



Southern Regional  
Medical Center

# News Release

## For Immediate Release

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## Southern Regional Medical Center's Phillip Pope Named as a 2023 Healthcare Warrior at Annual Valor Awards

Riverdale, GA – September 18, 2023 Southern Regional Medical Center's Director of Respiratory Therapy, Phillip Pope, CRT, RRT, NPS, was honored as a Healthcare Warrior Award recipient at Clayton County Chamber of Commerce's Valor Awards ceremony on September 15. The Healthcare (Frontline) Warrior Award recognizes extraordinary individuals and organizations who are committed to improving the quality of health and healthcare of those they serve.

During the recent pandemic, Respiratory Therapists were critical members of the medical teams that led the way in healthcare nationwide. Thrust into uncharted territory, Phillip took control and led the way. However, that is only one aspect of his extraordinary commitment to improving the quality of health and closing the healthcare disparity gap to the communities Southern Regional serves.

When the pandemic dust settled, Phillip, a Registered Respiratory Therapist and Neonatal – Pediatric Specialist, set his sights on assuring that newborns delivered at Southern Regional would have access to critical specialty care and developed and implemented an evidence-based iNO (Nitric Oxide Gas) program in the hospital's Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. That means that newborns in respiratory distress are able to be treated locally with iNO which relaxes smooth muscles to widen blood vessels, especially in the lungs, and provides breathing relief. Treating premature babies with nitric oxide gas has been proven to help prevent chronic lung disease and may also protect against brain injury. Most importantly, these critical babies do not have to be transferred to another care facility during their most compromising time. These infants stay in the hospital's NICU, where they receive iNO care and are closely monitored by a member of the Respiratory Therapy team.

"Phillip is a leader dedicated to assuring high-quality care in respiratory therapy," stated Janie Hinton, Chief Nursing Officer at Southern Regional. "He saw a need – a gap in healthcare services – and he worked tirelessly to align vendors and product, completed and processed agreements, and educated clinical teams to bring this critical program to infants with persistent pulmonary hypertension in our community."

With nearly 40 years of experience in respiratory therapy, Phillip has been a member of the Southern Regional Respiratory Therapy team for 32 years and was named as the unit's Director this year. He holds a BS: Respiratory Degree from Pearl River University School of Respiratory Medicine in Poplarville, MS.

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Southern Regional Medical Center is located at 11 Upper Riverdale Road, SW, in Riverdale and has served Clayton County and the southern crescent communities of metro Atlanta for more than 50 years. The hospital is a member of Prime Healthcare, an award-winning health system operating 45 hospitals and more than 300 outpatient locations in 14 states, providing over 2.6 million patient visits annually. Southern Regional is one of 14 hospitals within the Prime Healthcare Foundation, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit public charity.

**About Southern Regional Medical Center**

Southern Regional Medical Center is a 331-bed full-service hospital owned by Prime Healthcare Services, one of the nation’s leading hospital systems. Southern Regional, a non-profit hospital that is part of the Prime Healthcare Foundation, serves the residents of Clayton County and southern crescent metro Atlanta communities. The hospital offers a complete line of services including Senior Care and Senior Behavioral Health Services; Emergency Services; Heart and Vascular; Advanced Imaging; Laboratory; Neuroscience Services; Rehabilitation; Sleep Diagnostic Center; Surgery/Robotic Surgery; Wound Care; and Women’s Health Services, including a Level III NICU. The hospital is certified accredited as a Chest Pain Center and Primary Stroke Center. Additional information can be viewed at: [southernregional.org](http://southernregional.org).

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