

# Health Council of South Florida 2014-2015 State Legislative Agenda



The Health Council of South Florida (Council) is one of eleven local health councils created by FS 408.033 to coordinate health services planning across the state. Insofar as the Health Council of South Florida has determined that health services are and must be based on a foundation of ethics, our strategic goals emphasize reducing disparities in access to care, improving health promotion, and minimizing the effects of HIV/AIDS, with an emphasis on Miami-Dade and Monroe counties (District XI).<sup>[1]</sup> The Council's legislative priorities for action by Florida legislators during the 2015 Legislative Session are therefore:

<sup>[1]</sup> *Ethical standards to Promote the Health of the Community: A white paper on community health, February 2003*

## Local Health Councils Focused Legislative Priorities

**MAINTAIN** level funding of local health councils (LHCs) statewide to \$999,999 (\$90,909 to each of the 11 councils) as provided in FY 14-15.

LHCs develop district health plans containing data, analysis and recommendations that relate to health care status and needs in the community. The recommendations are designed to improve access to health care, reduce disparities in health status, assist state and local governments in the development of sound and rational health care policies, and advocate on behalf of the underserved. Local health councils study the impact of various initiatives on the health care system, provide assistance to the public and private sectors, and create and disseminate materials designed to increase their communities' understanding of health care issues. State funding received by LHCs is used to leverage additional resources to increase their capacity and enhance their service and programs.

For the past five years, the Health Council has maintained a favorable 89% program expense ratio allocated to direct program activities.

### Key Accomplishments

- ✓ **Responsible Fiscal Administration.** HCSF Administration engages in responsible fiscal administration that contributes to its continued improvement and sustainability, demonstrated by external audits which have provided a clean opinion of HCSF financial statements.
- ✓ **Enhanced Community Collaboration.** The HCSF is the regional oversight agency of the South Florida Cancer Control Collaborative, which improves access to cancer care and promotes education, advocacy, and research in eight counties.
- ✓ **Partnership Development.** HCSF serves as the project administrator for the Miami-Dade Health Action Network (MDHAN), a multi-sector trans disciplinary collaborative, which continuously has evolved since 2008 boasting over 2,300 engaged community partners representing 436 unique community organizations. The Network, serves as the neutral convening platform to address issues regarding the promotion of an integrated safety-net system and access to health care in Miami-Dade County. It has evolved into a thriving, active coalition with community partners engaged in work groups and health improvement activities to bring about thoughtful and targeted improvements to our local healthcare delivery system.
- ✓ **Objective & Reliable Community Health Data.** The HCSF's Miami Matters website provides unbiased data on health, environmental, and other quality of life indicators. The site promotes informed community action and serves as a road map for collaborative improvement. It is used by community stakeholders for community assessments, strategic planning, and to develop district profiles and utilization reports.

*Our mission is to be the source of unbiased health and quality of life data and analysis; the preferred partner for quality program planning, management, evaluation, and community services; the facilitator of collaboration and partnerships in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties; and the trusted champion for ethical and targeted healthcare policy at the local, state, and national levels.*

## AIDS Insurance Continuation Program (AICP) Focused Legislative Priorities

**MAINTAIN** level funding at \$15 M to sustain current enrollment levels.

AICP preserves the private health insurance coverage for low-income Floridians living to HIV/AIDS who cannot afford to pay their health insurance premiums.

The program's current overall cost-effectiveness or Gross Value Added Ratio is \$5.34 for every \$1.00 invested. In calendar year 2012, AICP provided private health care services for 2,492 clients throughout Florida and 20% of AICP clients disenrolled from the program and returned to the workforce due to improved health.

### Key Accomplishments

- ✓ **AICP provided insurance assistance to more than 2,000 low-income Floridians living with HIV/AIDS.**  
By helping individuals maintain their private health insurance coverage, many Floridians did not need to access other public health programs such as the Medicaid or the AIDS Drug Assistance Program.
- ✓ **AICP clients received approximately \$5 in private medical care goods and services for every \$1 invested in the program.** If AICP was not available, many clients would have to be enrolled in other public health programs.
- ✓ **The annual average cost savings to the state per AICP client is \$18,345.36.** The AICP client premium was \$549.22 for an annual average premium cost amounting to \$6,590.64. If the same AICP client was enrolled in the Florida Medicaid Program their average monthly premium cost would be \$2,078.00 or \$24,936.00 on an annual basis.

## Health Council of South Florida: 2015 Community Aligned Legislative Priorities

### ACCESS TO CARE

- **Increased Coverage**  
**Support** extending health coverage to uninsured adults who fall between 35% - 100% below the federal poverty with insurance that provides all necessary benefits and meets affordability criteria. It is estimated that over 760,000 Florida residents fall in the coverage gap. Providing access to care to these individuals will result in a healthier and more productive workforce.
  - **Scope of Practice for Practitioners**  
**Support** efforts to expand the healthcare workforce development and scope of practice for all licensed health professionals, allowing them practice to the full extent of their education and training (i.e. advanced registered nurse practitioners, physician assistants).
  - **Telehealth**  
**Support** efforts to expand the utilization of telemedicine in order to increase access to care and reduce costly medical interventions, especially in areas of critical need such as Monroe County.
  - **Children's Health**  
**Support** extending Medicaid and CHIP (KidCare) coverage to all lawfully residing children by removing the 5-year waiting period for children of lawfully residing immigrant parents.
  - **Free & Charitable Clinics**  
**Maintain** level funding in the amount of \$4.5 million for eligible free and charitable clinics operating in the State of Florida.
-

---

- **Rural Health**

**Monitor** the effects of the Medicaid Medical Assistance Program and the impact on beneficiaries residing in Monroe County.

**Maintain** state funding of rural health networks at current levels and support rural health network initiatives geared towards providing access to comprehensive primary care for residents of Monroe County.

- **Home & Community-Based Elderly Services**

**Support** increased funding for home and community-based elderly programs and services, thereby reducing the waiting list of 54,000 frail older adults, including 12,000 in Miami-Dade County.

## **HEALTH PROMOTION / DISEASE PREVENTION**

- **Healthy Behaviors**

**Support** efforts that integrate nutrition and physical activity standards that encourage healthy behaviors in child care centers, schools and senior centers.

- **Food Deserts**

**Support** flexible strategies (such as corporate tax credits and other financing mechanisms) to increase access to healthy foods in areas designated as food deserts.

- **Community Health Workers (CHWs)**

**Support** the efforts of the Florida Community Health Worker (CHW) Coalition to standardize curricula, certification and occupational classification of CHWs. CHWs conduct outreach for medical personnel or health organizations to implement programs in the community and serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.

## **LEGAL/REGULATORY**

- **Assisted Living Facilities**

**Support** efforts to increase oversight of unlicensed Assisted Living Facilities from operating and enhance the protection, welfare, and care of those in need in our community.

- **Certificate of Need (CON)**

**Oppose** further efforts to eliminate the Certificate of Need program and any other deregulation proposals that would impair quality and/or raise the cost of medical care in South Florida.

- **Volunteer Health Care Provider Program**

**Remove** language in the Sovereign Immunity Law that prohibits covered clinics from receiving compensation for the Department of Health; employed healthcare professionals practicing in covered free clinics from receiving sovereign immunity and covered clinics from receiving compensation from patients, allowing clinics to charge a minimal administrative fee if they wish to do so.

- **Volunteer Licensure Requirements**

**Amend** the Limited License Law to simplify the process and criteria for volunteer healthcare professionals from in-state and out-of state to obtain and maintain a limited license.

---



## Health Council of South Florida 2014-2015 State Legislative Agenda

As the preferred partner for strategic and community-based planning for Miami-Dade and Monroe counties, the Health Council of South Florida brings an evidence based, data-driven approach to health planning in our community.

Providing quality community-based services to meet community planning needs.



We invite you to visit our website and learn more about the Health Council of South Florida and its initiatives.



[www.healthcouncil.org](http://www.healthcouncil.org)

### Health Council of South Florida, Inc.

*Marisel Losa, MHSA, President & CEO, E: [mlosa@healthcouncil.org](mailto:mlosa@healthcouncil.org)*

*Cristina Tuero, Manager, Advocacy & External Affairs, E: [ctuero@healthcouncil.org](mailto:ctuero@healthcouncil.org)*

8095 NW 12 Street | Suite 300 | Doral, FL 33126 P | 305.592.1452 W | [www.healthcouncil.org](http://www.healthcouncil.org)