



2015–16

Florida Department of Health year in review





Florida Healthy Babies Initiative

In March, the Department announced \$1.4 million in funding for Florida's Healthy Babies, a collaborative statewide initiative to positively influence social determinants of health and reduce racial disparity in infant mortality, as black infants are 2–3 times more likely to die than white infants during the first year of life. This project engages the Department's 67 county health departments (CHDs) and numerous partners within each county to address disparities with evidence-based interventions. Throughout the year each county worked with their communities to develop a work plan, which includes activities such as implementing Baby Steps to Baby Friendly at area hospitals.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Joined a Multi-state contract to Purchase Breast Pumps

Using WIC food dollars at a reduced rate, local WIC agencies were able to provide breast pumps to women who had babies in a newborn intensive care units, and women who were breastfeeding exclusively and going back to work or school.

WIC 2015–16:

Infants who were ever breastfed increased from 79.3 to 80.7 percent.

Infants who were breastfed at least 26 weeks increased from 32.1 to 34.0 percent.

Infants who fully breastfed at least 26 weeks increased from 13.8 to 14.3 percent.

Children's Medical Services

Early Steps, 2015–16

48,194 children were referred to the Early Steps Program, which provides support for families with infants and toddlers, birth to 36 months of age, who have developmental delays or conditions that could result in delays. Of those referred, 31,091 children were determined eligible and served with an Individualized Family Support Plan.



CMS Managed Care Plan, 2016 The plan, which provides children with special health care needs a family-centered, comprehensive and coordinated system of care, served 74,756 children. In January, the new clinical eligibility screening tool rules went into place. The rules were further modified in April through collaborative rulemaking efforts with input from the families and the health care community.

As part of the Department's Healthy Babies initiative, Healthiest Weight Florida implemented the Baby Steps to Baby Friendly project in partnership with 41 hospitals in 26 counties. Baby Steps to Baby Friendly supports hospitals to improve and enhance maternity care practices related to breastfeeding, including achieving the World Health Organization and UNICEF's Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. Eleven hospitals have achieved the Baby-Friendly designation.

Zika Virus 2016

The Department spent most of 2016 protecting residents and visitors from the Zika virus, particularly in South Florida. Florida was the first state in the continental U.S. to identify locally transmission of Zika virus by *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes. We are also one of the few jurisdictions in the world that has interrupted and limited local transmission of mosquito-borne Zika. In all, we identified and eradicated four zones of ongoing, active transmission in Miami. Throughout the 2016 response, there were 1,333 cases, 1,049 of which were travel-related, 263 were locally acquired and 21 had exposure both in Florida and in other areas with ongoing Zika transmission. The Department provided free Zika testing to pregnant women and monitored 230 Zika-positive women during and after their pregnancies. Four babies were born with congenital infections and neurological complications and were offered needed support and services. Our state labs tested more than 12,000 people for Zika. We partnered with CDC to host informational sessions with Florida's health care providers—especially those who care for pregnant women. The Department, under the leadership of Governor Scott, awarded \$25 million to institutions in Florida to research ways to combat Zika, including better diagnostic tools, to understand long-term health impacts and support vaccine development.

response

Hurricanes

This year, we saw the first large-scale hurricane event in a decade. The Department is the lead agency for Florida's Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF-8). This role encompasses public health and medical preparedness and response efforts.

During Hurricane Matthew, the Department operated 51 special needs shelters and deployed 12 teams to the field to support local operations. We assisted with the large scale evacuation of three health care facilities including two hospitals and one nursing home. We also conducted

outreach to more than 45,000 medically fragile individuals to ensure they were safe and well during this incident.

Pulse Mass Shooting

In June, as a state, we experienced the unimaginable tragedy of a terror attack at a nightclub, Pulse, in Orlando that took the lives of 49 victims. The Department was called to action. Through the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC), State ESF-8 personnel activated. Per request from the Orlando EOC, the Florida Emergency Mortuary Operations Response System (FEMORS) was activated to support fatality management by the District 9 Medical Examiner; within a few hours, they were on site. Timeliness of victim identification allowed families to know the status of their loved ones as soon as possible.

We also established contact with OneBlood, the largest blood bank in Florida, to ensure adequate blood supply, activated personnel to support the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, alerted Disaster Behavioral Health Teams that their services were needed, and monitored medical surge needs to ensure the involved hospitals were not overwhelmed.

World AIDS Day, Dec. 1

On Dec. 1, the Department united with people and communities worldwide to show our support for people living with HIV and commemorate those who have died. The Department used this opportunity to renew our commitment to fighting the spread of HIV in Florida and helping connect individuals who are positive with lifesaving treatment and services.

South Florida has the highest incidence of HIV in the U.S. and it is a priority of the Department to change this.

We are focusing on four key strategies to make an even greater impact on reducing HIV rates in Florida and getting to zero:

- 1. Routine screening for HIV and implementation of CDC testing guidelines.**
- 2. Increased testing among high-risk populations and providing immediate access to treatment as well as re-engaging HIV positive persons into the care system, with the ultimate goal of getting HIV positive persons to an undetectable viral load.**
- 3. PrEP and nPEP as prevention strategies to reduce the risk of contracting HIV.**
- 4. Increased community outreach and awareness about HIV, high-risk behaviors, the importance of knowing one's status and if positive, quickly accessing and staying in treatment.**

2016 community health promotion

Healthiest Weight Florida

The Department recognized 80 communities as 2016 Healthy Weight Community Champions for their model practices, which affect more than 41 percent of Floridians. This year's class of champions worked to reshape environments in their communities through a variety of evidence-based policies that increase physical activity and improve nutrition.

Heart Health Plus

Seventeen CHDs were selected to implement the Heart Health Plus program based upon heart disease and related risk factor data. The interventions included the development of a blood pressure self-monitoring program, collaboration with a health system to implement standardized hypertension and tobacco cessation protocols, and partnership with faith-based organizations to assist with enrollment in the 100 congregations for Million Hearts program.

School-Based Dental Sealant Programs

The number of CHDs with a School-Based Sealant Program increased by 40 percent to 51 in 2016. These programs offer preventive dental services in schools at no cost to schools, parents or children. These programs have more than doubled the number of schools served with preventive dental services from 324 schools in 2013 to 664 schools in 2016. The cost savings over three years for 39,083 children receiving one dental sealant is more than \$2.5 million. Every \$1 Florida invests in dental sealants saves \$1.88 in fillings. Children with improved oral health learn and grow better and miss less school.



The Division of Community Health Promotion helped Floridians make healthy choices through a wide variety of programs.

Research The Department announced that over \$16 million in research funding was awarded to 17 different projects through the Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program and the James and Esther King Biomedical Research Program. These funds, dispersed among a number of universities and cancer research centers across the state, support researchers in their efforts to improve prevention, diagnosis, treatment and develop cures for cancer and tobacco-related diseases. The grant recipients were chosen based on recommendations by the Biomedical Research Advisory Council, which develops the comprehensive cancer control plan.

2016: 10-Year Anniversary of Tobacco Free Florida (TFF) The Department celebrated the accomplishments of TFF a decade after Floridians voted overwhelmingly in support of the state constitutional amendment to fund the tobacco education and use prevention program. The program has resulted in a significant decrease in smoking rates among both adults and teens in the state, leading to countless lives and billions of dollars saved. TFF's beneficial impact in Florida is proven by the numbers:

- In 2006, the adult smoking rate was 21 percent. Currently, it stands at 15.8 percent—the lowest it has ever been.

- The youth smoking rate has decreased from 10.6 percent in 2006 to 3 percent in 2016—an astounding 71 percent decrease.

- The reduction in adult smoking rates has resulted in approximately \$17.7 billion in savings in cumulative smoking related health care costs.

- 62 colleges and universities have enacted 100 percent smokefree campus policies.

- A total of 966 multiunit housing properties have smokefree policies.

- Currently there are over 357 school and community-based Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) clubs with over 5,100 SWAT members statewide.

- More than 159,000 Floridians have successfully quit using one of TFF's free services since the program was created.



MQA

Medical Quality Assurance

MQA issued 100,244 initial health care profession licenses in 2015-16—a three percent increase from the previous fiscal year.

In order to best service Florida's 1.2 million health care professionals, the division recently launched the new and improved Online Services Portal. This portal provides a new, user-friendly system that allows health care licensees and applicants more control over their licenses and applications.

VALOR Effective July 1, 2016, the Veterans Application for Licensure Online Response (VALOR) program for expedited licensing and fee waivers was expanded to qualified military veterans and spouses of active

duty service members.

During the 2015-16 fiscal year, 126 military veterans were licensed through VALOR.

Licensing Complaints

MQA investigators followed up on 20,772 complaints filed against licensees and the Department issued 267 emergency orders

restricting and/or suspending licenses of health care practitioners.

Unlicensed Activity MQA's Unlicensed Activity program investigators looked into 1,430 tips regarding unlicensed activity and issued 628 cease and desist notices, a 58 percent increase from the previous fiscal year.

Office of Compassionate Use (OCU)

Over the last year, OCU licensed the state's dispensing organizations, built the compassionate use registry and helped to serve over 1,800 patients.

By the end of 2016, five dispensaries were actively dispensing. In November, 71 percent of Florida voters voted to approve Amendment 2, which expands the qualifying conditions for medical marijuana. The Amendment directed the Department to promulgate rules in six months and implement three rules in nine months. The Department is diligently working through the rulemaking process to implement the provisions of the Amendment and providing information to legislators who are considering further direction to the Department. So far, more than 4,000 patients have received ordered products through this program.



*Advancing
public health
performance*

In March, State Surgeon General Dr. Celeste Philip announced the Department had received first-in-the-nation national accreditation as an integrated department of health through the Public Health Accreditation Board.

This seal of accreditation signifies that the unified Department, including the state health office and all 67 county health departments, has been rigorously examined and meets or exceeds national standards. For the people of Florida, this accreditation is a testament to the Department's ability to keep communities ahead of emerging health threats while promoting best practices to meet ongoing health challenges.

7 Florida Health Performs

For the next two years, we will focus on seven key areas to improve health in our state through Florida Health Performs. Florida Health Performs is the nexus of our State Health Improvement Plan, Department Strategic Plan and County Health Improvement Plans.



1 ▲ childhood vaccines

Increase vaccination of children to prevent disease and keep all of Florida's children protected from health threats.

High immunization levels contribute positively to the state's economy by lowering disease incidence, lowering health care costs and protecting travelers from vaccine-preventable diseases. Increasing access to and availability of vaccines will help keep Florida's families and communities protected from emerging health threats and improve overall school attendance.



2 ▲ health equity

Ensure Floridians in all communities have opportunities to achieve healthier outcomes.

Florida has experienced lower morbidity and mortality rates across several diseases, however gaps continue to exist. All Floridians regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age, geographic location and physical and developmental differences should be able to attain the highest level of health. Eliminating health gaps between different communities in Florida is a strategic priority for the department.



3 ▲ trauma services

Develop a trauma system that ensures the highest quality service for all Floridians.

Florida will have an integrated trauma system that drives performance through data reporting and competition with a goal of ensuring quality outcomes for severely injured patients.



Reduce the incidence of HIV infections to allow more Floridians to live longer healthier lives.

4 ▼ hiv infections

Florida has a comprehensive program for preventing the transmission of HIV and for providing care and treatment to those already infected. By reducing the incidence of HIV, more Floridians will live longer, healthier lives.

▼ infant mortality

Reduce infant mortality to improve health outcomes for all infants.

Infant mortality is a key measure of a population's health. While Florida's overall infant mortality rate has reached historic lows in recent years, these improvements have not been uniform across all groups, particularly among black infants. Reducing the black infant mortality rate will improve health outcomes for Florida's children, families and communities.



▼ inhaled nicotine

Decrease inhaled nicotine use to provide a longer and healthier life for more Floridians.

Cigarette smoking remains a major cause of cancer deaths in the United States. E-cigarette use among youth is on the rise with a 539% increase since 2011. The FDA deems all tobacco products are illegal for anyone under the age of 18. Florida has led the nation with innovative

strategies to teach young people about the dangers of smoking and to help current smokers have the resources and support they need to quit. By decreasing inhaled nicotine use through outreach and education, Floridians will experience longer, healthier lives.



▼ licensure time

Decrease time to issue licenses to health care professionals so they may serve the medical needs of Floridians more quickly.

By decreasing the licensure processing time, health care professionals will be able to get to work in a timelier manner.

