

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 AWARDS FUNDING FOR RESEARCH ON REFRACTORY AND INTRACTABLE EPILEPSY TREATMENT AND RESEARCH

TALLAHASSEE—The Florida Department of Health today announces \$1 million in grant funding to the University of Florida for research involving cannabidiol and its effects on refractory childhood epilepsy. The award is designed to provide treatment with a new medication, derived from cannabis, to children with resistant epilepsy through a Food and Drug Administration Expanded Access Investigational New Drug protocol.

“This funding helps Florida’s families dealing with severe childhood epilepsy to have access to an investigational cannabidiol medication as researchers work to answer important questions about the effect of this medication,” said Secretary of Health and State Surgeon General Dr. John Armstrong. “The scientific research framework puts the best interests of patients first.”

Florida Statute requires all applicants to obtain approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for an Investigational New Drug application authorizing research involving cannabidiol and its effects on intractable childhood epilepsy. Through the Compassionate Medical Cannabis Act, the Florida Legislature provided this funding. This grant was awarded based on rigorous scientific peer review, which is consistent with the standards used by federal funding agencies.

Sen. Rob Bradley said, “This is another step toward ensuring a safe, effective product is available to children suffering from this terrible disease. I’m grateful to see research dollars going to a university committed to helping children and their parents across this great state get the information they need to make the best decision for their family.”

Rep. Matt Gaetz said, “I’m grateful for the Florida Department of Health’s continued efforts to ensure children with intractable epilepsy have access to a safe, effective product. These research dollars will ensure quality information is available to help guide the choices of parents coping with children with these serious medical needs in Florida.”

The studies will directly impact the lives of children in Florida with drug resistant epilepsy. Drug resistant epilepsy is a serious and potentially life-threatening condition that impacts the day-to-day functioning of children. The primary objective of this grant is to evaluate the safety and efficacy of a cannabidiol medication when administered in addition to current care in children who have exhausted the majority of federal FDA-approved antiepileptic drug treatment options. The medication is available in standard dosages. This grant will

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also enhance access to existing clinical trials of other investigational new drugs for Florida residents.

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