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FLORIDA SURGEON GENERAL COMMENDS GOVERNOR DESANTIS FOR COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC HEALTH

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Tallahassee, Fla. — Governor Ron DeSantis today delivered his second State of the State address, marking the opening day of the 2020 Legislative Session and reaffirming his commitment to providing Florida’s health systems with the resources needed to continue improving the health outcomes for Florida’s millions of residents and visitors.

“For the better part of a year, our Administration has been focused on efficient and innovative ways to improve the health, safety and well-being of communities across our great state. I anticipate continuing to work with Surgeon General Rivkees to implement high-impact, community-level strategies that will continue making a difference in the health of our residents,” **said Lt. Governor Jeanette Nuñez.**

“I’m excited for the upcoming legislative session and for the vision that Governor DeSantis has for public health in Florida,” **said Florida Surgeon General Scott Rivkees.** “His leadership and support has led to significant achievements and I look forward to the upcoming year as we continue working toward making Florida the healthiest state in the nation.”

Under Governor Desantis’ leadership, the Department made important strides in advancing public health in Florida in 2019, including:

- **Coordinated the statewide investigation and response to more than 3,000 cases of hepatitis A in 2019** with more than 130,000 doses of vaccines provided by our local Department offices and public health partners.
- **Received a three-year \$58.8 million grant to address the all-drug overdose and opioid crisis in Florida.** The Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) grant will further public health prevention initiatives in partnership with the Department of Children and Families and other local stakeholders.
- **Established the first DOH Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) Statewide Prevention Administrator** with funding from Association of State and Territorial Health Officials and CDC as part of the Opioid Use Disorder, Maternal Outcome, NAS Initiative multi-state Learning Collaborative.

Governor DeSantis' Bolder, Brighter, Better Future budget funds the Florida Department of Health (Department) with \$3 billion to ensure the health of those who reside, work in and visit Florida is protected, including:

- **\$9.1M for Emerging Diseases Threat and Response:** The Department has responded to several emerging infectious disease threats that have impacted Florida residents, the health care infrastructure and the state's tourism industry. Florida receives more than 100 million visitors annually, which raises the risk of high threat disease introductions. One of the most recent threats to Florida's health security is an outbreak of hepatitis A. Funding will improve early identification, respond to and track the threat of emerging and reemerging high threat diseases.
- **\$1.7M for Closing the Gap for Racial and Other Disparities:** Closing the Gap Grant Awards will address racial and ethnic health disparities, including maternal and infant mortality, cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, lupus, HIV and social determinants of health.
- **\$2M for Reducing Infant and Maternal Morbidity and Mortality:** Funding will address health care quality to reduce infant & maternal morbidity and mortality.
- **\$6.1M for Addressing the HIV Epidemic:** Funding will be used for prevention, treatment and response.
- **\$350K for Healthy Water Initiative:** The Department is currently studying the long-term health impacts of exposure to blue-green algae and red-tide toxins to residents, visitors and those occupationally exposed in Florida. Increased funding for the expansion of the study will concentrate on human health effects from these toxins.

About the Florida Department of Health

The Florida Department of Health, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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