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STATEWIDE TOUR PROVIDES SURGEON GENERAL WITH VALUABLE INPUT FROM HEALTH LEADERS



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Tallahassee, Fla.—State Surgeon General Dr. Celeste Philip finished her statewide tour yesterday with a visit to the county health department in West Palm Beach. Dr. Philip participated in a roundtable discussion with DOH-Palm Beach County leadership and focused on local and state priorities for the department moving forward.

“I have learned a great deal about local and regional priorities during my time touring the state to meet with my colleagues. Today in Palm Beach County was no different,” said State Surgeon General Dr. Celeste Philip. “Working with local partners, Palm Beach is piloting a unique program to treat hepatitis C infections in individuals who are HIV positive. They are also developing a protocol to rapidly identify and treat syphilis in HIV positive individuals. Novel approaches are key to advancing our knowledge on how to improve the health of HIV positive Floridians and I commend them for championing this work.”

“It was a welcome opportunity to host Dr. Philip yesterday during the final stop of her tour,” said Health Officer for Palm Beach County Dr. Alina Alonso. “We were pleased to share a few of our innovative initiatives with her, and we look forward to sharing results from these projects so other counties can learn from our experience and launch similar programs.”

Dr. Philip’s tour began in April in Monroe County. She has now visited with all of the state’s county health officers, both at individual county health departments and through a series of regional consortium meetings. Common topics discussed throughout the tour included mentorship opportunities for health officers, Zika response efforts, outreach and programs for sexually transmitted diseases, racial disparities across infant mortality rates and services for Florida’s HIV population.

The goal of the tour was to identify opportunities in Florida’s 67 counties to improve and collaborate on for the new State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). The department is currently leading a multi-agency statewide effort to develop Florida’s SHIP for 2017-2020. The SHIP will provide the blueprint for effective, targeted and integrated action to improve the health of Floridians. Together with community partners, the department is currently gathering input to identify key health-related concerns facing the state and conducting a thorough analysis of factors that will help pinpoint the most important health issues for Florida.

Highlights along the way can be found on the department’s [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) platforms by searching the hashtag #FLHealthSHIP.

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