





Yet, despite rapid advancements over the past decades, Patel says many barriers remain to delivering guideline-directed heart failure care, with access chief among them.

“[Heart failure medications] are very expensive drugs. It’s hard for people to afford that. Access and affordability are by far the No. 1 barrier,” Patel says. “No. 2 would be education and having patients understand. Further, socioeconomic conditions don’t allow for proper diet sometimes, additional things like that.”

Durall agrees.

“The biggest challenges would be affordability of the best guideline-directed medications, as well as being able to attend the follow-up appointments,” she says. Floyd Medical Center offers a no-cost appointment transportation service for patients, called Collins Transport, among other resources, but some patients still struggle. “It’s really about making sure patients are aware that we offer this service. It’s helping these people know there are options available to get them access to the pharmacy or to their appointments,” Durall adds.

For rural areas in particular, collaboration and communication are important to ensure patients receive the most appropriate, guideline-directed care.

“We are a rural hospital — you don’t get much more rural than us. We work closely with Emory Health Care and Piedmont Health Care in Atlanta to send our really sick patients, our advanced