

NATIONAL HEALTHCARE CORP
Form 10-K
March 02, 2010

**UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549**

FORM 10-K

(Mark One)

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2009

OR

TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the transition period from _____ to _____

Commission File No. 001-13489

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its Corporate Charter)

Delaware
(State of Incorporation)

52-2057472
(I.R.S. Employer I.D. No.)

100 Vine Street
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37130
(Address of principal executive offices)
Telephone Number: **615-890-2020**

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act.

Title of Each Class	Name of Each Exchange on which Registered
Shares of Common Stock	NYSE Amex
Shares of Preferred Cumulative Convertible Stock	NYSE Amex

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: **None**

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.
Yes No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (a) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days: Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files).

Yes No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer or a smaller reporting company. (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Act). Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer
Non-accelerated filer Smaller reporting company

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).
Yes No

The aggregate market value of Common Stock held by non-affiliates on June 30, 2009 (based on the closing price of such shares on the NYSE Amex) was approximately \$235 million. For purposes of the foregoing calculation only, all directors, named executive officers and persons known to the Registrant to be holders of 5% or more of the Registrant's Common Stock have been deemed affiliates of the Registrant. The number of shares of Common Stock outstanding as of February 28, 2010 was 13,717,701.

Documents Incorporated by Reference

The following documents are incorporated by reference into Part III, Items 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 of this Form 10-K:
The Registrant's definitive proxy statement for its 2010 shareholder's meeting.

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PART 1

Item 1. Business.

General Development of Business

National HealthCare Corporation, which we also refer to as NHC or the Company, began business in 1971. We were incorporated as a Delaware corporation in 1997 when we changed from partnership form to corporate form. When we indicate NHC, we include all majority-owned subsidiaries, partnerships and limited liability companies in which we have an interest.

Our principal business is the operation of long-term health care centers with associated assisted living and independent living centers. Our business activities include providing subacute skilled and intermediate nursing and rehabilitative care, senior living services, home health care services, management services, hospice services, accounting and financial services and insurance services. We operate in 12 states, and our owned and leased properties are located primarily in the southeastern United States.

Merger in 2007 of National HealthCare Corporation and National Health Realty, Inc. and Issuance of NHC Convertible Preferred Stock

On October 31, 2007, NHC completed its acquisition of National Health Realty, Inc., (NHR) as contemplated by the Agreement and Plan of Merger (the Merger Agreement), dated December 20, 2006, by and among Davis Acquisition Sub LLC, NHC/OP, L.P., NHR and NHC, following the approval of the merger by the stockholders of NHR and the adoption of the amendment to the Certificate of Incorporation of NHC and approval of the issuance of shares of NHC Series A Convertible Preferred Stock (NHC Preferred) by the stockholders of NHC.

Pursuant to the terms of the Merger Agreement, NHR merged into Davis Acquisition Sub LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of NHC. Each share of NHR, issued and outstanding immediately prior to the merger, and not owned by Davis Acquisition Sub LLC, NHC/OP, L.P., or NHC, was converted into the right to receive \$9.00 in cash, without interest and one share of NHC Preferred.

Each share of the NHC Preferred is entitled to annual preferred dividends of \$0.80 per share and has a liquidation preference of \$15.75 per share. The NHC Preferred, which is listed on the NYSE Amex Exchange with the symbol NHC.PRA, is convertible at any time at the option of the shareholder into NHC common stock at a conversion price of \$65.07. Each share of the NHC Preferred is convertible into 0.24204 of a share of NHC common stock. After the 5th anniversary of the closing date, NHC will have the option to redeem the NHC Preferred, in whole or in part, for \$15.75 cash per share (plus accrued but unpaid dividends); provided that the NHC Preferred will not be redeemable

prior to the 8th anniversary of the closing date unless the average closing price for NHC common stock for 20 trading sessions equals or exceeds the conversion price. The conversion price will be adjusted to reflect any future NHC stock splits or stock dividends. The cash required to complete the merger was provided substantially from NHC's existing liquidity reserves.

NHC paid a total of approximately \$97,571,000 in cash to NHR stockholders, plus cash in lieu of fractional shares, and issued 10,841,062 shares of NHC Preferred with a liquidation preference of \$170,555,000 pursuant to the terms of the Merger Agreement, based on the number of NHR shares of common stock deemed outstanding on October 31, 2007, as calculated under the Merger Agreement.

Accounting Treatment of the Purchase NHC accounted for the merger as a purchase transaction under accounting principles generally accepted in the United States. Under the purchase method of accounting, the assets purchased and liabilities assumed were recorded, as of the completion of the merger, at their respective fair values and added to those of NHC. The financial condition and results of operations of NHC after completion of the merger include

the balances and results of the purchase beginning on November 1, 2007 and are not restated retroactively to reflect the historical financial position or results of operations of NHR.

Following the completion of the merger, the earnings of the combined company reflect purchase accounting adjustments, including the effect of changes in the cost bases of the acquired assets and liabilities on depreciation and amortization expenses.

As a result of the merger, we estimate that we experienced a reduction in our earnings per share of approximately 5% and 11% for the years ended December 31, 2009 and 2008, respectively. We believe, however, that this negative consequence is offset by the accretive effect that the merger has had and is expected to have on NHC's free cash flow. We estimate that our net cash flows increased by approximately \$5,400,000 in 2009 and \$4,000,000 in 2008 due to the merger.

Narrative Description of the Business.

Our business is long-term health care services. At December 31, 2009, we operate or manage 76 long-term health care centers with a total of 9,772 licensed beds. These numbers include 50 centers with 6,858 beds that we lease or own and 26 centers with 2,914 beds that we manage for others. Of the 50 leased or owned centers, 34 are leased from National Health Investors, Inc. (NHI). Through October 31, 2007, ten centers were leased from National Health Realty, Inc. (NHR). Effective October 31, 2007, these previously leased properties were acquired by us.

Our 23 assisted living centers (11 leased or owned and 12 managed) have 921 units (418 units leased or owned and 503 units managed). Our seven independent living centers (four leased or owned and three managed) have 761 retirement apartments (341 apartments leased or owned and 420 apartments managed).

During 2009, we operated 33 homecare programs and provided 449,991 homecare patient visits to 12,548 patients.

We have a partnership agreement with Caris HealthCare, LP (Caris), in which we have a 50% ownership, in order to develop hospice services in selected market locations in Tennessee. In December 2007, we licensed our first owned hospice program in Greenville, South Carolina and began providing services in January 2008. In January 2009, we purchased five hospice locations in South Carolina and also opened a branch location in Anderson, South Carolina during the first quarter of 2009. Combined, we provide hospice care to over 1,300 patients per day in 23 locations.

We operate specialized care units within certain of our healthcare centers such as Alzheimer's disease care units, sub-acute nursing units and a number of in-house pharmacies. Similar specialty units are under consideration at a number of our centers, as well as free standing projects.

Long-Term Care Services and Net Operating Revenues. Health care services we provide include a comprehensive range of services. In fiscal 2009, 93% of our net operating revenues were derived from such health care services. Highlights of health care services activities during 2009 were as follows:

A.

Long-Term Health Care Centers. The most significant portion of our business and the base for our other long-term health care services is the operation of our skilled nursing centers. In our centers, experienced medical professionals provide medical services prescribed by physicians. Registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and certified nursing assistants provide comprehensive, individualized nursing care 24 hours a day. In addition, our centers provide licensed therapy services, quality nutrition services, social services, activities, and housekeeping and laundry services.

We own or lease and operate 50 long-term health care centers as of December 31, 2009. We manage 26 centers for third party owners. Revenues from the 50 centers we own or lease are reported as patient revenues in our financial statements. Management fee income is recorded as other revenues from the 26 facilities that we manage. We generally charge 6% to 7% facility net revenues for our management services.

Average occupancy in long-term health care centers we operate was 92.0% during the year ended December 31, 2009.

B.

Rehabilitative Services. We provide therapy services through Professional Health Services, a division of NHC. Our licensed therapists provide physical, speech, respiratory and occupational therapy for patients recovering from strokes, heart attacks, orthopedic conditions, neurological illnesses, or other illnesses, injuries or disabilities. We maintained a rehabilitation staff of over 930 highly trained, professional therapists in 2009. The majority of our rehabilitative services are for patients in our owned and managed long-term care centers. However, we also provide services to over 100 additional health care providers. Our rates for these services are competitive with other market rates. We are the designated sports medicine provider for Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

C.

Medical Specialty Units. All of our long-term care centers participate in the Medicare program, and we have expanded our range of offerings by the creation of center-specific medical specialty units such as our Alzheimer's disease care units and subacute nursing units. Our trained staff provides care for Alzheimer's patients in early, middle and advanced stages of the disease. We provide specialized care and programming for persons with Alzheimer's or related disorders in dedicated units within many of our skilled nursing centers. Our sub-acute programs are designed to shorten or eliminate hospital stays and help to reduce the cost of quality health care. We develop individualized patient care plans to target appropriate medical and functional planning objectives with a primary goal where feasible for a return to home or a similar environment.

D.

Managed Care Contracts. We operate five regional contract management offices, staffed by experienced case managers who contract with managed care organizations (MCO's) and insurance carriers for the provision of subacute and other medical specialty services within a regional cluster of our owned and managed centers. Managed care patient days were 113,675 in 2009, 101,574 in 2008, and 74,428 in 2007.

E.

Hospice. Hospice services provide for the physical, spiritual and psychosocial needs of individuals facing a life-limiting illness. Resources including palliative and clinical care, education, spiritual, counseling and other services take into consideration both the needs of patients and the needs of family members. We licensed our first owned hospice program in Greenville, South Carolina in December 2007 and began providing services in January 2008. In January 2009, we purchased five hospice locations in South Carolina and also opened a branch office in Anderson, South Carolina during the first quarter of 2009. These hospice programs operate under the name Solaris Hospice.

F.

Pharmacy Operations. At December 31, 2009, we operated four regional pharmacy operations (one in east Tennessee, one in central Tennessee, one in South Carolina, and one in Missouri). These pharmacy operations use a central location to supply (on a separate contractual basis) pharmaceutical services (consulting and medications) and supplies. Regional pharmacies bill Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plans (PDPs) electronically and directly for inpatients who have selected a PDP. Our regional pharmacies currently serve 44 owned facilities, eight managed facilities, and 17 trade entities.

G.

Assisted Living Centers. Our assisted living centers are dedicated to providing personal care services and assistance with general activities of daily living such as dressing, bathing, meal preparation and medication management. We perform resident assessments to determine what services are desired or required and our qualified staff encourages residents to participate in a range of activities. We own or lease 11 and manage 12 assisted living centers. Of these 23 centers, 11 are located within the physical structure of a skilled nursing center or retirement center and 12 are freestanding. In 2009, the rate of occupancy was 89.9%. Certificates of Need are not required to build these projects and we believe that overbuilding has occurred in some of our markets. Effective January 1, 2010, our management

contract was not extended on eight of the twelve assisted living centers we managed in 2009. We do not expect the loss of the management contracts to have a material impact on our consolidated financial statements.

H.

Retirement Centers. Our four owned or leased and three managed retirement centers offer specially designed residential units for the active and ambulatory elderly and provide various ancillary services for our residents, including restaurants, activity rooms and social areas. In most cases, retirement centers also include long-term health care facilities, either in contiguous or adjacent licensed health care centers. Charges for services are paid from private sources without assistance from governmental programs. Retirement centers may be licensed and regulated in some states, but do not require the issuance of a Certificate of Need such as is required for health care centers. We have, in several cases, developed retirement centers adjacent to our health care properties with an initial construction of 40 to 80 units and which units are rented by the month; thus these centers offer an expansion of our continuum of care. We believe these retirement units offer a positive marketing aspect of our health care centers.

We have one managed and one owned retirement center which are continuing care communities, where the resident pays a substantial endowment fee and a monthly maintenance fee. The resident then receives a full range of services - including nursing home care - without additional charge.

I.

Homecare Programs. Our home health care programs (we call them homecare) assist those who wish to stay at home or in assisted living residences but still require some degree of medical care or assistance with daily activities.

Registered and licensed practical nurses and therapy professionals provide skilled services such as infusion therapy, wound care and physical, occupational and speech therapies. Home health aides may assist with daily activities such as assistance with walking and getting in and out of bed, personal hygiene, medication assistance, light housekeeping and maintaining a safe environment. NHC operates 33 homecare licensed and Medicare-certified offices in three states (Tennessee, South Carolina, and Florida) and some of our homecare patients are previously discharged from our long-term health care centers. Medicare reimbursement for homecare services is paid under a prospective payment system. Under this payment system, we receive a prospectively determined amount per patient per 60 day episode as defined by Medicare guidelines. Medicare episodes increased from 17,266 in 2008 to 18,292 in 2009 primarily due to an increase in the number of patients served, which increased from 11,320 in 2008 to 12,548 in 2009. Visits increased from 405,945 in 2008 to 449,991 in 2009.

Other Revenues. We generate revenues from insurance services to our managed centers, from management, accounting and financial services to third party long-term care, assisted living and independent living centers, and from rental income. In fiscal 2009, 7.0% of our net operating revenues were derived from such other sources. The significant sources of our other revenues are described as follows:

A.

Insurance Services. NHC owns a Tennessee domestic licensed insurance company. The company is licensed in several states and provides workers' compensation coverage to the majority of NHC operated and managed facilities in addition to other nursing homes, assisted living and retirement centers. A second wholly owned insurance subsidiary is licensed in the Cayman Islands and provides general and professional liability coverage in substantially all of NHC's owned and managed centers. This company elects to be taxed as a domestic subsidiary. We also self-insure our employees (referred to as partners) health insurance benefit program at a cost we believe is less than a commercially obtained policy. Finally, we operate a long-term care insurance division, which is licensed to sell commercially underwritten long-term care policies. NHC's revenues from insurance services totaled \$14,560,000 in 2009.

B.

Management, Accounting and Financial Services. We provide management services to long-term health care centers, assisted living centers and independent living centers operated by third party

owners. We typically charge 6% to 7% of the managed centers' revenues as a fee for these services. Additionally, we provide accounting and financial services to other long-term care or related types of entities for small operators or not-for-profit entities. No management services are provided for entities in which we provide accounting and financial services. As of December 31, 2009, we perform management services for 26 centers and accounting and financial services for 28 centers. NHC's revenues from management, accounting and financial services totaled \$17,845,000 in 2009.

We previously provided advisory and/or accounting services to National Health Realty Inc. (NHR). The services to NHR were terminated on October 31, 2007 when we merged with NHR.

Non-Operating Income. We generate non-operating income from equity in earnings of unconsolidated investments, from dividends and other realized gains and losses on securities, and interest income. The significant source of non-operating income is described as follows:

A.

Equity in Earnings of Unconsolidated Investments. Earnings from investments in entities in which we lack control but have the ability to exercise significant influence over operating and financial policies are accounted for on the equity method. Our most significant equity method investment is a 50% ownership and voting interest in Caris HealthCare L.P. (Caris), a business that specializes in hospice care services in NHC owned health care centers and in other settings. In 2003, we entered into a partnership agreement with Caris in order to develop hospice programs in selected market locations. Caris currently has sixteen locations in Tennessee.

Long-Term Health Care Centers

The health care centers operated by our subsidiaries provide in-patient skilled and intermediate nursing care services and in-patient and out-patient rehabilitation services. Skilled nursing care consists of 24-hour nursing service by registered or licensed practical nurses and related medical services prescribed by the patient's physician. Intermediate nursing care consists of similar services on a less intensive basis principally provided by non-licensed personnel. These distinctions are generally found in the long-term health care industry although for Medicaid reimbursement purposes, some states in which we operate have additional classifications, while in other states the Medicaid rate is the same regardless of patient classification. Rehabilitative services consist of physical, speech, and occupational therapies, which are designed to aid the patient's recovery and enable the patient to resume normal activities.

Each health care center has a licensed administrator responsible for supervising daily activities, and larger centers have assistant administrators. All have medical directors, a director of nurses and full-time registered nurse coverage. All centers provide physical therapy and most have other rehabilitative programs, such as occupational or speech

therapy. Each facility is located near at least one hospital and is qualified to accept patients discharged from such hospitals. Each center has a full dining room, kitchen, treatment and examining room, emergency lighting system, and sprinkler system where required. Management believes that all centers are in compliance with the existing fire and life safety codes.

We provide centralized management and support services to NHC operated health care nursing centers. The management and support services include operational support through the use of regional vice presidents and regional nurses, accounting and financial services, cash management, data processing, legal, consulting and services in the area of rehabilitative care. Our personnel are employed by our administrative services affiliate, National Health Corporation, which is also responsible for overall services in the area of personnel, loss control, insurance, education and training. We reimburse the administrative services contractor by paying all the costs of personnel employed for our benefit as well as a fee. National Health Corporation (National) is wholly owned by the National Health Corporation Employee Stock Ownership Plan and provides its services only to us.

We provide management services to centers operated under management contracts and offsite accounting and financial services to other owners, all pursuant to separate contracts. The term of each contract and the amount of the

management fee or accounting and financial services fee is determined on a case-by-case basis. Typically, we charge 6% to 7% of net revenues of the managed centers for our management contracts and specific item fees for our accounting and financial service agreements. The initial terms of the contracts range from two years to ten years. In certain contracts, we maintain a right of first refusal should the owner desire to sell a managed center.

Long-Term Care Center Occupancy Rates

The following table shows certain information relating to occupancy rates for our continuing owned and leased long-term health care centers:

	Year Ended December 31		
	2009	2008	2007
Overall census	92.0%	92.5%	92.5%

Occupancy rates are calculated by dividing the total number of days of patient care provided by the number of patient days available (which is determined by multiplying the number of licensed beds by 365 or 366).

Customers and Sources of Revenues

No individual customer or related group of customers accounts for a significant portion of our revenues. We do not expect the loss of a single customer or group of related customers would have a material adverse effect.

Certain groups of patients receive funds to pay the cost of their care from a common source. The following table sets forth sources of net patient revenues for the periods indicated:

<u>Source</u>	Year Ended December 31		
	2009	2008	2007
Private	30%	30%	29%
Medicare	41%	40%	39%
Medicaid/Skilled	8%	9%	9%
Medicaid/Intermediate	20%	20%	22%
VA and Other	1%	1%	1%

Total	100%	100%	100%
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The source and amount of the revenues are further dependent upon (i) the licensed bed capacity of our health care centers, (ii) the occupancy rate of the centers, (iii) the extent to which the rehabilitative and other skilled ancillary services provided at each center are utilized by the patients in the centers, (iv) the mix of private pay, Medicare and Medicaid patients, and (v) the rates paid by private paying patients and by the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Private pay, VA and other sources include commercial insurance, individual patients' own funds, managed care plans and the Veterans Administration. Although payment rates vary among these sources, market forces and costs largely determine these rates.

Private paying patients, private insurance carriers and the Veterans Administration generally pay on the basis of the center's charges or specifically negotiated contracts. We attempt to attract an increased percentage of private and Medicare patients by providing rehabilitative services and increasing the marketing of those services through market areas and Managed Care Offices, of which five were open at December 31, 2009. These services are designed to speed the patient's recovery and allow the patient to return home as soon as is practical. In addition to educating physicians and patients to the advantages of the rehabilitative services, we have also implemented incentive programs which provide for the payment of bonuses to our regional and center personnel if they are able to achieve private and Medicare goals at their centers.

Medicare is a health insurance program for the aged and certain other chronically disabled individuals operated by the federal government.

Medicaid is a medical assistance program for the indigent, operated by individual states with the financial participation of the federal government.

Government reimbursement programs such as Medicare and Medicaid prescribe, by law, the billing methods and amounts that health care providers may charge and be reimbursed to care for patients covered by these programs. Congress continually passes laws that effect major or minor changes in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Regulation and Licenses

Health care is an area of extensive regulatory oversight and frequent regulatory change. The federal government and the states in which we operate regulate various aspects of our business. These regulatory bodies, among other things, require us annually to license our skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities in some states and other health care businesses, including home health agencies and hospices. In particular, to operate nursing facilities and provide health care services we must comply with federal, state and local laws relating to the delivery and adequacy of medical care, distribution of pharmaceuticals, equipment, personnel, operating policies, fire prevention, rate-setting, building codes and environmental protection.

Governmental and other authorities periodically inspect our skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies and hospices to assure that we continue to comply with their various standards. We must pass these inspections to continue our licensing under state law, to obtain certification under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and to continue our participation in the Veterans Administration program. We can only participate in other third-party programs if our facilities pass these inspections. In addition, these authorities inspect our record keeping and inventory control.

From time to time, we, like others in the health care industry, may receive notices from federal and state regulatory agencies alleging that we failed to comply with applicable standards. These notices may require us to take corrective action, and may impose civil money penalties and/or other operating restrictions on us. If our skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies and hospices fail to comply with these directives or otherwise fail to comply substantially with licensure and certification laws, rules and regulations, we could lose our certification as a Medicare and Medicaid provider and/or lose our licenses.

Local and state health and social service agencies and other regulatory authorities specific to their location regulate, to varying degrees, our assisted living facilities. Although regulations and licensing requirements vary significantly from

state to state, they typically address, among other things, personnel education, training and records; facility services, including administration of medication, assistance with supervision of medication management and limited nursing services; physical plant specifications; furnishing of resident units; food and housekeeping services; emergency evacuation plans; and resident rights and responsibilities. If assisted living facilities fail to comply with licensing requirements, these facilities could lose their licenses. Most states also subject assisted living facilities to state or local building codes, fire codes and food service licensure or certification requirements. In addition, the manner and extent to which the assisted living industry is regulated at federal and state levels are evolving.

Changes in the laws or new interpretations of existing laws as applied to the skilled nursing facilities, the assisted living facilities or other components of our health care businesses may have a significant impact on our methods, revenues and costs of doing business.

In all states in which we operate, before a long-term care facility can make a capital expenditure exceeding certain specified amounts or construct any new long-term health care beds, approval of the state health care regulatory agency or agencies must be obtained and a Certificate of Need issued. The appropriate state health planning agency must determine that a need for the new beds or expenditure exists before a Certificate of Need can be issued. A Certificate of Need is generally issued for a specific maximum amount of expenditure and the project must be completed within a

specific time period. There is no advance assurance that we will be able to obtain a certificate of need in any particular instance. In some states, approval is also necessary in order to purchase existing health care beds, although the purchaser is normally permitted to avoid a full scale certificate of need application procedure by giving advance written notice of the acquisition and giving written assurance to the state regulatory agency that the change of ownership will not result in a change in the number of beds, services offered and, in some cases, reimbursement rates at the facility.

While there are currently no significant legislative proposals to eliminate certificates of need pending in the states in which we do business, deregulation in the certificate of need area would likely result in increased competition among nursing home companies and could adversely affect occupancy rates and the supply of licensed and certified personnel.

Medicare and Medicaid Participation by Our Centers

All health care centers, owned, leased or managed by us are certified to participate in Medicare. Health care centers participating in Medicare are known as SNFs (Skilled Nursing Facilities). All but six of our affiliated nursing centers participate in Medicaid. All of our homecares (Home Health Agencies) participate in Medicare which comprises over 95% of their revenue. Homecares also participate in Medicaid.

During the fiscal year, each nursing center receives payments from Medicare and, if participating, from Medicaid. We record as receivables the amounts we ultimately expect to receive under the Medicare and Medicaid programs and record into profit or loss any differences in amounts actually received at the time of interim or final settlements. Adjustments have not had a material adverse effect within the last three years.

Certifications and Participation Requirements; Efforts to Impose Reduced Payments

Changes in certification and participation requirements of the Medicare and Medicaid programs have restricted, and are likely to continue to restrict further, eligibility for reimbursement under those programs. Failure to obtain and maintain Medicare and Medicaid certification at our nursing centers would result in denial of Medicare and Medicaid payments which would likely result in a significant loss of revenue. In addition, private payors, including managed care payors, increasingly are demanding that providers accept discounted payments resulting in lost revenue for specific patients. Efforts to impose reduced payments, greater discounts and more stringent cost controls by government and other payors are expected to continue. For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2009, we derived 41% and 28% of our net patient revenues from the Medicare and Medicaid programs, respectively. Any reforms that significantly limit rates of reimbursement under the Medicare and Medicaid programs could have a material adverse effect on our profitability. We are unable to predict what reform proposals or reimbursement limitations will be adopted in the future or the effect such changes will have on our operations. No assurance can be given that such reforms will not have a material adverse effect on us.

Potential Healthcare Reform

The increase in the number of individuals and families without healthcare coverage has heightened debate about whether and how to implement comprehensive reform of the United States healthcare system. The Obama administration has made healthcare reform its primary domestic agenda item, and Congress is currently considering multiple plans on how to change the healthcare system and how to fund those changes. Generally, President Obama and most members of Congress believe that the current healthcare system is too inefficient and leaves too many individuals without healthcare coverage. Much of the current healthcare reform debate includes the following considerations; whether a public insurance option should be established; the impact to private insurance companies; the impact to consumer choice of healthcare services; the impact to small businesses; and the impact of funding alternatives including personal tax rate increases, business surcharges, service provider assessments and increasing the federal deficit. We are not able to predict whether healthcare reform will be implemented, what provisions a potential reform plan may include or what impact these developments may have on our future operating results or cash flows at this time.

Medicare Legislation and Regulations

Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs)

SNF PPS - Medicare is uniform nationwide and reimburses nursing centers under a fixed payment methodology named the Skilled Nursing Facility Prospective Payment System (*SNF PPS*). *PPS* is an acuity based classification system that uses nursing and therapy indexes adjusted by geographical wage indexes to calculate per diem rates for each Medicare patient. Payment rates are updated annually and are generally increased each October when the federal fiscal year begins. The acuity classification system is named RUGs (Resource Utilization Groups III). *SNF PPS*, as implemented in 1999, had an adverse impact on our industry and our business by decreasing payments materially. Refinements in the form of temporary add-ons provided some relief until October 1, 2002. Annual market basket (inflationary) increases have continued to improve payments since that time.

Distribution of payments among providers is determined by patient acuity and classification of 53 RUG groups. Effective October 1, 2009, the federal RUG rates had a market basket increase of 2.2%. There was also a recalibration of the nursing weights implemented resulting in a reduction of 3.3%. The net impact of these adjustments was a reduction of 1.1% to *PPS* rates.

Prescription Drugs - Medicare Part D In 2003, the Congress enacted the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act (MMA). This landmark legislation provides seniors and people with disabilities with a comprehensive prescription drug benefit under the Medicare program. Under Part D, private insurance companies contract with Medicare to provide coverage for anyone eligible for Part D that chooses to enroll in a Prescription Drug Plan (PDP). Most patients are enrolled in a PDP including Medicaid and Private Pay patients. There are multiple PDP s.

Some patients continue to be covered by other private insurance companies outside of Part D. As part of the consolidated billing component of the Medicare Part A *SNF PPS* plan, prescription drugs for patients in a Medicare Part A stay are billed to Part A and not Part D. The provider purchases prescriptions from a drug supplier and bills charges to Medicare Part A under the per diem established by CMS. Whereas, for a patient whose prescriptions are billed to Medicare Part D, the drug supplier bills Part D and the provider is only billed for non-covered and co-pay amounts.

Most of our nursing centers and assisted living centers are supplied prescriptions by our owned regional pharmacies known as Network Pharmacies. Network provides prescriptions to 44 owned, 8 managed, and 17 trade entities. We expect that changes to PDP payment methodology by CMS could have a negative effect on rates. Substantial increases in drug costs could occur which would negatively impact our gross margin for prescriptions.

Homecares (HHAs)

Medicare is uniform nationwide and reimburses homecares under a fixed payment methodology named the Prospective Payment System (HH PPS). Generally, Medicare makes payment under the HH PPS on the basis of a national standardized 60-day episode payment, adjusted for case mix and geographical wage index. Payment rates are updated periodically and were last adjusted on January 1, 2009. The acuity classification system is named HHRGs (Home Health Resource Groups).

For 2008, we received a market basket update of 3.0% coupled with rate reductions of 2.75% per year for years 2008 through 2010 to be followed by a 2.71% reduction in 2011. Changes were also made to case-mix weights, moving from 83 case-mix categories in 2007 to 153 case-mix categories in 2008. The ten visit threshold at which higher payment rates would occur was replaced with a multi-step threshold with incremental payments for increased visits.

For 2009, we received a market basket increase of 2.9% along with the annual 2.75% decrease mentioned above. Wage index changes were also made and were positive for some of our offices and negative for others. The combined net effect of all pay rate adjustments for 2009 was negligible.

Medicaid Legislation and Regulations

State Medicaid plans subject to budget constraints are of particular concern to us given the repeal of the Boren Amendment by the Balance Budget Act of 1997. The Boren Amendment provided fair reimbursement protection to nursing facilities. Changes in federal funding and pressure on certain provider taxes coupled with state budget problems have produced an uncertain environment. Industry studies predict the Medicaid crisis will continue with a state required contribution to Medicare Part D and anticipated budget deficits. States will more likely than not be unable to keep pace with nursing center inflation. States are under pressure to pursue other alternatives to long term care such as community and home-based services.

In Tennessee, annual Medicaid rate increases were implemented effective July 1, 2009. The Tennessee increase in revenue was approximately \$89,000 per quarter. In Missouri, Medicaid rate increases were implemented effective July 1, 2009 and the quarterly effect was an increase in revenues of approximately \$345,000. In South Carolina, Medicaid rate increases were implemented October 1, 2009 and the quarterly effect was an increase in revenues of approximately \$682,000.

Health Care Center Construction and Purchases

We have completed or anticipate completion of the following long-term health care centers.

Description	Number of Beds	Location	Cost	Date Placed in Service or Expected Completion
Bed Addition	60	North Augusta, SC	\$ 6,657,000	3 rd Quarter 2008
New Facility	120	Bluffton, SC	\$ 22,645,000	1 st Quarter 2010
New Facility	61	Mauldin, SC	\$ 6,600,000	1 st Quarter 2010

We have purchased or leased the following facilities:

Description	Location	Capitalized Cost	Date Placed in Service
544-Bed Long-Term Care Center			
66-Unit Assisted Living Facility	Chattanooga, TN	\$ 14,760,000	November 2007

109-bed Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Facility	Knoxville, TN	\$ 6,347,000	January 2008
132-Bed Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Facility			
60-Bed Assisted Living Facility	Charleston, SC	\$ 13,250,000	August 2008

The Chattanooga, Tennessee property has been leased to a third party provider and generates rental revenue for NHC.

In January 2008, we purchased two tracts of land located in South Carolina and one tract located in Tennessee. These tracts were undeveloped and are held for future development.

In December 2009, we purchased the remaining 20% partnership interest in our Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia facility. The partnership is now a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Company.

Competition

In most of the communities in which we operate health care centers, there are other health care centers with which we compete. We own, lease or manage (through subsidiaries) 76 long-term health care facilities located in 10 states. Each of these states are certificate of need states which generally requires the state to approve the opening of any

new long-term health care facilities. There are hundreds of operators of long-term health care facilities in each of these states and no single operator, including us, dominates any of these state's long-term health care markets, except for some small rural markets which might have only one long-term health care facility. In competing for patients and staff with these centers, we depend upon referrals from acute care hospitals, physicians, residential care facilities, church groups and other community service organizations. The reputation in the community and the physical appearance of our health care centers are important in obtaining patients, since members of the patient's family generally participate to a greater extent in selecting health care centers than in selecting an acute care hospital. We believe that by providing and emphasizing rehabilitative as well as skilled care services at our centers, we are able to broaden our patient base and to differentiate our centers from competing health care centers.

Our homecares compete with other home health agencies (HHAs) in most communities we serve. Competition occurs for patients and employees. Our homecares depend on hospital and physician referrals and reputation in order to maintain a healthy census.

As we expanded into the assisted living market, we monitored proposed or existing competing assisted living centers. Our development goal is to link our health care centers with our assisted living centers, thereby obtaining a competitive advantage for both.

We experience competition in employing and retaining nurses, technicians, aides and other high quality professional and non-professional employees. In order to enhance our competitive position, we have an educational tuition loan program, an American Dietetic Association approved internship program, a specially designed nurse's aide training class, and we make financial scholarship aid available to physical therapy vocational programs. We support the Foundation for Geriatric Education. We also conduct an Administrator in Training course, 24 months in duration, for the professional training of administrators. Presently, we have nine full-time individuals in this program. Four of our six regional vice presidents and 51 of our 76 health care center administrators are graduates of this program.

We experience competition in providing management and accounting services to other long-term health care providers. Those services are provided primarily to owners with whom we have had previous involvement through ownership or leasing arrangements. Our insurance services are provided primarily to centers for which we also provide management and/or accounting services.

Our employee benefit package offers a tuition reimbursement program. The goal of the program is to insure a well trained qualified work force to meet future demands. While the program is offered to all disciplines, special emphasis has been placed on supporting students in nursing and physical therapy programs. Students are reimbursed at the end of each semester after presenting tuition receipts and grades to management. The program has been successful in providing a means for many bright students to pursue a formal education.

Employees

As of December 31, 2009, our Administrative Services Contractor plus our managed centers had approximately 12,800 full and part time employees, who we call Partners . No employees are represented by a bargaining unit. We believe our current relations with our employees are good.

Investor Information

We maintain a worldwide web site at www.nhccare.com. We publish to this web site our annual report on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K, and press releases. We do not necessarily have these filed the same day as they are filed with the SEC or released to the public, but rather have a policy of placing these on the web site within two (2) business days of public release or SEC filing.

We also maintain the following documents on the web site:

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The NHC Code of Ethics. This Code has been adopted for all employees of our Administrative Services Contractor, officers and directors of the Company. The website will also disclose whether there have been any amendments or waivers to the Code of Ethics and Standards of conduct. To date there have been none.

*

Information on our NHC Valuesline , which allows our staff and investors unrestricted access to our Corporate Compliance Officer, executive officers and directors. The toll free number is 800-526-4064 and the communications may be incognito, if desired.

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The NHC Restated Audit Committee Charter.

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The NHC Compensation Committee Charter.

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The NHC Nomination and Corporate Governance Committee Charter

We will furnish, free of charge, a copy of any of the above documents to any interested investor upon receipt of a written request.

Item 1A. Risk Factors

You should carefully consider the risk factors set forth below, as well as the other information contained in this Annual Report on Form 10-K. These risk factors should be considered in connection with evaluating the forward-looking statements contained in this Annual Report on Form 10-K, because these factors could cause the actual results and conditions to differ materially from those projected in forward-looking statements. The risks described below are not the only risks facing us. Additional risks and uncertainties that are not currently known to us or that we currently deem to be immaterial may also materially and adversely affect our business operations. Any of the following risks could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition or results of operations and cash flows.

Risks Relating to Our Company

We depend on reimbursement from Medicare, Medicaid and other third-party payors and reimbursement rates from such payors may be reduced. - We derive a substantial portion of our revenue from third-party payors, including the Medicare and Medicaid programs. For the year ended December 31, 2009, we derived approximately 64% of our net operating revenues from the Medicare, Medicaid and other government programs. Third-party payor programs are highly regulated and are subject to frequent and substantial changes. Changes in the reimbursement rate or methods of payment from third-party payors, including the Medicare and Medicaid programs, or the implementation of other measures to reduce reimbursements for our services has in the past, and could in the future, result in a substantial reduction in our revenues and operating margins. Additionally, net revenue realizable under third-party payor agreements can change after examination and retroactive adjustment by payors during the claims settlement processes or as a result of post-payment audits. Payors may disallow requests for reimbursement based on determinations that certain costs are not reimbursable or reasonable because additional documentation is necessary or because certain services were not covered or were not reasonable and medically necessary. There also continue to be new legislative and regulatory proposals that

could impose further limitations on government and private payments to health care providers. In some cases, states have enacted or are considering enacting measures designed to reduce their Medicaid expenditures and to make changes to private health care insurance. We cannot assure you that adequate reimbursement levels will continue to be available for the services provided by us, which are currently being reimbursed by Medicare, Medicaid or private third-party payors. Further limits on the scope of services reimbursed and on reimbursement rates could have a material adverse effect on our liquidity, financial condition and results of operations. It is possible that the effects of further refinements to PPS that result in lower payments to us or cuts in state Medicaid funding could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations. See Item 1, Business Regulation and Licenses and Medicare Legislation and Regulations and Medicaid Legislation and Regulations .

We conduct business in a heavily regulated industry, and changes in, or violations of, regulations may result in increased costs or sanctions that reduce our revenue and profitability. - In the ordinary course of our business, we are regularly subject to inquiries, investigations and audits by federal and state agencies to determine whether we are in compliance with regulations governing the operation of, and reimbursement for, skilled nursing, assisted living and independent living facilities, hospice, home health agencies and our other operating areas. These regulations include those relating to licensure, conduct of operations, ownership of facilities, construction of new and additions to existing facilities, allowable costs, services and prices for services. In particular, various laws, including federal and state anti-kickback and anti-fraud statutes, prohibit certain business practices and relationships that might affect the provision and cost of health care services reimbursable under federal and/or state health care programs such as Medicare and Medicaid, including the payment or receipt of remuneration for the referral of patients whose care will be paid by federal governmental programs. Sanctions for violating the anti-kickback and anti-fraud statutes include criminal penalties and civil sanctions, including fines and possible exclusion from governmental programs such as Medicare and Medicaid.

In addition, the Stark Law broadly defines the scope of prohibited physician referrals under federal health care programs to providers with which they have ownership or other financial arrangements. Many states have adopted, or are considering, legislative proposals similar to these laws, some of which extend beyond federal health care programs, to prohibit the payment or receipt of remuneration for the referral of patients and physician referrals regardless of the source of the payment for the care. These laws and regulations are complex and limited judicial or regulatory interpretation exists. We cannot assure you that governmental officials charged with responsibility for enforcing the provisions of these laws and regulations will not assert that one or more of our arrangements are in violation of the provisions of such laws and regulations.

The regulatory environment surrounding the long-term care industry has intensified, particularly for larger for-profit, multi-facility providers like us. The federal government has imposed extensive enforcement policies resulting in a significant increase in the number of inspections, citations of regulatory deficiencies and other regulatory sanctions, including terminations from the Medicare and Medicaid programs, denials of payment for new Medicare and Medicaid admissions and civil monetary penalties. If we fail to comply, or are perceived as failing to comply, with the extensive laws and regulations applicable to our business, we could become ineligible to receive government program reimbursement, be required to refund amounts received from Medicare, Medicaid or private payors, suffer civil or criminal penalties, suffer damage to our reputation in various markets or be required to make significant changes to our operations. We are also subject to federal and state laws that govern financial and other arrangements between health care providers. These laws often prohibit certain direct and indirect payments or fee-splitting arrangements between health care providers that are designed to induce the referral of patients to a particular provider for medical products and services. Possible sanctions for violation of any of these restrictions or prohibitions include loss of

eligibility to participate in reimbursement programs and/or civil and criminal penalties. Furthermore, some states restrict certain business relationships between physicians and other providers of health care services. Many states prohibit business corporations from providing, or holding themselves out as a provider of, medical care. From time to time, we may seek guidance as to the interpretation of these laws; however, there can be no assurance that such laws will ultimately be interpreted in a manner consistent with our practices. In addition, we could be forced to expend considerable resources responding to an investigation or other enforcement action under these laws or regulations. Furthermore, should we lose licenses or certifications for a number of our facilities as a result of regulatory action or otherwise, we could be deemed in default under some of our agreements, including agreements governing outstanding indebtedness. We also are subject to

potential lawsuits under a federal whistle-blower statute designed to combat fraud and abuse in the health care industry. These lawsuits can involve significant monetary awards to private plaintiffs who successfully bring these suits.

We have established policies and procedures that we believe are sufficient to ensure that our facilities will operate in substantial compliance with these anti-fraud and abuse requirements. While we believe that our business practices are consistent with Medicare and Medicaid criteria, those criteria are often vague and subject to change and interpretation. Aggressive anti-fraud actions, however, have had and could have an adverse effect on our financial position, results of operations and cash flows. See Item 1, "Business - Regulation and Licenses .

We are unable to predict the future course of federal, state and local regulation or legislation, including Medicare and Medicaid statutes and regulations, or the intensity of federal and state enforcement actions. Our failure to obtain or renew required regulatory approvals or licenses or to comply with applicable regulatory requirements, the suspension or revocation of our licenses or our disqualification from participation in certain federal and state reimbursement programs, or the imposition of other harsh enforcement sanctions could have a material adverse effect upon our operations and financial condition.

We are required to comply with laws governing the transmission and privacy of health information. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, or HIPAA, requires us to comply with standards for the exchange of health information within our Company and with third parties, such as payors, business associates and patients. These include standards for common health care transactions, such as claims information, plan eligibility, payment information and the use of electronic signatures, unique identifiers for providers, employers, health plans and individuals, and security, privacy and enforcement. The Department of Health and Human Services has released final rules to implement a number of these requirements, and several HIPAA initiatives have become effective, including privacy protections, transaction standards, and security standards. If we fail to comply with these standards, we could be subject to criminal penalties and civil sanctions.

We are defendants in significant legal actions, which are commonplace in our industry, and which could subject us to increased operating costs and substantial uninsured liabilities, which would materially and adversely affect our liquidity and financial condition - As is typical in the health care industry, we are subject to claims that our services have resulted in resident injury or other adverse effects. We, like our industry peers, have experienced an increasing trend in the frequency and severity of professional liability, workers' compensation, and health insurance claims and litigation asserted against us. In some states in which we have significant operations, insurance coverage for the risk of punitive damages arising from professional liability claims and/or litigation may not, in certain cases, be available due to state law prohibitions or limitations of availability. We cannot assure you that we will not be liable for punitive damage awards that are either not covered or are in excess of our insurance policy limits. We also believe that there have been, and will continue to be, governmental investigations of long-term care providers, particularly in the area of Medicare/Medicaid false claims, as well as an increase in enforcement actions resulting from these investigations. Insurance is not available to cover such losses. Any adverse determination in a legal proceeding or governmental investigation, whether currently asserted or arising in the future, could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition.

Due to the rising cost and limited availability of professional liability, workers' compensation and health insurance, we are largely self-insured on all of these programs and as a result, there is no limit on the maximum number of claims or amount for which we or our insurance subsidiary can be liable in any policy period. Although we base our loss estimates on independent actuarial analyses using the information we have to date, the amount of the losses could exceed our estimates. In the event our actual liability exceeds our estimates for any given period, our results of operations and financial condition could be materially adversely impacted. In addition, our insurance coverage might not cover all claims made against us. If we are unable to maintain our current insurance coverage, if judgments are obtained in excess of the coverage we maintain, if we are required to pay uninsured punitive damages, or if the number of claims settled within the self-insured retention currently in place significantly increases, we could be exposed to substantial additional liabilities. We cannot assure you that the claims we pay under our self-insurance programs will not exceed the reserves we have set aside to pay claims. The number of claims within the self-insured retention may increase.

Recent legislation and the increasing costs of being publicly owned are likely to impact our future consolidated financial position and results of operations. - In connection with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, we are subject to rules requiring our management to report on the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting. If we fail to have effective internal controls and procedures for financial reporting in place, we could be unable to provide timely and reliable financial information which could, in turn, have an adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows.

Significant regulatory changes, including the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and rules and regulations promulgated as a result of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, have increased, and in the future are likely to further increase, general and administrative costs. In order to comply with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, the listing standards of the NYSE Amex exchange, and rules implemented by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), we have had to hire additional personnel and utilize additional outside legal, accounting and advisory services, and may continue to require such additional resources. Moreover, in the rapidly changing regulatory environment in which we now operate, there is significant uncertainty as to what will be required to comply with many of the new rules and regulations. As a result, we may be required to spend substantially more than we currently estimate, and may need to divert resources from other activities, as we develop our compliance plans.

New accounting pronouncements or new interpretations of existing standards could require us to make adjustments in our accounting policies that could affect our financial statements. - The Financial Accounting Standards Board, the SEC, or other accounting organizations or governmental entities issue new pronouncements or new interpretations of existing accounting standards that sometimes require us to change our accounting policies and procedures. Future pronouncements or interpretations could require us to change our policies or procedures and have a significant impact on our future financial statements.

By undertaking to provide management services, advisory services, and/or financial services to other entities, we become at least partially responsible for meeting the regulatory requirements of those entities. - We provide management and/or financial services to health care centers, assisting living centers and independent living centers owned by third parties. At December 31, 2009, we perform management services (which include financial services) for 26 such centers and accounting and financial services for an additional 28 such centers. Furthermore, we previously provided advisory services to NHR, prior to the merger with NHC, a publicly traded REIT and financial services to Management Advisory Source, LLC which company provides advisory services to NHI, a publicly traded REIT. The ARisk Factors contained herein as applying to us may in many instances apply equally to these other entities for which we provide services. We have in the past and may in the future be subject to claims from the entities to which we provide management, advisory or financial services, or to the claims of third parties to those entities. Any adverse determination in any legal proceeding regarding such claims could have a material adverse effect on our business, our results of operation, our financial condition and cash flows.

We provide management services to long-term care centers under terms whereby the payments for our services are subject to subordination to other expenditures of the long-term care provider. Furthermore, there are certain third parties with whom we have contracted to provide services and which we have determined, based on insufficient historical collections and the lack of expected future collections, that the service revenue realization is uncertain. We may, therefore, make expenditures related to the provision of services for which we are not paid.

The cost to replace or retain qualified nurses, health care professionals and other key personnel may adversely affect our financial performance, and we may not be able to comply with certain states' staffing requirements. - We could experience significant increases in our operating costs due to shortages in qualified nurses, health care professionals and other key personnel. The market for these key personnel is highly competitive. We, like other health care providers, have experienced difficulties in attracting and retaining qualified personnel, especially facility administrators, nurses, certified nurses' aides and other important health care providers. There is currently a shortage of nurses, and trends indicate this shortage will continue or worsen in the future. The difficulty our skilled nursing facilities are experiencing in hiring and retaining qualified personnel has increased our average wage rate. We may continue to experience increases in our labor costs due to higher wages and greater benefits required to attract and retain qualified health care personnel. Our ability to control labor costs will significantly affect our future operating results.

Certain states in which we operate skilled nursing facilities have adopted minimum staffing standards and additional states may also establish similar requirements in the future. Our ability to satisfy these requirements will depend upon our ability to attract and retain qualified nurses, certified nurses' assistants and other staff. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the imposition of fines or other sanctions. If states do not appropriate sufficient additional funds (through Medicaid program appropriations or otherwise) to pay for any additional operating costs resulting from minimum staffing requirements, our profitability may be adversely affected.

Although we currently have no collective bargaining agreements with unions at our facilities, there is no assurance this will continue to be the case. If any of our facilities enter into collective bargaining agreements with unions, we could experience or incur additional administrative expenses associated with union representation or our employees.

Future acquisitions may be difficult to complete, use significant resources, or be unsuccessful and could expose us to unforeseen liabilities. - We may selectively pursue acquisitions or new developments in our target markets. Acquisitions and new developments may involve significant cash expenditures, debt incurrence, capital expenditures, additional operating losses, amortization of the intangible assets of acquired companies, dilutive issuances of equity securities and other expenses that could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. Acquisitions also involve numerous other risks, including difficulties integrating acquired operations, personnel and information systems, diversion of management's time from existing operations, potential losses of key employees or customers of acquired companies, assumptions of significant liabilities, exposure to unforeseen liabilities of acquired companies and increases in our indebtedness.

We cannot assure you that we will succeed in obtaining financing for any acquisitions at a reasonable cost or that any financing will not contain restrictive covenants that limit our operating flexibility. We also may be unable to operate acquired facilities profitably or succeed in achieving improvements in their financial performance.

We also may face competition in acquiring any facilities. Our competitors may acquire or seek to acquire many of the facilities that would be suitable acquisition candidates for us. This could limit our ability to grow by acquisitions or increase the cost of our acquisitions.

Upkeep of healthcare properties is capital intensive, requiring us to continually direct financial resources to the maintenance and enhancement of our physical plant and equipment. - As of December 31, 2009, we leased or owned 76 skilled nursing centers, 23 assisted living centers, and seven independent living centers. Our ability to maintain and enhance our physical plant and equipment in a suitable condition to meet regulatory standards, operate efficiently and remain competitive in our markets requires us to commit a substantial portion of our free cash flow to continued investment in our physical plant and equipment. Certain of our competitors may operate centers that are not as old as our centers, or may appear more modernized than our centers, and therefore may be more attractive to prospective customers. In addition, the cost to replace our existing centers through acquisition or construction is substantially higher than the carrying value of our centers. We are undertaking a process to allocate more aggressively capital spending within our owned and leased centers in an effort to address issues that arise in connection with an aging

physical plant.

If factors, including factors indicated in these Risk Factors and other factors beyond our control render us unable to direct the necessary financial and human resources to the maintenance, upgrade and modernization of our physical plant and equipment, our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flow could be adversely impacted.

Provision for losses in our financial statements may not be adequate. - Loss provisions in our financial statements for self-insured programs are made on an undiscounted basis in the relevant period. These provisions are based on internal and external evaluations of the merits of individual claims, analysis of claims history and independent actuarially determined estimates. Our management reviews the methods of determining these estimates and establishing the resulting accrued liabilities frequently, with any material adjustments resulting therefrom being reflected in current earnings. Although we believe that our provisions for self-insured losses in our financial statements are adequate, the ultimate liability may be in excess of the amounts recorded. In the event the provisions for loss reflected in our financial statements are inadequate, our financial condition and results of operations may be materially affected.

Implementation of a new information technology infrastructure could cause business interruptions and negatively affect our profitability and cash flows. - We continue to refine and implement our information technology to improve customer service, enhance operating efficiencies and provide more effective management of business operations. Implementation of the new system and software and refinement of existing software carries risks such as cost overruns, project delays and business interruptions and delays. If we experience a material business interruption as a result of the implementation of our existing or future information technology infrastructure or are unable to obtain the projected benefits of this new infrastructure, it could adversely affect us and could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows.

If we fail to compete effectively with other health care providers, our revenues and profitability may decline. - The long-term health care services industry is highly competitive. Our skilled nursing health care centers, assisted living centers, independent living facilities, home care services and other operations compete on a local and regional basis with other nursing centers, health care providers, and senior living service providers. Some of our competitors' facilities are located in newer buildings and may offer services not provided by us or are operated by entities having greater financial and other resources than us. Our skilled nursing facilities face competition from skilled nursing, assisted living, independent living facilities, homecare services, and other operations that provide services comparable to those offered by our skilled nursing facilities. Many competing general acute care hospitals are larger and more established than our facilities.

The long-term care industry is divided into a variety of competitive areas that market similar services. These competitors include skilled nursing, assisted living, independent living facilities, homecare services, hospice providers and other operations. Our facilities generally operate in communities that also are served by similar facilities operated by our competitors. Certain of our competitors are operated by not-for-profit, non-taxpaying or governmental agencies that can finance capital expenditures on a tax exempt basis and that receive funds and charitable contributions unavailable to us. Our facilities compete based on factors such as our reputation for quality care; the commitment and expertise of our staff; the quality and comprehensiveness of our treatment programs; the physical appearance, location and condition of our facilities and to a limited extent, the charges for services. In addition, we compete with other long-term care providers for customer referrals from hospitals. As a result, a failure to compete effectively with respect to referrals may have an adverse impact on our business. Many of these competing companies have greater financial and other resources than we have. We cannot assure you that increased competition in the future will not adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations.

Possible changes in the case mix of patients as well as payor mix and payment methodologies may significantly affect our profitability. - The sources and amounts of our patient revenues will be determined by a number of factors, including licensed bed capacity and occupancy rates of our facilities, the mix of patients and the rates of reimbursement among payors. Likewise, reimbursement for therapy services will vary based upon payor and payment methodologies. Changes in the case mix of the patients as well as payor mix among private pay, Medicare and Medicaid will significantly affect our profitability. Particularly, any significant increase in our Medicaid population could have a material adverse effect on our financial position, results of operations and cash flow, especially if states operating these programs continue to limit, or more aggressively seek limits on, reimbursement rates.

Private third-party payors continue to try to reduce health care costs. - Private third-party payors are continuing their efforts to control health care costs through direct contracts with health care providers, increased utilization review and greater enrollment in managed care programs and preferred provider organizations. These private payors increasingly

are demanding discounted fee structures and the assumption by health care providers of all or a portion of the financial risk. We could be adversely affected by the continuing efforts of private third-party payors to limit the amount of reimbursement we receive for health care services. We cannot assure you that reimbursement payments under private third-party payor programs will remain at levels comparable to present levels or will be sufficient to cover the costs allocable to patients eligible for reimbursement pursuant to such programs. Future changes in the reimbursement rates or methods of private or third-party payors, including the Medicare and Medicaid programs, or the implementation of other measures to reduce reimbursement for our services could result in a substantial reduction in our net operating revenues. Finally, as a result of competitive pressures, our ability to maintain operating margins through price increases to private patients is limited.

We are exposed to market risk due to the fact that outstanding debt and future borrowings are or will be subject to wide fluctuations based on changing interest rates. - Market risk is the risk of loss arising from adverse changes in market rates and prices such as interest rates, foreign currency exchange rates and commodity prices. Our primary exposure to market risk is interest rate risk associated with variable rate borrowings. We currently have a \$75,000,000 revolving credit agreement. The revolving credit agreement provides for variable rates and if market interest rates rise, so will our required interest payments on any future borrowings under the revolving credit facility.

Although we currently have a modest amount of debt outstanding, we expect to borrow in the future to fund development and acquisitions. In the event we incur substantial indebtedness, this could have important consequences to you. For example, it could:

*

make it more difficult for us to satisfy our financial obligations;

*

increase our vulnerability to general adverse economic and industry conditions, including material adverse regulatory changes such as reductions in reimbursement;

*

limit our ability to obtain additional financing to fund future working capital, capital expenditures and other general corporate requirements, or to carry out other aspects of our business plan;

*

require us to dedicate a substantial portion of our cash flow from operations to payments on indebtedness, thereby reducing the availability of such cash flow to fund working capital, capital expenditures or other general corporate

purposes, or to carry out other aspects of our business plan;

*

require us to pledge as collateral substantially all of our assets;

*

require us to maintain certain debt coverage and financial ratios at specified levels, thereby reducing our financial flexibility;

*

limit our ability to make material acquisitions or take advantage of business opportunities that may arise;

*

expose us to fluctuations in interest rates, to the extent our borrowings bear variable rates of interest;

*

limit our flexibility in planning for, or reacting to, changes in our business and the industry; and

*

place us at a competitive disadvantage compared to our competitors that have less debt.

In addition, loan agreements governing our debt contain and may in the future contain financial and other restrictive covenants limiting our ability to engage in activities that may be in our long-term best interests. Our failure to comply with those covenants could result in an event of default which, if not cured or waived, could result in the acceleration of some or all of our debts.

We are permitted to incur substantially more debt, which could further exacerbate the risks described above. - We and our subsidiaries may be able to incur substantial additional indebtedness in the future. The terms of our current

debt do not completely prohibit us or our subsidiaries from incurring additional indebtedness. If new debt is added to our current debt levels, the related risks that we now face could intensify.

To service our current as well as anticipated indebtedness and future dividends, we will require a significant amount of cash, the availability of which depends on many factors beyond our control. - Our ability to make payments on and to refinance our indebtedness, including our present indebtedness, to fund planned capital expenditures, and to fund future dividend payments will depend on our ability to generate cash in the future. This, to a certain extent, is subject to general economic, financial, competitive, legislative, regulatory and other factors that are beyond our control.

We may not be able to meet all of our capital needs. - We cannot assure you that our business will generate cash flow from operations that anticipated revenue growth and improvement of operating efficiencies will be realized or that future borrowings will be available to us in an amount sufficient to enable us to service our indebtedness or to fund our other liquidity needs. We may need to refinance all or a portion of our indebtedness on or before maturity, sell assets or curtail discretionary capital expenditures.

Item 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments

None.

Item 2. Properties**Long-Term Health Care Centers**

State	City	Center Name	Affiliation	Total Beds	Joined NHC
Alabama	Anniston	NHC HealthCare, Anniston	Leased ⁽¹⁾	151	1973
	Moulton	NHC HealthCare, Moulton	Leased ⁽¹⁾	136	1973
Georgia	Fort Oglethorpe	NHC HealthCare, Fort Oglethorpe	Owned	135	1989
	Rossville	NHC HealthCare, Rossville	Leased ⁽¹⁾	112	1971
Kansas	Chanute	Chanute HealthCare Center	Managed	77	2001
	Council Grove	Council Grove HealthCare Center	Managed	80	2001
	Haysville	Haysville HealthCare Center	Managed	119	2001
	Larned	Larned HealthCare Center	Managed	80	2001
	Sedgwick	Sedgwick HealthCare Center	Managed	62	2001
Kentucky	Glasgow	NHC HealthCare, Glasgow	Leased ⁽¹⁾	194	1971
	Madisonville	NHC HealthCare, Madisonville	Leased ⁽¹⁾	94	1973
Massachusetts	Greenfield	Buckley-Greenfield Health Care Center	Managed	120	1999
	Holyoke	Holyoke Health Care Center	Managed	102	1999
	Quincy	John Adams Health Care Center	Managed	71	1999
	Taunton	Longmeadow of Taunton	Managed	100	1999
Missouri	Columbia	Columbia HealthCare Center	Managed	97	2001
	Desloge	NHC HealthCare, Desloge	Leased ⁽¹⁾	120	1982
	Joplin	Joplin HealthCare Center	Managed	92	2001
	Joplin	NHC HealthCare, Joplin	Leased ⁽¹⁾	126	1982
	Kennett	NHC HealthCare, Kennett	Leased ⁽¹⁾	170	1982
	Macon	Macon Health Care Center	Managed	120	1982
	Osage Beach	Osage Beach Health Care Center	Managed	120	1982
	St. Charles	Charlevoix HealthCare Center	Managed	142	2001
	St. Charles	NHC HealthCare, St. Charles	Leased ⁽¹⁾	120	1982
	St. Louis		Leased ⁽¹⁾	220	1987

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		NHC HealthCare, Maryland Heights			
	Springfield	Springfield Rehabilitation and Health Care Center	Managed	120	1982
	Town & Country	NHC HealthCare, Town & Country	Owned	200	2001
	West Plains	NHC HealthCare, West Plains	Owned ⁽³⁾	120	1982
New Hampshire	Epsom	Epsom Health Care Center	Managed	108	1999
	Manchester	Maple Leaf Health Care Center	Managed	114	1999
	Manchester	Villa Crest Health Care Center	Managed	126	1999

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Long-Term Health Care Centers

(continued)

State	City	Center Name	Affiliation	Total Beds	Joined NHC
South Carolina	Anderson	NHC HealthCare, Anderson	Leased ⁽¹⁾	290	1973
	Charleston	NHC HealthCare, Charleston	Owned	132	2008
	Clinton	NHC HealthCare, Clinton	Owned ⁽³⁾	131	1993
	Columbia	NHC HealthCare, Parklane	Owned ⁽³⁾	180	1997
	Greenwood	NHC HealthCare, Greenwood	Leased ⁽¹⁾	152	1973
	Greenville	NHC HealthCare, Greenville	Owned ⁽³⁾	176	1992
	Laurens	NHC HealthCare, Laurens	Leased ⁽¹⁾	176	1973
	Lexington	NHC HealthCare, Lexington	Owned ⁽³⁾	120	1994
	Mauldin	NHC HealthCare, Mauldin	Owned ⁽³⁾	180	1997
	Murrells Inlet	NHC HealthCare, Garden City	Owned ⁽³⁾	148	1992
	North Augusta	NHC HealthCare, North Augusta	Owned ⁽³⁾	192	1991
	Sumter	NHC HealthCare, Sumter	Managed	138	1985
Tennessee	Athens	NHC HealthCare, Athens	Leased ⁽¹⁾	98	1971
	Chattanooga	NHC HealthCare, Chattanooga	Leased ⁽¹⁾	207	1971
	Columbia	Maury Regional Hospital	Managed	20	1996
	Columbia	NHC HealthCare, Columbia	Leased ⁽¹⁾	106	1973
	Columbia	NHC HealthCare, Hillview	Leased ⁽¹⁾	92	1971
	Cookeville	NHC HealthCare, Cookeville	Managed	94	1975
	Dickson	NHC HealthCare, Dickson	Leased ⁽¹⁾	191	1971
	Dunlap	NHC HealthCare, Sequatchie	Leased ⁽¹⁾	120	1976
	Farragut	NHC HealthCare, Farragut	Owned ⁽³⁾	90	1998
	Franklin	NHC Place, Cool Springs	Owned	180	2004
	Franklin	NHC HealthCare, Franklin	Leased ⁽¹⁾	80	1979
	Hendersonville	NHC HealthCare, Hendersonville	Leased ⁽¹⁾	122	1987
	Johnson City	NHC HealthCare, Johnson City	Leased ⁽¹⁾	160	1971
	Knoxville	NHC HealthCare, Fort Sanders	Owned ⁽²⁾	172	1977
	Knoxville	Holston Health & Rehabilitation Center	Owned	109	2008
	Knoxville	NHC HealthCare, Knoxville	Leased ⁽¹⁾	139	1971
Lawrenceburg	NHC HealthCare, Lawrenceburg	Managed	96	1985	

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	Lawrenceburg	NHC HealthCare, Scott	Leased ⁽¹⁾	60	1971
	Lewisburg	NHC HealthCare, Lewisburg	Leased ⁽¹⁾	100	1971
	Lewisburg	NHC HealthCare, Oakwood	Leased ⁽¹⁾	60	1973
	McMinnville	NHC HealthCare, McMinnville	Leased ⁽¹⁾	150	1971
	Milan	NHC HealthCare, Milan	Leased ⁽¹⁾	122	1971
	Murfreesboro	AdamsPlace	Owned ⁽³⁾	90	1997
	Murfreesboro	NHC HealthCare, Murfreesboro	Managed	181	1974
	Nashville	The Health Center of Richland Place	Managed	107	1992
	Nashville	McKendree Village	Managed	300	2008
	Oak Ridge	NHC HealthCare, Oak Ridge	Managed	128	1977
	Pulaski	NHC HealthCare, Pulaski	Leased ⁽¹⁾	102	1971
	Smithville	NHC HealthCare, Smithville	Leased ⁽¹⁾	114	1971
	Somerville	NHC HealthCare, Somerville	Leased ⁽¹⁾	72	1976
	Sparta	NHC HealthCare, Sparta	Leased ⁽¹⁾	120	1975
	Springfield	NHC HealthCare, Springfield	Leased ⁽¹⁾	107	1973
Virginia	Bristol	NHC HealthCare, Bristol	Leased ⁽¹⁾	120	1973

Assisted Living Units

State	City	Center	Affiliation	Units
Alabama	Anniston	NHC Place/Anniston	Owned ⁽³⁾	68
Arizona	Gilbert	The Place at Gilbert	Managed ⁽⁴⁾	50
	Glendale	The Place at Glendale	Managed ⁽⁴⁾	38
	Tucson	The Place at Tucson	Managed ⁽⁴⁾	50
	Tucson	The Place at Tanque Verde	Managed ⁽⁴⁾	38
Kansas	Larned	Larned Health Care Center	Managed	19
Kentucky	Glasgow	NHC HealthCare, Glasgow	Leased ⁽¹⁾	8
Missouri	St. Charles	Lake St. Charles Retirement Center	Leased ⁽¹⁾	25
New Hampshire	Manchester	Villa Crest Assisted Living	Managed	29
South Carolina	Charleston	The Palmettos of Charleston	Owned	60
	Conway	The Place at Conway	Managed ⁽⁴⁾	42
Tennessee	Dickson	NHC HealthCare, Dickson	Leased ⁽¹⁾	20
	Farragut	NHC Place, Farragut	Owned ⁽³⁾	84
	Franklin	NHC Place, Cool Springs	Owned	46
	Gallatin	The Place at Gallatin	Managed ⁽⁴⁾	42
	Johnson City	NHC HealthCare, Johnson City	Leased ⁽¹⁾	6
	Kingsport	The Place at Kingsport	Managed ⁽⁴⁾	44
	Murfreesboro	AdamsPlace	Owned ⁽³⁾	83
	Nashville	McKendree Manor	Managed	85
	Nashville	Richland Place	Managed	24
	Smithville	NHC HealthCare, Smithville	Leased ⁽¹⁾	6
	Somerville	NHC HealthCare, Somerville	Leased ⁽¹⁾	12
Tullahoma	The Place at Tullahoma	Managed ⁽⁴⁾	42	

Retirement Apartments

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State	City	Retirement Apartments	Affiliation	Units	Est.
Kansas	Larned	Larned HealthCare Center	Managed	10	2001
Missouri	St. Charles	Lake St. Charles Retirement Apartments	Leased ⁽¹⁾	155	1984
Tennessee	Chattanooga	Parkwood Retirement Apartments	Leased ⁽¹⁾	30	1986
	Johnson City	Colonial Hill Retirement Apartments	Leased ⁽¹⁾	63	1987
	Murfreesboro	AdamsPlace	Owned ⁽³⁾	93	1997
	Nashville	McKendree Tower and Cottages	Managed	273	2008
	Nashville	Richland Place Retirement Apartments	Managed	137	1993

Homecare Programs

State	City	Homecare Programs	Affiliation	Est.
Florida	Carrabelle	NHC HomeCare of Carrabelle	Owned	1994
	Chipley	NHC HomeCare of Chipley	Owned	1994
	Crawfordville	NHC HomeCare of Crawfordville	Owned	1994
	Marianna	NHC HomeCare of Marianna	Owned	1994
	Merritt Island	NHC HomeCare of Merritt Island	Owned	1999
	Ocala	NHC HomeCare of Ocala	Owned	1996
	Panama City	NHC HomeCare of Panama City	Owned	1994
	Port St. Joe	NHC HomeCare of Port St. Joe	Owned	1994
	Quincy	NHC HomeCare of Quincy	Owned	1994
	Vero Beach	NHC HomeCare of Vero Beach	Owned	1997
South Carolina	Aiken	NHC HomeCare of Aiken	Owned	1996
	Greenville	NHC HomeCare of Greenville	Owned	2007
	Greenwood	NHC HomeCare of Greenwood	Owned	1996
	Laurens	NHC HomeCare of Laurens	Owned	1996
Tennessee	Athens	NHC HomeCare of Athens	Owned	1984
	Chattanooga	NHC HomeCare of Chattanooga	Owned	1985
	Columbia	NHC HomeCare of Columbia	Owned	1977
	Cookeville	NHC HomeCare of Cookeville	Owned	1976
	Dickson	NHC HomeCare of Dickson	Owned	1977
	Franklin	NHC HomeCare of Franklin	Owned	2007
	Hendersonville	NHC HomeCare of Hendersonville	Owned	2009
	Johnson City	NHC HomeCare of Johnson City	Owned	1978
	Knoxville	NHC HomeCare of Knoxville	Owned	1977
	Lawrenceburg	NHC HomeCare of Lawrenceburg	Owned	1977
	Lebanon	NHC HomeCare of Lebanon	Owned	1997
	Lewisburg	NHC HomeCare of Lewisburg	Owned	1977
	McMinnville	NHC HomeCare of McMinnville	Owned	1976
	Milan	NHC HomeCare of Milan	Owned	1977
	Murfreesboro	NHC HomeCare of Murfreesboro	Owned	1976

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Pulaski	NHC HomeCare of Pulaski	Owned	1985
Somerville	NHC HomeCare of Somerville	Owned	1983
Sparta	NHC HomeCare of Sparta	Owned	1984
Springfield	NHC HomeCare of Springfield	Owned	1984

⁽¹⁾Leased from NHI

⁽²⁾NHC HealthCare/Fort Sanders is owned by a separate limited partnership. The Company owns approximately 25% of the partnership interest in Fort Sanders.

⁽³⁾Acquired upon merger of NHR and NHC.

⁽⁴⁾Effective January 1, 2010, management contracts were terminated.

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The following table includes certain information regarding Healthcare Facilities which are owned or leased by us and leased to others:

Name of Facility	Location	No. of Beds
<i>Long-Term Care</i>		
The Aristocrat	Naples, FL	60
The Health Center at Coconut Creek	Coconut Creek, FL	120
The Health Center of Daytona Beach	Daytona Beach, FL	73
The Imperial Health Care Center	Naples, FL	113
The Health Center of Windermere	Orlando, FL	120
Charlotte Harbor Health Care Center	Port Charlotte, FL	180
The Health Center at Standifer Place	Chattanooga, TN	544
<i>Assisted Living</i>		
The Place at Vero Beach	Vero Beach, FL	120
The Place at Merritt Island	Merritt Island, FL	84
The Place at Stuart	Stuart, FL	84
Standifer Place Assisted Living	Chattanooga, TN	66

Item 3. Legal Proceedings.

General and Professional Liability Lawsuits and Insurance

The long term care industry has experienced significant amounts of personal injury/wrongful death claims and in the severity of awards based upon alleged negligence by nursing facilities and their employees in providing care to residents. As of December 31, 2009, we and/or our managed centers are currently defendants in 38 such claims covering the years 1999 through December 31, 2009.

In 2002, we established and capitalized a wholly-owned licensed liability insurance company. Thus, since 2002, insurance coverage for incidents occurring at all providers owned or leased, and most providers managed by us is provided through this wholly-owned insurance company.

Our coverages for all years include primary policies and excess policies. In 2002, deductibles were eliminated and first dollar coverage was provided through the wholly-owned insurance company, while the excess coverage was provided by a third party insurer.

For 2003-2009, both primary professional liability insurance coverage and excess coverage is provided through our wholly-owned liability insurance company. The primary coverage is in the amount of \$1 million per incident, \$3 million per location with an annual primary policy aggregate limit of \$17.0 million for 2009, \$16.0 million for 2008, and \$14 million for 2007. The excess coverage is \$7.5 million annual excess in the aggregate applicable to years 2003-2007 and subsequently for \$9.0 million annual excess in the aggregate for years 2008-2009.

As a result of the terms of our insurance policies and our use of a wholly-owned insurance company, we have retained significant self-insured risk with respect to general and professional liability. We use independent actuaries to estimate our exposures for claims obligations (for both asserted and unasserted claims) related to exposures in excess of coverage limits, and we maintain reserves for these obligations. **It is possible that claims against us could exceed our coverage limits and our reserves, which would have a material adverse effect on our financial position, results of operations and cash flows.**

General Litigation

There is certain additional litigation incidental to our business, none of which, in management's opinion, would be material to our financial position or results of operations.

Item 4. Submission of Matters to a Vote of Security Holders

None

PART II**Item 5. Market for Registrant's Common Equity, Related Stockholder Matters and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities.**

The shares of common stock of National HealthCare Corporation are listed on the NYSE Amex exchange under the symbol NHC. NHC was previously listed on the American Stock Exchange until its acquisition by NYSE in October 2008. The closing price for the NHC common shares on February 26, 2010 was \$36.79. On December 31, 2009, NHC had approximately 4,500 shareholders, comprised of approximately 2,300 shareholders of record and an additional 2,211 shareholders indicated by security position listings. The following table sets out the quarterly high and low sales prices and cash dividends declared of NHC's common shares.

	Stock Prices		Cash Dividends Declared
	High	Low	
2008			
1 st Quarter	\$ 51.70	\$ 45.75	\$.210
2 nd Quarter	53.95	45.75	.240
3 rd Quarter	53.95	42.75	.240
4 th Quarter	50.64	34.10	.240

2009

1 st Quarter	\$ 51.74	\$ 34.17	\$.240
2 nd Quarter	43.66	36.10	.260
3 rd Quarter	40.00	34.91	.260
4 th Quarter	37.74	34.32	.260

There was no repurchase or publicly announced programs to repurchase our common stock in 2008 or 2009.

Although we intend to declare and pay regular quarterly cash dividends, there can be no assurance that any dividends will be declared, paid or increased in the future.

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Since November 1, 2007, the shares of convertible preferred stock of NHC are listed on the NYSE Amex exchange under the symbol NHC.PRA. The following table sets out the quarterly high and low sales prices and cash dividends declared of NHC's preferred shares.

	Stock Prices		Cash Dividends Declared
	High	Low	
2008			
1 st Quarter	\$ 15.24	\$ 13.00	\$.20
2 nd Quarter	14.30	12.73	.20
3 rd Quarter	14.16	12.75	.20
4 th Quarter	14.00	9.00	.20
2009			
1 st Quarter	\$ 14.00	\$ 10.21	\$.20
2 nd Quarter	12.40	10.48	.20
3 rd Quarter	12.50	11.01	.20
4 th Quarter	12.25	9.15	.20

The following table sets forth information regarding our equity compensation plans:

Plan Category	Number of securities to be issued upon exercise of outstanding options, warrants and rights	Weighted-average exercise price of outstanding options, warrants and rights	Number of securities remaining available for future issuance under equity compensation plans (excluding securities reflected in column (a))
	(a)	(b)	(c)
Equity compensation plans approved by security holders	385,305	44.78	787,738
Equity compensation plans not approved by security holders			
Total	385,305	44.78	787,738

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The following graph and chart compare the cumulative total stockholder return for the period from December 31, 2004 through December 31, 2009 on an investment of \$100 in (i) NHC's common stock, (ii) the Standard & Poor's 500 Stock Index (S&P 500 Index) and (iii) the Standard & Poor's Health Care Index (S&P Health Care Index). Cumulative total stockholder return assumes the reinvestment of all dividends. Stock price performances shown in the graph are not necessarily indicative of future price performances.

Item 6. Selected Financial Data.

The following table represents selected financial information for the five years ended December 31, 2009. The data for 2009, 2008 and 2007 has been derived from financial statements included elsewhere in this Form 10-K and should be read in conjunction with those financial statements, accompanying footnotes and Management's Discussion and Analysis.

	2009	As of and for the Year Ended December 31,			2005
		2008	2007 ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	2006 ⁽³⁾	
		<i>(in thousands, except per share data)</i>			
Operating Data:					
Net operating revenues	\$ 668,221	\$ 633,208	\$ 579,360	\$ 544,005	\$ 533,099
Total costs and expenses	617,349	595,656	525,800	508,679	495,691
Non-operating income	16,784	15,735	18,674	18,953	9,282
Income before income taxes	67,656	53,287	72,234	54,279	46,690
Income tax provision	27,607	16,916	26,785	17,539	18,055
Net income	40,049	36,371	45,449	36,740	28,635
Dividends to preferred shareholders	8,673	8,673	1,831		
Net income available to common shareholders	31,376	27,698	43,618	36,740	28,635
Earnings per common share:					
Basic	\$ 2.31	\$ 2.16	\$ 3.47	\$ 2.99	\$ 2.34
Diluted	2.31	2.11	3.36	2.85	2.24
Cash dividends declared:					
Per preferred share	\$.80	\$.80	\$.169	\$	\$
Per common share	1.02	.93	.810	.690	.575
Balance Sheet Data:					
Total assets	\$ 788,532	\$ 777,296	\$ 698,408	\$ 471,477	\$ 410,625
Accrued risk reserves	107,456	106,000	88,382	76,471	70,290
Long-term debt, less current portion	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,381	13,568
Stockholders' equity	525,779	480,817	455,708	249,142	203,059

(1)

Effective January 1, 2007, the Company adopted ASC Topic 740, *Income Taxes* (previously FIN No. 48).

(2)

On October 31, 2007, the Company completed its acquisition of NHR.

(3)

Effective January 1, 2006, the Company adopted ASC Topic 718, *Compensation - Stock Compensation* (previously SFAS No. 123(revised 2004)).

Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations.

Overview

National HealthCare Corporation, which we also refer to as NHC or the Company, is a leading provider of long-term health care services. At December 31, 2009 we operate or manage 76 long-term health care centers with 9,772 beds in 10 states and provide other services in two additional states. These operations are provided by separately funded and maintained subsidiaries. We provide long-term health care services to patients in a variety of settings including long-term nursing centers, managed care specialty units, sub-acute care units, Alzheimer's care units, hospice care, homecare programs, assisted living centers and independent living centers. In addition, we provide management and accounting services to owners of long-term health care centers.

Executive Summary

Merger of National HealthCare Corporation and National Health Realty, Inc., and Issuance of NHC Convertible Preferred Stock - On October 31, 2007, NHC completed its acquisition of National Health Realty, Inc., (NHR) as contemplated by the Agreement and Plan of Merger (the Merger Agreement), following the approval of the merger and approval of the issuance of shares of NHC Series A Convertible Preferred Stock (NHC Preferred) by the stockholders of NHC. The acquisition has provided us with ownership of a portfolio of first class health care, retirement and assisted living centers and has enhanced our net cash flows by approximately \$5,400,000 in 2009 and \$4,000,000 in 2008. We estimate that we experienced a reduction in 2009 and 2008 earnings per share of approximately 14 cents and 26 cents per common share basic, respectively, and 14 cents and 25 cents per common share diluted, respectively, due to the merger. We believe, however, that the negative consequence is offset by the accretive effect that the merger has had and is expected to have in the future on NHC 's free cash flow.

\$75,000,000 Revolving Credit Agreement On October 27, 2009, National HealthCare Corporation extended its Credit Agreement (the Credit Agreement) with Bank of America, N.A., as lender (the Lender). The Credit Agreement provides for a \$75,000,000 revolving credit facility (the Credit Facility), of which up to \$5,000,000 may be utilized for letters of credit.

Amounts outstanding under the Credit Facility bear interest at either, (i) the Eurodollar rate plus 1.0% or (ii) the prime rate. Letter of credit fees are equal to 1.0% times the maximum amount available to be drawn under outstanding letters of credit. Commitment fees are payable on the daily unused portion of the Credit Facility at a rate of 20 basis points per annum.

As of December 31, 2009, the outstanding balance on the Credit Facility is \$0-. The entire amount of \$75,000,000 is available to be drawn for general corporate purposes, including working capital and acquisitions. We obtained the line of credit to fund further growth strategies as opportunities arise.

Earnings To monitor our earnings, we have developed budgets and management reports to monitor labor, census, and the composition of revenues. Inflationary increases in our costs may cause net earnings from patient services to decline.

Development and Growth We are undertaking to expand our long-term care operations while protecting our existing operations and markets. The following table lists our recent or expected construction and purchase activities.

Description	Beds	Location	Placed in Service
Addition	60	Columbia, SC	First Quarter 2007
Addition	60	Garden City, SC	First Quarter 2007
Addition	20	Franklin, TN	January 2008

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Purchase	109	Knoxville, TN	January 2008
Addition	60	North Augusta, SC	June 2008
Purchase	132	Charleston, SC	August 2008
Purchase	60	Charleston, SC	August 2008
New Center	120	Bluffton, SC	January 2010
New Center	61	Mauldin, SC	March 2010

We expect to begin construction in 2010 of a new 77-bed long-term care facility in Tullahoma, Tennessee, a new 75-unit assisted living facility in Parklane, South Carolina, and a bed addition to our current Cool Springs, Tennessee assisted living facility. During 2010, we will apply for Certificates of Need for additional beds in our markets and also evaluate the feasibility of expansion into new markets by building private pay health care centers or by the purchase of existing health care centers.

In 2008, we developed an active hospice program in South Carolina independently of our partnership with Caris Healthcare. In January 2009, we purchased five hospice locations in South Carolina and opened another location in Greenville, South Carolina. This brought the total to seven hospice locations in South Carolina as of December 31, 2009.

Accrued Risk Reserves Our accrued professional liability reserves, workers' compensation reserves and health insurance reserves totaled \$107,456,000 at December 31, 2009 and are a primary area of management focus. We have set aside restricted cash and marketable securities to fund our professional liability and workers' compensation reserves.

As to exposure for professional liability claims, we have developed for our centers performance certification criteria to measure and bring focus to the patient care issues most likely to produce professional liability exposure, including in-house acquired pressure ulcers, significant weight loss and numbers of falls. These programs for certification, which we regularly modify and improve, have produced measurable improvements in reducing these incidents. Our experience is that achieving goals in these patient care areas improves both patient and employee satisfaction.

Application of Critical Accounting Policies

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires us to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates and cause our reported net income to vary significantly from period to period.

Our critical accounting policies that are both important to the portrayal of our financial condition and results and require our most difficult, subjective or complex judgments are as follows:

Revenue Recognition - Third Party Payors - Approximately 64% (2009), 63% (2008), and 65% (2007) of our net operating revenues are derived from Medicare, Medicaid, and other government programs. Amounts earned under these programs are subject to review by the Medicare and Medicaid intermediaries. In our opinion, adequate provision has been made for any adjustments that may result from these reviews. Any differences between our estimates of settlements and final determinations are reflected in operations in the year finalized. We have made provisions of approximately \$18,617,000 as of December 31, 2009 for other various Medicare and Medicaid issues for current and prior year cost reports and claims reviews. Consistent with our revenue recognition policies, we will record revenues when the approved requests, including the final cost report audits, are assured. We recorded revenues of \$430,000, \$490,000, and \$2,910,000 for such settlements in 2009, 2008, and 2007, respectively.

Revenue Recognition - Private Pay - For private pay patients in skilled nursing or assisted living facilities, we bill room and board in advance for the current month with payment being due upon receipt of the statement in the month the services are performed. Charges for ancillary, pharmacy, therapy and other services to private patients are billed in the month following the performance of services; however, all billings are recognized as revenue when the services are performed.

Accrued Risk Reserves - We are principally self-insured for risks related to employee health insurance, workers compensation and professional and general liability claims. Our accrued risk reserves primarily represent the accrual for self-insured risks associated with employee health insurance, workers compensation and professional and general liability claims. The accrued risk reserves include a liability for reported claims and estimates for incurred but unreported claims. Our policy with respect to a significant portion of our workers compensation and professional and general liability claims is to use an actuary to support the estimates recorded for incurred but unreported claims. Our health insurance reserve is based on our known claims incurred and an estimate of incurred but unreported claims determined by our analysis of historical claims paid. We reassess our accrued risk reserves on a quarterly basis.

Professional liability remains an area of particular concern to us. The entire long term care industry has seen a dramatic increase in personal injury/wrongful death claims based on alleged negligence by nursing homes and their employees in providing care to residents. As of December 31, 2009, we and/or our managed centers are defendants in 38 such claims inclusive of years 1999 through 2009. It remains possible that those pending matters plus potential unasserted claims could exceed our reserves, which could have a material adverse effect on our financial position, results of operations and cash flows. It is also possible that future events could cause us to make significant adjustments or revisions to these reserve estimates and cause our reported net income to vary significantly from period to period.

We maintain insurance coverage for incidents occurring in all provider locations owned, leased or managed by us. The coverages include both primary policies and excess policies.

We maintain both primary and excess coverage through our own insurance subsidiary. Settlements, if any, in excess of available insurance policy limits and our own reserves would be expensed by us.

Revenue Recognition - Subordination of Fees and Uncertain Collections - We provide management services to certain long-term care facilities and to others we provide accounting and financial services. We generally charge 6% to 7% of net revenues for our management services and a predetermined fixed rate per bed for the accounting and financial services. Our policy is to recognize revenues associated with both management services and accounting and financial services on an accrual basis as the services are provided. However, under the terms of our management contracts, payments for our management services are subject to subordination to other expenditures of the long-term care center being managed. Furthermore, for certain of the third parties with whom we have contracted to provide services and which we have determined, based on insufficient historical collections and the lack of expected future collections, that collection is not reasonably assured, our policy is to recognize income only in the period in which the amounts are realized. We may receive payment for the unpaid and unrecognized management fees in whole or in part in the future only if cash flows from the operating and investing activities of the centers are sufficient to pay the fees. There can be no assurance that such future cash flows will occur. The realization of such previously unrecognized revenue could cause our reported net income to vary significantly from period to period.

We agree to subordinate our fees to the other expenses of a managed center because we believe we know how to improve the quality of patient services and finances of a long-term care center and because subordinating our fees demonstrates to the owner and employees of the managed center how confident we are of the impact we can have in making the center operations successful. We may continue to provide services to certain managed centers despite not being fully paid currently so that we may be able to collect unpaid fees in the future from improved operating results and because the incremental savings from discontinuing services to a center may be small compared to the potential benefit. Also, we may benefit from providing other ancillary services to the managed center.

See Notes 3, 4 and 5 to the Consolidated Financial Statements regarding our relationships with National, NHI and centers previously owned by NHI and the recognition of management fees from long-term care centers owned by these parties.

Credit Losses - Certain of our accounts receivable from private paying patients and certain of our notes receivable are subject to credit losses. We have attempted to reserve for expected accounts receivable credit losses based on our past experience with similar accounts receivable and believe our reserves to be adequate.

We continually monitor and evaluate the carrying amount of our notes receivable in accordance with ASC Topic 310, *Receivables* (previously SFAS No. 114, *Accounting by Creditors for Impairment of a Loan - An Amendment of FASB Statements No. 5 and 15.*). It is possible, however, that the accuracy of our estimation process could be materially impacted as the composition of the receivables changes over time. We continually review and refine our estimation process to make it as reactive to these changes as possible. However, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to accurately estimate credit losses on these balances. It is possible that future events could cause us to make significant adjustments or revisions to these estimates and cause our reported net income to vary significantly from period to period.

Potential Recognition of Deferred Income - During 1988, we sold the assets of eight long-term health care centers to National Health Corporation (National), our administrative general partner at the time of the sale. The resulting profit of \$15,745,000 was deferred. \$10,000,000 of the deferred gain and related deferred income taxes of \$4,000,000 was recognized as income in December, 2007 with the collection of the \$10,000,000 note from National. \$3,745,000 of the deferred gain has been amortized into income on a straight-line basis over the 20-year management contract period. Additional deferred income of \$2,000,000 will be recognized when the Company no longer has an obligation to advance the \$2,000,000 working capital loan, which was extended until January 20, 2018 with the extension of the management agreement.

Uncertain Tax Positions - NHC continually evaluates for uncertain tax positions. These uncertain positions may arise where tax laws may allow for alternative interpretations or where the timing of recognition of income is subject to judgment. We believe we have adequate provisions for our uncertain tax positions including related penalties and interest. However, because of uncertainty of interpretation by various tax authorities and the possibility that there are issues that have not been recognized by management, we cannot guarantee we have accurately estimated our tax liabilities.

The above listing is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all of our accounting policies. In many cases, the accounting treatment of a particular transaction is specifically dictated by generally accepted accounting principles, with limited need for management's judgment in their application. There are also areas in which management's judgment in selecting any available alternative would not produce a materially different result. See our audited consolidated financial statements and notes thereto which contain accounting policies and other disclosures required by generally accepted accounting principles.

Results of Operations

The following table and discussion sets forth items from the consolidated statements of income as a percentage of net revenues for the audited years ended December 31, 2009, 2008 and 2007.

Percentage of Net Revenues

Year Ended December 31,	2009	2008	2007
Revenues:			
Net patient revenues	90.8%	89.8%	90.3%
Other revenues	6.8	7.8	6.6
Net operating revenues	97.6	97.6	96.9
Costs and Expenses:			
Salaries, wages and benefits	54.1	53.6	54.6
Other operating	27.5	29.4	29.4
Recovery of notes receivable			(2.3)
Recognition of deferred gain - National			(1.7)
Gain on sale of assets			(1.8)
Rent	4.7	4.9	6.7
Depreciation and amortization	3.7	3.8	2.8
Interest	.1	.1	.2
Total costs and expenses	90.1	91.8	87.9

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Income before non-operating income	7.5	5.8	9.0
Non-operating income	2.4	2.4	3.1
Income before income taxes	9.9	8.2	12.1
Income tax provision	(4.0)	(2.6)	(4.5)
Net Income	5.9	5.6	7.6
Dividends to preferred shareholders	(1.3)	(1.3)	(.3)
Net income available to common shareholders	4.6	4.3	7.3

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The following table sets forth the increase in certain items from the consolidated statements of income as compared to the prior period.

Period to Period Increase (Decrease)

<i>(dollars in thousands)</i>	2009 vs. 2008		2008 vs. 2007	
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
Revenues:				
Net patient revenues	\$ 38,535	6.6	\$ 43,296	8.0
Other revenues	(3,522)	(7.0)	10,552	26.6
Net operating revenues	35,013	5.5	53,848	9.3
Costs and Expenses:				
Salaries, wages and benefits	22,774	6.5	21,489	6.6
Other operating	(2,433)	(1.3)	14,929	8.5
Recovery of notes receivable			13,571	100.0
Recognition of deferred gain - National			10,000	100.0
Gain on sale of assets			11,108	100.0
Rent	898	2.9	(8,752)	(21.8)
Depreciation and amortization	611	2.5	7,810	45.9
Interest	(157)	(18.0)	(299)	(25.5)
Total costs and expenses	21,693	3.6	69,856	13.3
Income before non-operating income	13,320	35.4	(16,008)	(29.9)
Non-operating income	1,049	6.7	(2,939)	(15.7)
Income before income taxes	14,369	27.0	(18,947)	(26.2)
Income tax provision	10,691	63.2	9,869	36.8
Net Income	3,678	10.1	(9,078)	(20.0)
Dividends paid to preferred shareholders			(6,842)	(373.7)
Net income available to common shareholders	\$ 3,678	13.3	\$ (15,920)	(36.5)

Our long-term health care services, including therapy and pharmacy services, provided 91.0%, 91.4%, and 91.8% of net patient revenues in 2009, 2008, and 2007, respectively. Homecare programs provided 9.0%, 8.6%, and 8.2% of net patient revenues in 2009, 2008, and 2007, respectively.

The overall average census in owned and leased health care centers for 2009 was 92.0% compared to 92.5% in 2008 and 2007.

Approximately 64% (2009), 63% (2008), and 65% (2007) of our net operating revenues are derived from Medicare, Medicaid, and other government programs. As discussed above in the Application of Critical Accounting Policies section, amounts earned under these programs are subject to review by the Medicare and Medicaid intermediaries. See Application of Critical Accounting Policies for discussion of the effects that this revenue concentration and the uncertainties related to such revenues have on our revenue recognition policies.

Government Program Financial Changes

Cost containment will continue to be a priority for Federal and State governments for health care services, including the types of services we provide. Government reimbursement programs such as Medicare and Medicaid prescribe, by law, the billing methods and amounts that health care providers may charge and be reimbursed to care for patients covered by these programs. Congress has passed a number of laws that have effected major changes in the Medicare and Medicaid programs. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 sought to achieve a balanced federal budget by, among other things, reducing federal spending on Medicare and Medicaid to various providers. In February 2006, Congress enacted the Deficit Reduction Act, or DRA, which reduced net Medicare and Medicaid spending, and in December 2006, Congress passed the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006, which also affects payments under the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Medicare

Effective October 1, 2009, our PPS rates were decreased by a net of 1.1%. There was an inflationary increase of 2.2%, but there was also a recalibration of the nursing weights resulting in a reduction of 3.3%. The net impact of the adjustments was a reduction of 1.1% to PPS rates. Our annual 2009 Medicare revenues increased \$9,088,000, or 6.1%, over our annual 2008 Medicare revenues. The inflation update (or market basket increase) was 3.4% in 2008 and 3.3% in 2007.

Overall our average Medicare per diem increased 3.8% in 2009 compared to 2008. No assurances can be given as to whether Congress will increase or decrease reimbursement in the future, the timing of any action or the form of relief, if any, that may be enacted.

Medicaid

Tennessee annual Medicaid rate increases were implemented effective July 1, 2009. Tennessee Medicaid only funded 20% of the normal rate increases for all Skilled and Intermediate providers. We estimate the resulting increase in revenue from this payment source was approximately \$89,000 per quarter.

Missouri Medicaid funded a global rate increase for all providers of \$6.15 per day effective July 1, 2009. The quarterly effect of these rate increases was approximately \$345,000.

South Carolina annual Medicaid rate increases were implemented effective October 1, 2009. We estimate the resulting increase in revenue was approximately \$682,000 per quarter.

Overall our average Medicaid per diem increased 3.0% in 2009 compared to 2008. We face challenges with respect to states' Medicaid payments, because many currently do not cover the total costs incurred in providing care to those patients. States will continue to control Medicaid expenditures and also look for adequate funding sources, including provider assessments. The DRA includes several provisions designed to reduce Medicaid spending. These provisions include, among others, provisions strengthening the Medicaid asset transfer restrictions for persons seeking to qualify for Medicaid long-term care coverage, which could, due to the timing of the penalty period, increase facilities' exposure to uncompensated care. Other provisions could increase state funding for home and community-based services, potentially having an impact on funding for nursing facilities. There is no assurance that the funding for our services will increase or decrease in the future.

2009 Compared to 2008

Results for 2009 compared to 2008 include a 5.5% increase in net operating revenues and a 27.0% increase in net income before income taxes.

Net patient revenues increased \$38,535,000 or 6.6% compared to the same period last year. Medicare, Medicaid and private pay per diem rates increased 3.8%, 3.0% and 4.8%, respectively, in 2009 compared to 2008. Additionally, the January 1, 2009 acquisition of five hospice locations in South Carolina and the acquisition of a 132-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility and 60-bed assisted living facility located in Charleston, South Carolina, effective August 1, 2008 added approximately \$13,334,000 in net patient revenues. Homecare operations also increased net patient revenues in the amount of \$6,131,000.

Other revenues this year decreased \$3,522,000 or 7.0% to \$46,632,000. Other revenues in 2009 include management and accounting service fees of \$17,845,000 (\$18,496,000 in 2008) and insurance services revenue of \$14,560,000 (\$16,690,000 in 2008). Rental income decreased \$509,000 in 2009 compared to 2008. NHC provided management services for 26 skilled nursing centers, 12 assisted living facilities, and accounting and financial services for 28 centers in both 2009 and 2008. Effective January 1, 2010, we will no longer manage eight of the twelve assisted living facilities. Included in other revenues for these eight facilities was \$948,000 and \$938,000 for 2009 and 2008, respectively. We do not expect the discontinuation of these management services to have a material effect on our

operating results. See Application of Critical Accounting Policies, *Revenue Recognition - Subordination of Fees and Uncertain Collections* for a discussion of the factors that may cause management fee revenues to fluctuate from period to period.

Non-operating income in 2009 increased \$1,049,000 or 6.7% to \$16,784,000. The increase is due primarily to the increase in equity in earnings of our unconsolidated investments in Caris Healthcare, L.P. (\$1,123,000).

Total costs and expenses for 2009 increased \$21,693,000 or 3.6% to \$617,349,000 from \$595,656,000 in 2008. Salaries, wages and benefits, the largest operating costs of this service company, increased \$22,774,000 or 6.5% to \$370,708,000 from \$347,934,000. Other operating expenses decreased \$2,433,000 or 1.3% to \$188,145,000 for 2009 compared to \$190,578,000 in 2008. Rent expense increased \$898,000 or 2.9% to \$32,351,000. Depreciation and amortization increased 2.5% to \$25,429,000. Interest costs decreased to \$716,000.

Increases in salaries, wages and benefits are due to increased staffing due to the acquisition of a 132-bed skilled health care facility and 60-bed assisted living facility in Charleston, South Carolina (\$3,462,000) in August 2008, the acquisition of five hospice locations in South Carolina (\$4,702,000) in January 2009, increased costs for therapist services (\$2,962,000), increased costs for homecare services (\$3,587,000), and inflationary wage increases.

Other operating expenses decreased due to favorable professional liability results of approximately \$11,795,000 in 2009 compared to the prior year. The decreased costs were offset in part by increases in costs at newly acquired long-term care and assisted living facilities in Charleston, South Carolina (\$1,781,000), the costs of five hospice locations newly purchased in South Carolina (\$3,398,000), homecare expenses (\$2,504,000) and inflationary increases.

Rent expense in the 2009 period increased by approximately \$898,000 compared to the prior year due to increased percentage rent to National Health Investors, Inc. (NHI) of \$227,187. Percentage rent to NHI is equal to 4% of the increase in facility revenues over the 2007 revenues, the base year of the lease agreement.

Depreciation expense increased primarily due to the acquisition or construction of depreciable assets in the last year. The increase in depreciation for the twelve months ended December 31, 2009 was \$611,000.

The decrease in interest costs is due primarily to the Company paying off the revolving credit facility during the fourth quarter of 2009.

The income tax provision for 2009 is \$27,607,000 (an effective tax rate of 40.8%). The income tax provision and effective tax rate for 2009 were favorably impacted by statute of limitations expirations and adjustment to unrecognized tax benefits resulting in a benefit to the provision of \$1,553,000 composed of \$941,000 tax and \$612,000 interest and penalties on permanent differences, or 2.3% of income before taxes in 2009. The income tax provision and effective tax rate for 2009 were unfavorably impacted by adjustments to unrecognized tax benefits resulting in an increase in the tax provision of \$4,179,000 composed of \$2,589,000 tax and \$1,591,00 interest and penalties or 6.2% of income before taxes in 2009. The income tax provision for 2008 is \$16,916,000 (an effective tax rate of 31.7%). The income tax provision and effective tax rate for 2008 were favorably impacted by statute of limitations expirations of \$4,086,000 composed of \$2,067,000 tax and \$904,000 interest and penalties on permanent differences, and \$1,115,000 interest and penalties on temporary differences, or 7.7% of income before taxes in 2008.

The effective tax rate for 2010 is expected to be in the range of 35% to 39%.

2008 Compared to 2007

Results for 2008 compared to 2007 include an 9.3% increase in net operating revenues and a 41.9% increase in net income before income taxes after removing from consideration the recovery of notes receivable previously written off (\$13,571,000), the recognition of deferred gain (\$10,000,000) and the gain on sale of assets (\$11,108,000), all occurring in the 2007 period.

Net patient revenues increased \$43,296,000 or 8.0% compared to the same period last year. Medicare, Medicaid and private pay per diem rates increased 1.8%, 3.2% and 6.2%, respectively, in 2008 compared to 2007.

Additionally, the January 2, 2008 acquisition of a 109-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility located in Knoxville, Tennessee, the June 2008 completion of a 60-bed addition to our existing North Augusta, South Carolina facility, and the August 2008 acquisition of a 132-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility and a 60-bed assisted living facility located in Charleston, South Carolina added approximately \$11,952,000 to net patient revenue.

Other operating revenues in 2008 increased \$10,552,000 or 13.1% to \$50,154,000. Other operating revenues in 2008 include management and accounting service fees of \$18,496,000 (\$16,799,000 in 2007) and insurance services revenue of \$16,690,000 (\$15,914,000 in 2007). Rental income increased \$9,195,000 in 2008 compared to 2007. NHC provided accounting and financial services for 28 facilities in both 2008 and 2007. The increase in rental income is due primarily to (1) rental revenues from nine Florida facilities received in the October 31, 2007 merger with NHR (\$6,392,000) and (2) rental revenues from the November 1, 2007 purchase of the real estate of a 544-bed long-term care center and 66 unit assisted living center located in Chattanooga, Tennessee (\$2,000,000). See Application of Critical Accounting Policies, Revenue Recognition - Subordination of Fees and Uncertain Collections for a discussion of the factors that may cause management fee revenues to fluctuate from period to period.

Non-operating income in 2008 decreased \$2,939,000 or 15.7% to \$15,735,000. The decrease was due in part from interest income (\$4,117,000) and dividends and other realized gains on securities (\$427,000). The decrease was offset due to an increase of \$1,626,000 in the amount of the equity in earnings of our unconsolidated investment (Caris Healthcare, L.P.). Interest income decreased in 2008 compared to 2007 due primarily to decreased investments caused by the expenditure by NHC of approximately \$89,600,000 in cash to complete the merger with NHR effective October 31, 2007. Further, interest income decreased in 2008 compared to 2007 due to the collection of notes receivable of \$13,571,000 occurring in the second quarter (\$6,195,000) and fourth quarter (\$7,376,000) of 2007.

Total costs and expenses for 2008 increased \$69,856,000 or 13.3% to \$595,656,000 from \$525,800,000 in 2007. Salaries, wages and benefits, the largest operating costs of this service company, increased \$21,489,000 or 6.6% to \$347,934,000 from \$326,445,000. Other operating expenses increased \$14,929,000 or 8.5% to \$190,578,000 for 2008 compared to \$175,649,000 in 2007. Rent expense decreased \$8,752,000 or 21.8% to \$31,453,000 due primarily to reduction in rent expense due to the October 31, 2007 merger with NHR. Depreciation and amortization increased 45.9% to \$24,818,000. Interest costs decreased 25.5% to \$873,000.

Costs and expenses in 2007 included \$13,571,000 from the recovery of notes receivable which had previously been written off, \$10,000,000 for the recognition of a previously deferred gain, and \$11,108,000 on the sale of land.

Increases in salaries, wages and benefits are due to increased staffing due to the acquisition of two long-term health care facilities (241 long-term beds) and a 60-bed assisted living facility and due to the completion of construction of a 60-bed addition to an existing facility (\$7,281,000), increased costs for therapist services (\$4,211,000), increases in the provision for workers compensation and health insurance claims (\$983,000) and inflationary wage increases. Increases in other operating costs are due to the bed additions mentioned above (\$5,856,000) and inflationary increases.

Rent expense in the 2008 period declined by approximately \$8,752,000 compared to the same period last year because NHC is no longer paying rent to NHR after the October 31, 2007 merger between the two companies. This decline in rent expense is offset in part due to increased percentage rent to NHI (\$530,000). Percentage rent to NHI is equal to 4% of the increase in facility revenues over the 2007 base year revenues.

Depreciation expense increased primarily due to the acquisition of depreciable assets in the last year. The merger with NHR completed on October 31, 2007 added depreciable real property of \$247,649,000 and the net increase in depreciation in the twelve months ended December 31, 2008 was \$7,810,000.

The decrease in interest costs is primarily due to recording capitalized interest for construction projects financed internally of approximately \$150,000 in the current period compared to \$26,000 in the period ended December 31, 2007. Furthermore, the weighted average interest rate for our debt decreased to 1.1% in 2008 from 7.5% in 2007 due to new financing.

The income tax provision for 2008 is \$16,916,000 (an effective tax rate of 31.7%). The income tax provision and effective tax rate for 2008 were favorably impacted by statute of limitations expirations of \$4,086,000 composed of

\$2,067,000 tax and \$904,000 interest and penalties on permanent differences, and \$1,115,000 interest and penalties on temporary differences under ASC 740, (previously FIN 48), or 7.7% of income before taxes in 2008. The income tax provision for 2007 is \$26,785,000 (an effective tax rate of 37.1%). The income tax provision and effective tax rate for 2007 were impacted by statute of limitations expirations of \$1,504,000 (including \$499,000 of interest and penalties) under FIN 48, or 2.1% of income before taxes in 2007.

Liquidity, Capital Resources and Financial Condition

Sources and Uses of Funds - Our primary sources of cash include revenues from the healthcare and senior living facilities we operate, insurance services, management services and accounting services. Our primary uses of cash include salaries, wages and other operating costs of our home office and the facilities we operate, the cost of additions to and acquisitions of real property, rent expenses, debt service payments (including principal and interest) and dividend distributions. These sources and uses of cash are reflected in our Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows and are discussed in further detail below. The following is a summary of our sources and uses of cash flows (dollars in thousands):

	Year Ended		One Year Change		Year Ended	One Year Change		Two Year Change	
	12/31/07	12/31/08	\$	%	12/31/09	\$	%	\$	%
Cash and Cash equivalents at beginning of period	\$ 50,678	\$ 2,379	\$ (48,299)	(95)	\$ 49,033	\$ 46,654	196	\$ (1,645)	(3)
Cash provided from (used in) operating activities	47,824	56,881	9,057	19	85,150	28,269	50	37,326	78
Cash provided from (used in)	(120,838)	(11,117)	109,721	91	(39,185)	(28,068)	(252)	81,653	68

investing
activities

Cash provided from (used in) financing activities	24,715	890	(23,825)	(96)	(55,976)	(56,866)	(639)	(80,691)	(327)
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Cash and cash equivalents at end of period	\$ 2,379	\$ 49,033	\$ 46,654	1,961	\$ 39,022	\$ (10,011)	(20)	\$ 36,643	154
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Operating Activities - Net cash provided by operating activities for the year ended December 31, 2009, was \$85,150,000 as compared to \$56,881,000 for 2008, and \$47,824,000 for 2007. Cash provided by operating activities for the current year benefited from decreases in restricted cash and accounts receivable and also benefited from increases in other current liabilities and accrued risk reserves, amounts due third party payors, and other noncurrent liabilities. The increases were offset by an increase in federal income taxes receivable and decreases in accrued payroll and accounts payable. The acquisition of NHR enhanced operating cash flows by approximately \$5,400,000 in 2009 and \$4,000,000 in 2008.

The decrease in accounts receivable was due to collections and timing of payments. The decreases in accounts payable and accrued payroll were due to timing of payments.

The increase in other current liabilities and accrued risks reserves accounted for \$4,434,000 in 2009, \$17,647,000 in 2008, and \$13,753,000 in 2007 of the cash provided by operating activities. If the risks materialize as expected, which may not be finally known for several years, they will require the use of our restricted cash.

Investing Activities - Cash used in investing activities totaled \$39,185,000 for the year ended December 31, 2009, as compared to \$11,117,000 for 2008 and \$120,838,000 for 2007. Cash used for property and equipment additions was \$44,064,000 for the year ended December 31, 2009 and \$42,660,000 in the comparable period in 2008. Investments in notes receivable totaled \$8,326,000 in 2009 compared to \$5,914,000 in 2008. Cash provided by net collections of notes receivable was \$5,017,000 in 2009 compared to \$4,902,000 in 2008. The collections of our investment in the cash fund in liquidation balance totaled \$7,804,000 cash provided in 2009 compared to \$25,528,000 cash provided in 2008.

Construction costs included in additions to property and equipment in 2009 includes \$16,100,000 for a new 120-bed long-term health care center under construction in Bluffton, South Carolina and \$5,000,000 for a new 60-bed assisted living facility under construction in Mauldin, South Carolina. Both of these facilities are opening during the first quarter of 2010. The remaining \$22,964,000 of additions to property and equipment were for capital improvements at our 50 leased or owned centers. A note receivable investment was made in the amount of \$8,049,000 to a third party healthcare provider in which we provide financial/accounting services. The purchase of marketable securities was transferred out of restricted cash to earn a better rate of return.

Financing Activities - Net cash used in financing activities totaled \$55,976,000 for the year ended December 31, 2009 compared to cash provided by financing activities of \$890,000 in 2008 and \$24,715,000 in 2007. Payments on debt were \$50,502,000 in 2009 compared to \$7,433,000 in 2008. Dividends paid to common shareholders for the year were \$13,508,000 compared to \$11,543,000 in 2008. Dividends paid to preferred shareholders were \$8,673,000 in 2009 compared to \$8,336,000 in 2008. Proceeds from the issuance of common stock, primarily from the exercise of stock options, total \$15,395,000 compared to \$6,663,000 in the prior period. Tax benefits from the exercise of stock options provided cash of \$1,566,000 in 2009 and \$1,549,000 in 2008.

During the fourth quarter of 2009, \$50,500,000 was repaid on our revolving credit facility. The 2008 borrowing was used to repay \$30,000,000 in restricted cash used to fund the acquisition of NHR and to fund 2008 acquisitions and improvements.

Investment in Cash Fund in Liquidation - We invested in the Columbia Strategic Cash Portfolio Fund (the Fund) for a number of years and prior to December 7, 2007, we had considered the investment to be a cash equivalent because the funds were immediately available for distribution. On December 7, 2007, the Fund's manager notified us that (1) cash redemptions were suspended; (2) the Fund's valuation will be based on the market value of the underlying securities, whereas historically the Fund's valuation was based on amortized cost; (3) interest would continue to accrue; and (4) the Fund would begin an orderly liquidation and dissolution of its assets for distribution to the fund holders.

Our investment in the Fund totaled \$39,500,000 on December 7, 2007. Since that date, we have received cash distributions of \$37,170,000 and reported realized losses of \$2,330,000. At December 31, 2009, our investment in the Fund totaled \$-0-.

Since the December 7, 2007 notice from the Fund's manager, we have not considered our investment in the Fund to be a cash equivalent due to the suspension of Fund redemptions. As the Fund was liquidated, we received our pro rata share of the Fund in cash distributions. We reported the cash distributions received as cash flows from investing activities in our Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows.

Table of Contractual Cash Obligations

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Our contractual cash obligations for periods subsequent to December 31, 2009 are as follows (in 000 s):

	Total	Less than 1 year	1-3 Years	3-5 Years	After 5 Years
Long-term debt principal	\$ 10,000	\$	\$	\$	\$ 10,000
Long-term debt interest	2,211	276	553	553	829
Obligations to complete construction	19,260	19,260			
Operating leases	404,400	33,700	67,400	67,400	235,900
Total Contractual Cash Obligations	\$ 435,871	\$ 53,236	\$ 67,953	\$ 67,953	\$ 246,729

Income taxes payable for uncertain tax positions under ASC 740 (previously FIN 48) of \$8,680,000 attributable to permanent differences, at December 31, 2009 has not been included in the above table because of the inability to estimate the period in which payment is expected to occur. See Note 14 of the Consolidated Financial Statements for a discussion on income taxes.

Short-term liquidity - Effective October 27, 2009, we extended the maturity of our \$75,000,000 revolving credit agreement to October 26, 2010. At December 31, 2009, we do not have any funds borrowed against the credit agreement. The entire amount of \$75,000,000 is available to be drawn for general corporate purposes, including working capital and acquisitions.

As to short-term liquidity commitments, NHC has entered into agreements to complete several construction projects. At December 31, 2009, we are obligated on construction contracts in the amount of approximately \$19,260,000, all of which is expected to require funding within the next twelve months.

We expect to meet our short-term liquidity requirements primarily from our cash flows from operating activities. In addition to cash flows from operations, our current cash on hand of \$39,022,000, marketable securities of \$71,280,000 and as needed, our borrowing capacity, are expected to be adequate to meet our contractual obligations and to finance our operating requirements and our growth and development plans in the next twelve months.

Long-term liquidity - Our \$75,000,000 revolving credit agreement matures on October 26, 2010. We currently anticipate renewing the credit agreement at that time. While we have had no indication from the lender there is any question about renewal, there has been no commitment at this time. We entered into this loan originally on October 30, 2007, and have renewed the loan twice, with a one year maturity. At the inception and at each renewal, the lender offered alternative notes with longer maturities, but the Company chose a one-year maturity because of the terms. If we have an outstanding balance and are not able to refinance our debt as it matures, we will be required to use our cash and marketable securities to meet our debt obligations. This will limit our ability to fund future growth opportunities.

Our ability to refinance the credit agreement, to meet our long-term contractual obligations and to finance our operating requirements, growth and development plans will depend upon our future performance, which will be affected by business, economic, financial and other factors, including potential changes in state and federal government payment rates for healthcare, customer demand, success of our marketing efforts, pressures from competitors, and the state of the economy, including the state of financial and credit markets.

Guarantees and Contingencies

We started paying quarterly dividends in the second quarter of 2004. Although we intend to declare and pay regular quarterly cash dividends, there can be no assurance that any dividends will be declared, paid or increased in the future.

At December 31, 2009, we have no guaranteed debt obligations.

We have no outstanding letters of credit. We may or may not in the future elect to use financial derivative instruments to hedge interest rate exposure in the future. At December 31, 2009, we did not participate in any such financial investments.

Impact of Inflation

Inflation has remained relatively low during the past three years. However, rates paid under the Medicare and Medicaid programs do not necessarily reflect all inflationary changes and are subject to cuts unrelated to inflationary costs. Therefore, there can be no assurance that future rate increases will be sufficient to offset future inflation increases in our labor and other health care service costs.

Other Matters

On July 24, 2009, the Company received a civil investigative demand from the Tennessee Attorney General's Office, requesting production of documents related to NHC's business relationships with non-profit entities. The Company is in the process of responding to the demand and will comply as required with the terms of the demand.

New Accounting Pronouncements

See Note 1 to the Consolidated Financial Statements for the impact of new accounting standards.

Item 7a. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures about Market Risk.

Interest Rate Risk -

Our cash and cash equivalents consist of highly liquid investments with a maturity of less than three months when purchased. As a result of the short-term nature of our cash instruments, a hypothetical 10% change in interest rates would have minimal impact on our future earnings and cash flows related to these instruments.

Approximately \$20.3 million of our notes receivable bear interest at fixed interest rates. As the interest rates on these notes receivable are fixed, a hypothetical 10% change in interest rates would have no impact on our future earnings and cash flows related to these instruments.

Approximately \$6.5 million of our notes receivable bear interest at variable rates (generally at the prime rate plus 2%). Because the interest rates of these instruments are variable, a hypothetical 10% change in interest rates would result in a related increase or decrease in interest income of approximately \$33,000.

As of December 31, 2009, none of our current or long-term debt bears interest at fixed interest rates. All of our debt (\$10.0 million at December 31, 2009) bears interest at variable rates. Because the interest rate of this instrument is variable, a hypothetical 10% change in interest rates would result in a related increase or decrease in interest expense of approximately \$28,000.

We do not currently use any derivative instruments to hedge our interest rate exposure. We have not used derivative instruments for trading purposes and the use of such instruments in the future would be subject to approvals by our senior officers.

Equity Price Risk -

We consider the majority of our investments in marketable securities as available for sale securities and unrealized gains and losses that are not considered to be other-than-temporary are recorded in stockholders' equity in accordance with ASC Topic 320, *Investments - Debt and Equity Securities* (previously SFAS No. 115, *Accounting for Certain Investments in Debt and Equity Securities*). The investments in marketable securities are recorded at their fair market value based on quoted market prices. Thus, there is exposure to equity price risk, which is the potential change in fair value due to a change in quoted market prices. Hypothetically, a 10% increase in quoted market prices would result in a related 10% increase in the fair value of our investments in marketable securities of \$9,063,000 and a 10% reduction in quoted market prices would result in a related 10% decrease in the fair value of our investments in marketable securities of approximately \$9,063,000.

Item 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data.

REPORT OF INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM

Board of Directors and Stockholders

National HealthCare Corporation

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

We have audited the accompanying consolidated balance sheet of National HealthCare Corporation as of December 31, 2009 and the related consolidated statements of income, stockholders' equity and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Company's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with the standards of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States). Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of National HealthCare Corporation at December 31, 2009 and the consolidated results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles.

We also have audited, in accordance with the standards of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States), National HealthCare Corporation's internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2009, based on criteria established in *Internal Control-Integrated Framework* issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission and our report dated March 2, 2010, expressed an unqualified opinion thereon.

/s/ Ernst & Young LLP

Nashville, Tennessee

March 2, 2010

REPORT OF INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM

Board of Directors and Stockholders

National HealthCare Corporation

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

We have audited the accompanying consolidated balance sheet of National HealthCare Corporation as of December 31, 2008 and the related consolidated statements of income, stockholders' equity and cash flows for each of the two years in the period ended December 31, 2008. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Company's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with the standards of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States). Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of National HealthCare Corporation at December 31, 2008 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for each of the two years in the period ended December 31, 2008, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

As discussed in Notes 1 and 14 of the consolidated financial statements, effective January 1, 2007, the Company changed its method for accounting for uncertain income tax positions due to the adoption of FASB Interpretation No. 48, *Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes - An Interpretation of FASB Statement No. 109*.

/s/ BDO Seidman LLP

Nashville, Tennessee

March 5, 2009

NATIONAL HEALTHCARE CORPORATION**Consolidated Statements of Income***(in thousands, except share and per share amounts)*

Years Ended December 31	2009	2008	2007
Revenues:			
Net patient revenues	\$ 621,589	\$ 583,054	\$ 539,758
Other revenues	46,632	50,154	39,602
Net operating revenues	668,221	633,208	579,360
Costs and Expenses:			
Salaries, wages and benefits	370,708	347,934	326,445
Other operating	188,145	190,578	175,649
Recovery of notes receivable			(13,571)
Recognition of deferred gain			(10,000)
Gain on sale of assets			(11,108)
Rent	32,351	31,453	40,205
Depreciation and amortization	25,429	24,818	17,008
Interest	716	873	1,172
Total costs and expenses	617,349	595,656	525,800
Income Before Non-Operating Income	50,872	37,552	53,560
Non-Operating Income	16,784	15,735	18,674
Income Before Income Taxes	67,656	53,287	72,234
Income Tax Provision	27,607	16,916	26,785
Net Income	40,049	36,371	45,449
Dividends to Preferred Shareholders	(8,673)	(8,673)	(1,831)
Net Income Available to Common Shareholders	\$ 31,376	\$ 27,698	\$ 43,618
Earnings Per Common Share:			
Basic	\$ 2.31	\$ 2.16	\$ 3.47
Diluted	\$ 2.31	\$ 2.11	\$ 3.36

Weighted Average Common Shares Outstanding:

Basic	13,562,850	12,834,630	12,562,347
Diluted	13,577,676	13,133,419	12,993,930

The accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements are an integral part of these consolidated statements.

NATIONAL HEALTHCARE CORPORATION**Consolidated Balance Sheets***(in thousands, except share and per share amounts)*

	December 31	2009	2008
Assets			
Current Assets:			
Cash and cash equivalents		\$ 39,022	\$ 49,033
Restricted cash		96,934	119,407
Marketable securities		71,280	54,682
Restricted marketable securities		19,350	1,537
Investment in cash fund in liquidation			7,804
Accounts receivable, less allowance for doubtful accounts of \$3,502 and \$5,017, respectively		62,129	70,728
Notes receivable		189	189
Inventories		7,393	7,142
Prepaid expenses and other assets		1,074	1,246
Federal income tax receivable		3,470	
Deferred income taxes			984
Total current assets		300,841	312,752
Property and Equipment:			
Property and equipment, at cost		608,753	571,960
Accumulated depreciation and amortization		(181,177)	(158,478)
Net property and equipment		427,576	413,482
Other Assets:			
Deposits		323	529
Goodwill		5,978	3,033
Notes receivable		26,616	20,389
Notes receivable from National			2,918
Deferred income taxes		15,555	13,672
Investments in limited liability companies and other		11,643	10,521

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Total other assets	60,115	51,062
Total assets	\$ 788,532	\$ 777,296

The accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements are an integral part of these consolidated statements.

NATIONAL HEALTHCARE CORPORATION**Consolidated Balance Sheets***(in thousands, except share and per share amounts)*

	December 31	2009	2008
Liabilities and Stockholders Equity			
Current Liabilities:			
Current portion of long-term debt	\$		\$ 50,502
Trade accounts payable		10,909	13,809
Accrued payroll		46,149	48,480
Amounts due to third party payors		18,617	15,594
Accrued risk reserves		107,456	106,000
Deferred income taxes		8,427	
Other current liabilities		15,117	12,139
Dividends payable		5,729	5,291
Accrued interest		81	104
Total current liabilities		212,485	251,919
Long-Term Debt, less Current Portion		10,000	10,000
Other Noncurrent Liabilities		22,633	15,807
Deferred Lease Credits		2,423	3,635
Deferred Revenue		15,212	15,118
Commitments, Contingencies and Guarantees			
Stockholders Equity:			
Series A Convertible Preferred Stock; \$.01 par value; 25,000,000 shares authorized; 10,841,062 shares issued and outstanding; stated at liquidation value of \$15.75 per share		170,555	170,555
Common stock, \$.01 par value; 30,000,000 shares authorized; 13,717,701 and 13,031,696 shares, respectively, issued and outstanding		137	130
Capital in excess of par value		130,867	113,580
Retained earnings		197,140	179,710
Unrealized gains on marketable securities, net of taxes		27,080	16,842

Total stockholders equity	525,779	480,817
Total liabilities and stockholders equity	\$ 788,532	\$ 777,296

The accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements are an integral part of these consolidated statements.

NATIONAL HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows

(in thousands)

Year Ended December 31	2009	2008	2007
Cash Flows From Operating Activities:			
Net income	\$ 40,049	\$ 36,371	\$ 45,449
Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash provided by operating activities:			
Depreciation and amortization	25,429	24,818	17,008
Recovery of notes receivable			(7,376)
Provision for doubtful accounts receivable	05/07/15		
			\$1,000,000
			\$1,028,757
IronGate Energy Services LLC 11.00% due 07/01/18 07/10/13			230,054
			97,200
R&R Ice Cream plc 8.25% due 05/15/20 06/19/14			187,926
			142,638
Schahin II Finance CO SPV Ltd 5.88% due 09/25/22 01/08/14			756,445
			123,794
Turbine Engines Securitization Ltd, 2013-1A, 6.38% due 12/13/48 11/27/13			344,464
			345,508
Unifrax I LLC/Unifrax Holding Co., 7.50% due 02/15/19 08/13/13			1,405,706
			1,078,770
			\$3,924,595
			\$2,816,667

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION (Unaudited)

Sector Classification

Information in the “Schedule of Investments” is categorized by sectors using sector-level classifications used by Bloomberg Industry Classification System, a widely recognized industry classification system provider. In the Fund’s registration statement, the Fund has investment policies relating to concentration in specific industries. For purposes of these investment policies, the Fund usually classifies industries based on industry-level classifications used by widely recognized industry classification system providers such as Bloomberg Industry Classification System, Global Industry Classification Standards and Barclays Global Classification Scheme.

Item 2. Controls and Procedures.

- (a) The registrant's principal executive officer and principal financial officer have evaluated the registrant's disclosure controls and procedures (as defined in Rule 30a-3(c) under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended) as of a date within 90 days of the filing date of this report and have concluded, based on such evaluation, that the registrant's disclosure controls and procedures were effective, as of that date, in ensuring that information required to be disclosed by the registrant in this Form N-Q was recorded, processed, summarized and reported within the time periods specified in the Securities and Exchange Commission's rules and forms.
- (b) There was no change in the registrant's internal control over financial reporting (as defined in Rule 30a-3(d) under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended) that occurred during the registrant's last fiscal quarter that has materially affected or is reasonably likely to materially affect the registrant's internal control over financial reporting.

Item 3. Exhibits.

A separate certification for each principal executive officer and principal financial officer of the registrant as required by Rule 30a-2(a) under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (17 CFR 270.30a-2(a)), is attached hereto.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and the Investment Company Act of 1940, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

Guggenheim Credit Allocation Fund

By: /s/ Donald C. Cacciapaglia
Donald C. Cacciapaglia
President and Chief Executive Officer

Date: April 29, 2016

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and the Investment Company Act of 1940, this report has been signed below by the following persons on behalf of the registrant and in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

By: /s/ Donald C. Cacciapaglia
Donald C. Cacciapaglia
President and Chief Executive Officer

Date: April 29, 2016

By: /s/ John L. Sullivan
John L. Sullivan
Chief Financial Officer, Chief Accounting Officer & Treasurer

Date: April 29, 2016