



# BACK TO BASICS

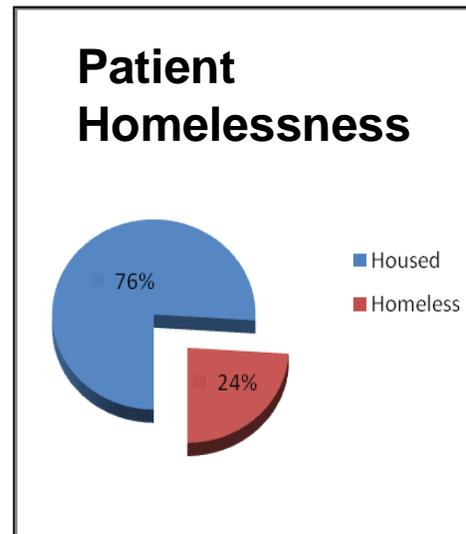
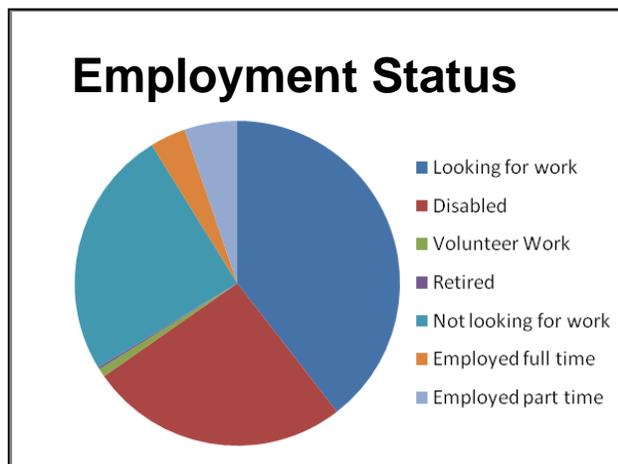
*A Research Brief from Georgia's Brief Assessment, Screening, Intervention and Continuum of Care System<sup>1</sup>*

April 2011

## Reaching marginalized populations: Is homelessness and unemployment the face of Georgia BASICS?

**Introduction and Rationale:** Among the urban indigent, emergency departments (EDs) are often an avenue for receiving medical services related to a range of healthcare needs. Screening conducted by GA BASICS has revealed that many of our ED patients are confronted with housing issues, low (or no) income, and unemployment. This presents numerous additional barriers to our patients while they are tasked with thinking about their drinking and drug use and changing problem behavior. Highlighted below are characteristics of past participants.

**Sample:** 823 participants with intake dates from January to March 2009 at Grady ED.



### Results:

- While 3 out of 4 patients are housed, less than 20 % are employed.
- Approximately 35% are currently looking for work; 25% are disabled.
- On average, homeless patients earned half that of housed patients in the past month (\$932/month).

### Take Home Message:

These data suggests that participants enrolled in GA BASICS are often unemployed and low-income with a large minority (24%) who are also homeless or precariously housed. Healthcare providers engaged with our participants should acknowledge these tremendous socioeconomic obstacles to health when determining appropriate interventions and referrals for problem alcohol and drug use.

<sup>1</sup> For more information contact [gabasics@gsu.edu](mailto:gabasics@gsu.edu).