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GOV. SCOTT'S SECURING FLORIDA'S FUTURE BUDGET PROTECTS THE HEALTH OF FAMILIES AND VISITORS



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Tallahassee, Fla. — Governor Rick Scott's Securing Florida's Future budget invests \$2.9 billion to protect the health and well-being of Florida families and visitors. The Securing Florida's Future Budget focuses on several key areas, including combatting the national epidemic of prescription opioid misuse and abuse, implementing strategies to fight against HIV, and boosting existing programs focused on protecting young children.

Governor Rick Scott said "I am proud to announce that the Securing Florida's Future budget will help to enhance the health and well-being of Florida's families and visitors. This investment will ensure our state has the resources we need to combat health challenges, such as the national opioid epidemic, for years to come."

Florida State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. Celeste Philip said, "Through the Securing Florida's Future budget, Governor Rick Scott has prioritized critical aspects of public health that will keep Florida on the leading edge of health innovation and improvement. I am grateful to Governor Scott for prioritizing upgrades to the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which remains an effective tool to combat the serious national opioid epidemic here in Florida. We also know that fighting HIV in Florida requires a nimble and adaptive response, and Governor Scott's budget will allow the department to implement strategies that will help reduce new HIV infections. By proposing these investments, as well as recommending funding for programs that protect the health of our children, Governor Scott's budget makes critical provisions that will secure our state's future."

Recommended Funding Highlights:

\$1.2 Million for Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Upgrades

One of the tools Florida has in the fight against prescription opioid misuse and abuse is the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) database, which collects and stores prescribing and dispensing data for controlled substances in Schedules II, III, and IV. The purpose of the PDMP is to provide the information that is collected in the database to health care practitioners to guide their decisions in prescribing. As the state continues to combat the national opioid

epidemic, this funding is key to maintaining and upgrading the database, as well as enabling the addition of new features that will encourage use by prescribers.

Tim Stapleton, Chief Executive Officer for the Florida Medical Association said, “The opioid epidemic is an insidious threat to public health in Florida, and it requires a collaborative response at every level of the community. As a part of an organization that advocates for the highest level of medical care, I am grateful that Governor Scott’s budget includes funding to support a program that prescribers rely on to ensure that patients avoid adverse outcomes from controlled substance use. The data contained in the PDMP database is essential for ensuring safe prescribing practices and stemming the tide of opioid abuse in our state.”

\$55.9 Million for Implementation of Evidence-based HIV Strategies

This funding will strengthen our state’s ability to leverage resources in the most effective way to reduce infections. In order to ensure Florida is implementing strategies to meet the changing nature of the fight against HIV, this recommendation increases the department’s authority for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program and increases the dollars available for Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) – which helps prevent the spread of HIV among high risk populations.

David Poole, director of legislative affairs at the AIDS Healthcare Foundation said, “Preventing the spread of HIV in Florida is one of the crucial roles of the public health system. This flexibility in funding will allow the department to implement effective, evidence-based strategies and continue its high-impact prevention initiatives.”

\$1.4 Million for Early Steps Program

This request is for budget authority to expend fully a federal grant awarded to the department for the Early Steps Program – which serves families with infants and toddlers, birth to 36 months of age, who have developmental delays or an established condition likely to result in a developmental delay. The department is committed to ensuring every grant dollar is spent to help the children and families who benefit from Early Steps services.

Phyllis K. Kalifeh, President of the Children’s Forum said, “The earliest days of a child’s life are when we see the foundations for optimal health, growth and development for all stages of life. I applaud Governor Rick Scott for making the essential services of the Early Steps program one of the priority areas in this budget in order to ensure that Florida’s children with special needs and their families have the support and resources they need to thrive.”

\$3.6 Million for Florida Poison Information Center Network (FPICN)

This funding will ensure the continuation of the valuable around the clock services the Florida Poison Information Center Network provides by specially trained physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and toxicologists. This service was extremely important during the Zika response and transitioning to recurring funding will support the long-term staffing commitments for this important emergency health care delivery program.

Dr. Richard Weisman, director of the Florida Poison Center in Miami said “This investment in the Florida Poison Information Center Network will help improve and ensure that this critical

service is available for all Floridians. The recurring funds will go to further strengthen this program and add a staff that is fully equipped to handle emerging public health threats.”

For additional details on the Governor’s budget, visit www.securingsfloridasfuturebudget.com

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, 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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