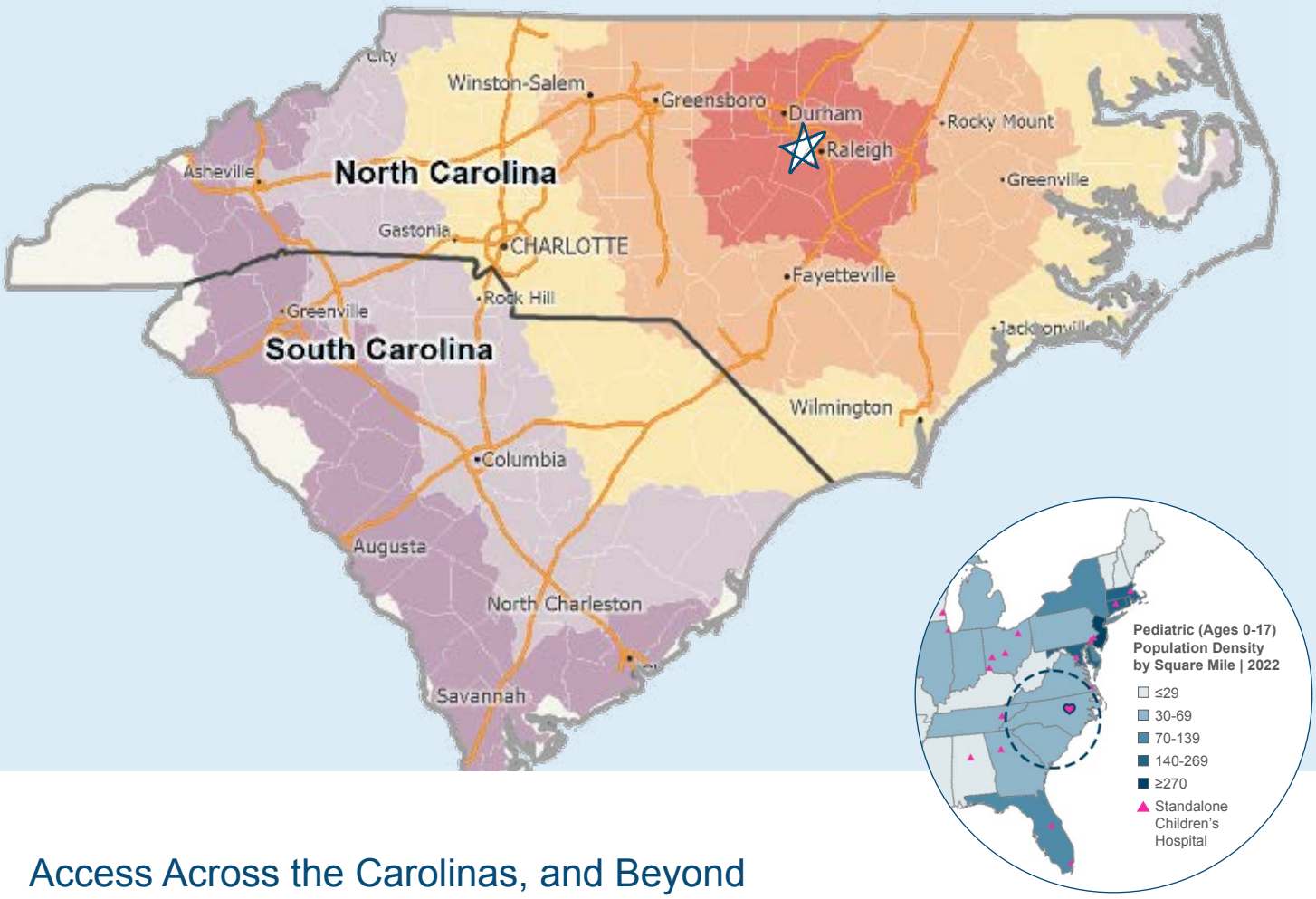
- **A 500-bed hospital** as the anchor of the campus.
- **A 70-bed behavioral health hospital**, the only freestanding pediatric behavioral health hospital of its kind in North Carolina.
- **An ambulatory surgical center**, serving as the hub for a statewide network of care.
- **Physician training and research infrastructure**, backed by two globally respected medical systems.
- **Accommodations for families**, so they can focus on what matters most – the care of their children.

The Need Is Real and Urgent

- **North and South Carolina rank in the bottom 15 states nationally for children's health measures**, despite ranking in the top 5 states in the country for economic growth.
- **North Carolina is the most populous state in the country without a health system dedicated exclusively to children**, and the 3rd fastest-growing state by population.
- **North Carolina currently receives a failing grade for children's mental health.** With only 200 child psychiatrists across 31 of the state's 100 counties, North Carolina ranks 44th for access to children's behavioral healthcare.
- **Today, North Carolina's 11 pediatric hospitals have their services embedded in adult-focused hospitals**, competing for resources, equipment, and clinicians. The largest existing pediatric unit has just 234 beds.
- **There are fewer pediatric beds in North Carolina today than there were 20 years ago**, despite substantial population growth over that time. North Carolina has 41 pediatricians per 100,000 children (compared to 64 per 100,000 in Ohio).
- **No single North Carolina hospital receives more than 12% of pediatric admissions**, resulting in volumes that are often too low to consistently achieve the highest quality outcomes and support advanced subspecialty pediatric services.
- **Duke Children's and UNC Children's both operate at more than 90% occupancy today**, well beyond the optimal level for hospitals caring for critically ill children, and must deny hundreds of transfer requests each year because there isn't room.
- **3,500+ North Carolina children on Medicaid** leave the state each year to receive care that isn't available at home.
- **Children's Flight of Hope flies more children out of North Carolina to receive medical care** than from any other state in the country.

Our mission is to create a world-class children's health system dedicated to improving the lives of children and families of North Carolina and beyond.

ncchildrens.org



Access Across the Carolinas, and Beyond

The Apex campus was chosen deliberately for its reach.

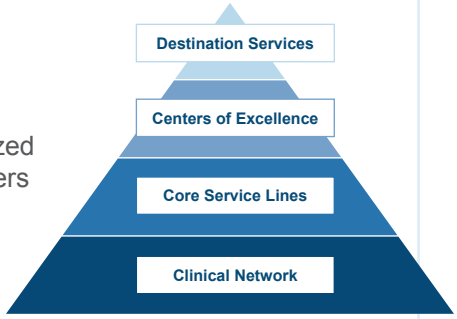
Drive time from NC Children's (Apex)	0-60 min.	60-120 min.	120-180 min.	180-240 min.	240-300 min.
Children age 0-17 within that radius	590,000	770,000	1,350,000	1,300,000	2,260,000

By car: 95% of North Carolina and South Carolina fall within a four-hour drive (a radius that also reaches into southern Virginia). **By air:** the 20-minute drive from RDU international airport offers the entire eastern U.S. half-day access.

- **NC Children's is committed to working with partner hospitals in rural communities** to offer clinical expertise and will form meaningful partnerships with rural providers so that they and their patients are part of a statewide children's healthcare system.
- **Beyond the Apex campus**, NC Children's plans to support pediatricians, family practice doctors, and health systems statewide through clinical consultation, virtual care, and a pipeline for transferring children who need a higher level of care.
- **NC Children's will be the only hospital of this scale and specialty depth in the Carolinas and Virginia.** The closest comparable peer hospitals of similar scale are in Washington, DC (~300 miles) and Atlanta (~360 miles).
- **A planned statewide "spoke" network of care** will extend NC Children's specialists into rural communities, supporting local primary care providers so more children can be treated closer to home. Currently, 20% of North Carolina counties have no pediatrician and 40% have too few to have a stable, deep workforce.

A Destination for Pediatric Care

We will develop highly specialized destination programs and centers of excellence to provide multidisciplinary or specialized care that is not currently available in North Carolina.



- **Destination Services:** Multidisciplinary, high-impact, lower-volume care that requires sub-specialty pediatric expertise. These services are either extremely limited or completely unavailable in North Carolina today.
- **Centers of Excellence:** Specialized multidisciplinary programs with focused clinical, research and training resources supporting children with highly complex needs across the state and region.
- **Core Service Lines:** Fundamental pediatric services requiring complex care and coordination across acute and ambulatory environments.
- **Clinical Network:** Preventive care, care coordination and population health services supporting needs across the state in partnership with pediatricians and health systems.

How the Project is Funded

The total projected investment to plan, build and open the full campus is $3 billion, drawn from four sources:

- **Duke Health and UNC Health are contributing their combined pediatric service lines** — more than $1 billion in annual patient revenue — to launch and help sustain NC Children's.
- **$424 million in North Carolina state government support announced to date** via legislative appropriation. Any investment made by the state will be limited to capital construction costs only. NC Children's will not need ongoing state financial support for hospital operations.
- **$1 billion in anticipated debt issuance**, which the demonstrated operational success of both Duke's and UNC's pediatric service lines makes possible.
- **$1 billion+ philanthropic campaign goal** from individual donors, foundations, and corporate partners.

We closed on our land in March. More than 500 subject matter experts across Duke and UNC, patient families, and community partners are already at the table shaping what this hospital will look like. This is happening — now is the moment to be part of it.

Momentum: Progress to Date

2022–2023 (Imagine):

Long-term strategic planning began

Legislative directive and $320 million appropriation by the NC state legislature

Project plan and feasibility analysis developed

2024 (Plan):

Duke/UNC partnership confirmed

Economic impact analysis completed

Capital needs determined

2025 (Partner):

Joint Clinical Planning Committee launched

Site selection finalized

Philanthropic campaign launched

2026 (Grow):

A $25 million gift from Coca-Cola Consolidated launched the Founders Circle

Land closed on March 27

More than 500 individuals have been involved in architecture and design planning

Secured an additional state appropriation bringing the total state commitment to $424.5 million

$100 million commitment from The Duke Endowment announced

Keep up with the latest updates **@ncchildrens** and **ncchildrens.org**.

For Every Child, in Every County

Ana

Diagnosed in-utero with a rare airway malformation (CPAM), Ana's family relocated from Waxhaw, NC to Philadelphia for several months to access the specialized fetal care team she needed — moving three times while away from home.

"We are expecting Ana's brother in June, and will drive 10 hours away from home for his anatomy scan. Hopefully, in the near future, other families will have access to the best technology and specialists locally."

— Kirsti, Ana's mother

Michael

Born with multiple complex conditions, Michael's family from Cary, NC had to travel out of state to find surgeons who specialized in his care.

"You don't understand the difference at a freestanding children's hospital until you experience it. While Michael may not benefit from the new children's hospital, children like him will."

— Melissa, Michael's mother

NORTH CAROLINA
Children's

UNC HEALTH

ncchildrens.org

DukeHealth

Economic Impact for North Carolina

Beyond its impact on children and families, NC Children's will build a nationally competitive environment to train, recruit, and retain the next generation of pediatric physicians, nurses, and researchers in North Carolina. Independent economic modeling shows the project is also one of the largest economic development efforts in North Carolina history.

- **4,000+ construction jobs** during the building phase.
- **8,400+ direct jobs** — permanent NC Children's employees once the hospital is operating.
- **9,800+ indirect jobs** created in the surrounding economy (e.g., area hotels, restaurants, and suppliers).
- **$780 million+ in annual direct wages** paid to NC Children's employees.
- **$26.8 billion+** in state GDP and **$1.1 billion+** generated in state and local tax revenue over 20 years.

The increased volume of patients at NC Children's will also support research and education, which will reinforce North Carolina's growing position as the national biotech and pharmaceutical hub.

Keeping North Carolina Strong for Generations to Come

We are building something new and different for North Carolina and the Southeast. An independent, freestanding children's hospital won't compete with adult programs for resources. Every piece of equipment, every protocol, every decision, every square foot of space will exist for one reason: the care of children.

Research shows that children treated in freestanding children's hospitals have better outcomes and their families consistently report better experiences. NC Children's represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity: to keep families in the state for the care they need and to make North Carolina a national destination in pediatric health.