

Patrick O. Gee, Ph.D., JLC



Patrick O. Gee, Ph.D., JLC is the Founder and Chief Executive Hope Dealer for iAdvocate, Inc., a non-profit health and wellness organization based in Richmond, Virginia. On April 21, 2017 - four years after his ESRD diagnosis - Patrick received a kidney transplant and started his journey as "the Voice for the Voiceless and the Face for the Faceless in the Fight Against Kidney Disease." Quality Insights Renal Network 5 recruited Patrick to serve on its Patient Advisory Council and Medical Review Board and helped him find his voice to advocate for people with kidney disease. Since 2017, Patrick has spoken on behalf of the underserved, undervalued and disenfranchised communities of color. He has served on 14 kidney community boards and advisory committees, engaged and participated in 11 scientific research workgroups, and has served as a consultant with many other organizations. He has also been recognized for his contributions along the way.



Patient Engagement BEYOND BORDERS

The Fight Against Diabetic Amputations Among Black Americans



**2022 Call to Action
in 29203 – Article:**

CUT OFF

"In one Black community, limbs are being amputated at an alarming rate. It didn't have to be this way."

<https://www.thestate.com/news/state/south-carolina/article258302413.html>

WHAT CAN YOU DO...

...to reduce disparities in communities most harmed by disenfranchisement?

- Organize a community advisory board. Identify community organizations, activists and faith-based organizations.
- Healthcare providers do foot checks on diabetics.
- Identify where patients live and any resource gaps in their communities.
- Search for local organizations and resources that can assist in filling these gaps.
- Search for various forms of education that can help patients better manage their health with the resources they have.

References

- <https://fa.sc.gov/data-research/population-demographics/census-state-data-center>
- <https://localistica.com/usa/sc/county/richland/zipcodes/all-zipcodes/>
- <https://www.walkscore.com/score/richland-county-sc>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/health-equity/regional/health-burden.html>
- <https://www.richlandcountysc.gov/Government/Departments/Government-and-Community-Services/Education/County-District-Profiles>
- <https://www.thestate.com/news/state/south-carolina/article258302413.html>

Area Code 29203 - Columbia, SC

From 2016 – 2020, 41,000 residents (approximately 10 of every 10,000) in 29203 received a lower limb amputation due to damage from diabetes. The largest group of residents in 29203 are Black (81.8%) and are cut off from basic services that might help reduce disparities and save their limbs and lives. One-third live in poverty.



Reference map of the 29203 zip code within Richland County and the state.

Food Apartheid

A large portion of the residents in zip code 29203 experience food apartheid, meaning there are structural barriers preventing access to healthy food options, particularly for residents without transportation. With just four grocery stores located in 29203 – and two of them out of reach for many residents – discount stores like Dollar General and Family Dollar fill the void. The nine discount stores offer limited, if any, fresh produce and lean meats.



Dialysis centers are also common in the zip code since vascular pathology is often followed by kidney disease and other health issues. Eight of the centers are in 29203, which is more than in any other part of Columbia.

IMPACT OF SOCIAL & STRUCTURAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH IN 29203

Socioeconomic Factors

- **Income:** The median household income is \$56,993, which is below the state median.
- **Job Status:** Unemployment is slightly above the state average (4.1 vs. 4.0).
- **Education:** High school diploma/GED or higher among people 25 or older is above the state average (91.60%).

Physical Environment

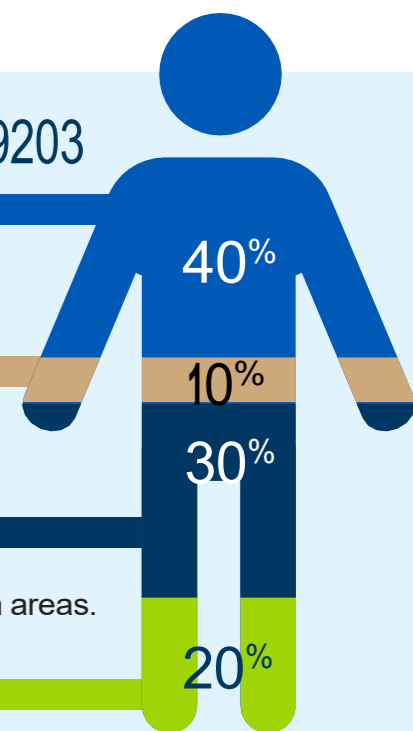
- A Walk Score® above 70 is considered good and features areas for walking and biking.
- Richland County has a Walk Score® of 52, making it a "somewhat walkable" county.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture classifies much of 29203 as experiencing food apartheid.

Health Behaviors

- The percentage of adults who use commercial tobacco products is higher in the U.S. South and Midwest.
- People in rural areas have higher rates of poor health related to commercial tobacco compared to those in urban areas.
- More than 87% of the Richland County population live in an urban area.

Health Care

- 29203 is surrounded by health institutions, yet is designated as a health provider shortage area (HPSA).



How one Virginia man has gone beyond borders to partner with South Carolina-based organizations fighting disparities in 29203:

- Patrick has provided numerous educational opportunities.
- He introduced Project Tech to Evidation Health, which is helping the citizens of 29203 improve their health by harnessing digital technology.
- He partnered with ESRD Network 6 to provide an educational webinar to dialysis providers about completing diabetic foot checks during dialysis sessions.
- He identified food share opportunities within the area.



Quality
Insights

Renal Network 5