

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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Contact: Communications Office
(850) 245-4111

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AWARDS GRANTS TO EXPAND RESEARCH INTO CANCER AND TOBACCO-RELATED DISEASES

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Health today announced that research grants in the amount of \$1,600,000 each are being awarded to the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute and the University of Florida. This grant funding will be used to expand research into tobacco-related diseases, such as lung cancer. Lung cancer is the leading cause of all cancer-related deaths, and is the most common tobacco-related cancer.

"Florida is creating collaborative research networks to accelerate progress in the care of patients with cancer and tobacco-related disease," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. "These projects will move us closer to becoming the premier destination for cancer treatment, research and prevention."

Funding for the awards comes from the James and Esther King Biomedical Research Program which supports initiatives addressing tobacco-related diseases including cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and pulmonary disease. The Department will issue a new funding opportunity announcement for the King program as well as the Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program prior to July 15.

H. Lee Moffitt's research project will seek to detect lung cancer early, when it may be treated more successfully. The research focuses on improving the accuracy of cancer scanning using a type of x-ray scan called low-dose CT screening. Moffitt plans to translate the work of their research teams into improved computer software to analyze the scans and provide more accurate results. Moffitt will advance the quality of care and Florida's research infrastructure by sharing everything in this project -- the screening methods, computer software programs, and education materials -- with hospitals, universities and research institutions in Florida. Moffitt plans to engage health care providers and the community to ensure that the people at high risk know that screening is a lifesaving choice.

The University of Florida will use this new grant to expand an existing research network that includes nearly 40 percent of all Floridians through a network of 22 hospitals, 416 clinics, and more than 3,000 physicians. This project will seek to improve quality of care for tobacco-related diseases by testing new ways of providing care in real-world clinical settings. The project is significant because it will increase enrollment of vulnerable populations in research studies to better understand ways of improving health outcomes for everyone in Florida. The project will expand the existing research network, provide education for physicians on conducting research

in real-world settings, and collaborate with the Florida Department of Health to reduce regulatory barriers to conducting large-scale research at many institutions.

State Representative Marti Coley said, "Working to find better treatments and a cure for tobacco-related diseases, such as lung cancer, is so important for the citizens of Florida. I want to express my congratulations to the research teams that have been awarded these critical grants and wish them great success."

State Senator Eleanor Sobel said, "It is important for Florida to stay on the frontline of the effort to address all cancers and specifically those tied to tobacco use. This grant funding from the James and Esther King Biomedical Research Program will assist these research institutions in their mission to find cures and share that information with the rest of the state."

Dr. Daniel Armstrong, Chair of the Biomedical Research Advisory Council said, "As the state strategic research priorities were being developed, the Biomedical Research Advisory Council recognized an opportunity to fund enduring infrastructure in the prevention, diagnosis and cure of tobacco-related diseases. This infrastructure can benefit investigators across the state and help us realize advances to reduce cancer burden. The funded projects demonstrate desired collaboration across institutions, shared scientific advisory boards, and meaningful ways to include input from research participants and community advisors. Importantly, these projects include specific plans to share results and make infrastructure available to any researcher in Florida."

"We applaud the state's continued commitment to funding cancer research and the effort to position Florida as the premier destination for cancer treatment and research," said Thomas Sellers, PhD, MPH, center director and executive vice president of Moffitt Cancer Center the only NCI-designated comprehensive cancer center based in Florida. "This grant will be used to improve the excellent research being conducted at Moffitt and the funding will enable greater collaboration among the network of research institutions across the state."

University of Florida President Bernie Machen said, "This grant funding enables us to expand on the nationally-recognized research we have been conducting for several years. A key distinction of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute at the University of Florida is to serve as a central source which connects resources, people and ideas that lead to increased collaboration and new discoveries."

Dr. Myra M. Hurt, Senior Associate Dean for Research, Graduate and Undergraduate Programs at the Florida State University College of Medicine said, "We are pleased to collaborate on this grant with the University of Florida that will accelerate the sharing of information across the research community and lead to increased potential for better prevention technology and new treatments for patients."

Stephanie Leeds, vice president for advocacy in the Florida Division of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) said, "We appreciate the strategic grant funding that

the Florida Department of Health has awarded to these distinguished institutions. Cancers that develop from the use of tobacco affects so many Floridians and their families. It is critical that we remain relentless in our pursuit of better prevention methods, improved treatment and collaborative research throughout our state.”

Martha Bogdan, President and CEO for the American Lung Association in Florida said, “Lung cancer is the #1 cancer killer of women, killing almost twice as many women as any other cancer. On average, less than half of all women diagnosed with lung cancer will be alive one year after their diagnosis. The American Lung Association in Florida applauds this investment of research by the James and Ester King Research Program and we remain committed to working toward a day when Florida families will be free from the pain and loss caused by tobacco-related illnesses.”

Dr. Charles E. Wood, Chair of the Department of Physiology and Functional Genomics at the University of Florida and the American Heart Association member on the Biomedical Research Advisory Council, said, “These awards provide critical resources that will allow for vibrant research on diseases that stem from tobacco use. We are particularly pleased by the new level of collaboration that is now made possible with these specific projects.”

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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