

**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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## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS STEPS TOWARD HEALTH EQUITY IN RECOGNITION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**TALLAHASSEE** – During the month of February, which is recognized as Black History Month, the Florida Department of Health is highlighting efforts statewide to bring health equity to all people in Florida. Since 2004, the Department’s Office of Minority Health has coordinated partnerships, program development and other related efforts to address the health needs of Florida’s minority populations statewide.

“Health equity means that all people have the opportunity to achieve their full health potential within their communities,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “Our Office of Minority Health promotes health equity across every part of our agency and works with a dedicated liaison in each of Florida’s county health departments.”

The Reducing Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities: Closing the Gap Grant Program is one of many efforts the Office of Minority Health uses to address health equity at the local level. This program awards grants to community organizations to improve health outcomes of racial and ethnic populations. The program currently focuses on the priority areas of cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, immunizations, HIV/AIDS, maternal and infant mortality, and oral health. For the 2013-14 fiscal year, grants were awarded to 15 community-based organizations with each organization receiving between \$150,000 and \$200,000.

The Department works with Closing the Gap Grant Program awardees, through a competitive application process, to propose interventions and strategies that support, among other things, the Department’s Healthiest Weight Florida initiative. Only 36% of Floridians are at a healthy weight and the Department is working through public-private collaborations to bring together state agencies, not for profit organizations, businesses, faith-based groups and entire communities to help Florida’s children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living.

The Office of Minority Health has ongoing partnerships with organizations such as the National Office of Minority Health, the Health Equity Research Institute, the Florida Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys and the National Conference on Preventing Crime in the Black Community. The Office of Minority Health works comprehensively across the Department to ensure that all of the Department’s programs and services for children, adults, and families are seen through the lens of health equity.

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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