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Emergency Department patient: truly exceptional care team

DALTON, Ga. (December 31, 2024) – When Shea Wagner Garrett walked into the emergency department at Hamilton Medical Center, she expected to get relief from her pain. That happened, but she left with something more: confidence that she was in the hands of a truly exceptional care team.

“From start to finish, I didn’t have a single complaint,” said Garrett, a Dalton resident and busy mom who now works in her family’s business, Johns BBQ.

Garrett’s journey to the emergency room began with severe gastric pain. Having previously worked in healthcare, she knew the warning signs of what turned out to be gallbladder stones resulting in an unplanned surgery. It marked the start of three consecutive visits to the hospital, each ending with outcomes that reassured her she was in excellent hands.

On her first visit, Garrett woke up in the middle of the night in pain. After dropping her kids at school, she headed straight to the ER. To her surprise, she was called back in less than 15 minutes.

The medical team quickly determined she needed a cholecystectomy, a surgical procedure to remove her gallbladder. Fortunately, the surgeon was available that day for the outpatient operation. Within six hours, Garrett had been admitted, undergone testing, completed her surgery and begun recovery before being discharged to rest at home.

“From check-in to check-out, every single person I encountered was amazing,” she said.

Just two weeks later, Garrett returned to the emergency room — this time with her grandmother, who has diabetes and Alzheimer’s. Her grandmother’s blood sugar had spiked dangerously high, but the ER team stabilized her and sent her home within a few hours.

The next day, Garrett was back yet again — this time with her grandfather, who was struggling with alarmingly high blood pressure. Once again, the care team acted swiftly, and his condition was brought under control in just two and a half hours.

“I really felt like everybody was just phenomenal,” Garrett said.

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Photo: Shea Wagner Garrett, center, is pictured with Lucy Ausdran, Hamilton Medical Center Emergency Department physician assistant; and Becca Allen, Surgical Services clinical manager.