



## OFFICE OF REGULATORY SERVICES

The Office of Regulatory Services (ORS) inspects, monitors, licenses, registers, and certifies a variety of health and childcare facilities. It works to ensure that facilities and programs operate at acceptable levels, as mandated by state statutes and by rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Human Resources, and investigates complaints against licensed facilities. ORS also certifies various health care facilities to receive Medicaid and Medicare funds, through contracts and agreements with the Georgia Department of Community Health, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Food and Drug Administration of the U.S Department of Health and Human Services. A staff of 245 appropriated positions carries out these activities.

The office's adjusted budget appropriation for FY 2008 was \$16.2 million, including \$8.1 million in state funds. For FY 2009 the adjusted budget appropriation was \$16.4 million, including \$8.7 million in state funds.

### **Residential Child Care**

ORS regulates 83 child-placing and adoption agencies (private agencies which place children in foster homes for temporary care or in homes for adoption); 288 child caring institutions (facilities which provide full-time residential care for six or more children through 18 years of age outside of their own homes); and 9 outdoor therapeutic programs for children.

### **Health Care and Long-Term Care**

ORS regulates acute health care and long-term care facilities. These include 276 ambulatory surgical treatment centers; 1 birthing center; 378 community living arrangements; 1 comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation facility; 263 drug abuse treatment facilities; 254 end stage renal disease centers; 1 eye bank; 102 home health agencies; 162 hospices; 185 hospitals; 6 dual psychiatric residential treatment facilities/ residential mental health facilities; 11 intermediate care facilities for people with mental retardation; 246 mammography facilities; 4 maternity homes; 40 narcotic treatment programs; 376 nursing homes; 91 outpatient physical therapy centers; 2061 personal care homes; 695 private home care providers; 88 rural health clinics; 398 state-licensed clinical laboratories; 7349 registered X-ray facilities; 6 traumatic brain injury facilities; and assists the Department of Insurance in their regulation of 10 health maintenance organizations. Most of the regulated health care facilities and nursing homes are certified by ORS for reimbursement under the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

## Trends

Many changes are occurring in the industries that ORS regulates. There is continuing growth in the use of personal care homes (assisted living facilities), and increased placement of persons with disabilities in community settings. The use of agencies that provide long term care services in a person's home, such as private home care providers and hospice providers, is expanding rapidly across the state. These changes significantly impact the delivery of regulatory services by ORS.

In addition, the public wants more information to help them choose facilities and services. To help meet this increasing demand for readily available information, ORS is putting more information about facilities on the Internet. Currently, the ORS web page ([www.ors.dhr.georgia.gov](http://www.ors.dhr.georgia.gov)) offers information about the types of facilities it licenses, rules and regulations for licensed facilities, links to accreditation reports on licensed facilities, survey inspection reports for some kinds of facilities and the ability to file complaints about regulated care online. Publications can also be purchased through the web page.

Rapid changes in the way care is delivered continue to affect the way health care facilities are regulated. Rules must be revised and regulatory philosophy must adapt to these changes. Federal regulations now require the submission of health assessment data in an electronic format from nursing homes and home health agencies on persons receiving care through these federally certified facilities. Access to this database by ORS provides better information for compliance monitoring decisions. The survey process used in these facilities will continue to evolve.

Increased consumer knowledge and concern about patient/client safety, as well as improved accessibility through Internet access, fuels the number of complaints received about care. Enforcement efforts to improve the quality of care consumers receive in licensed facilities will continue to be used or recommended by ORS when determined necessary.