



RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

MARY C. MAYHEW
SECRETARY

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Contact: AHCA Communications Office
(850) 412-3623
AHCACommunications@ahca.myflorida.com

AHCA Prioritizes Patient-Centered Health Care System by Driving Accountability and Transparency

Tallahassee, FLA. – Under Governor DeSantis' leadership, the Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) has spearheaded bold initiatives to lay the foundation for a patient-centered health care system that will prioritize the interests of Florida patients. Driving transformation through greater accountability and broader transparency, the Agency has put meaningful facility-level and provider health care cost information into the hands of Florida consumers; paved a pathway forward for the importation of safe, affordable prescription drugs; and convened health care providers from across Florida to identify key strategies and evidence-based interventions to reduce potentially preventable hospital admissions, readmissions, and emergency department visits as well as reduce adverse birth outcomes.

Governor Ron DeSantis said, "I am extremely proud of the work Secretary Mayhew and her team at the Agency for Health Care Administration have accomplished over the past year. We have taken tremendous strides toward lowering the cost of prescription drugs, providing greater transparency of health care facility procedure costs, improving birth outcomes and reducing potentially preventable hospital visits.

"We've also seen an unprecedented commitment to behavioral health services and support for Florida's most vulnerable populations. These critical steps will help reshape our health care delivery system for the benefit of Florida patients, and I look forward to further building on this work with Secretary Mayhew in the New Year."

Secretary Mary Mayhew said, "Our top priority is to ensure a high quality, safe and affordable health care delivery system for all Floridians, and in his first year in office, Governor DeSantis has delivered on many groundbreaking health care initiatives for Florida patients. The Governor and I have a shared mission to make Florida's health care system the most transparent in the nation. With our Agency's expansion of Florida Health Price Finder, consumers, for the first time, have easy access to the average costs paid for health care services in Florida.

"Equally important is measuring our Agency's investments and interventions in health care to ensure improved health outcomes through greater accountability and efficient use of taxpayer dollars. By breaking down silos and creating new opportunities for collaboration with health care providers from across Florida, we are poised to continue building an environment that fosters clinical best practices, evidence-based care and data driven solutions for Florida patients."

Canadian Prescription Drug Importation

Governor DeSantis has prioritized the importation of cheaper prescription drugs from Canada. The Agency officially submitted its [concept paper](#) in August to the U.S. Department of Health

and Human Services (HHS) for Florida's Canadian Prescription Drug Importation Program. With this milestone achievement, Florida continues to drive the national conversation on reducing prescription drug prices for individuals and families in need. Florida's concept paper identified an anticipated costs savings of over \$150 million annually within taxpayer funded programs when the program is fully operational.

The proposal has seen unprecedented support from President Trump and HHS Secretary Alex Azar, who recently announced a historic notice of proposed rulemaking and draft guidance for a plan to allow Florida and other states to import cheaper prescription drugs.

Transparency

At the start of his administration, Governor DeSantis directed Secretary Mayhew to expedite the development of the Agency's transparency website to offer facility-level pricing and quality information for the most common health care services.

The expansion of [Florida Health Price Finder](#) in early November enabled Florida consumers to review and shop costs for frequently sought health care services such as knee replacements, hip replacements or rotator cuff repair at facilities in their area. This cost data is linked to quality information, thereby empowering Floridians with the transparency necessary to make fully informed health care decisions.

Under Governor DeSantis' leadership, the Agency has worked to dramatically increase the amount of health care information available to consumers. Floridians now, for the first time, have access to health care costs for procedures at hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers on Florida Health Price Finder. The Agency's mission is to drive affordability and value across Florida's health care system and by eliminating barriers to health care cost transparency, Florida consumers and patients can be empowered to make well-informed decisions and create increased accountability for providers.

Birth Outcomes and Maternal Workgroup

The Agency has convened a birth outcomes stakeholder workgroup to focus on identifying key strategies and evidence-based interventions focused on reducing primary C-sections, preterm birth rates, and the occurrence of neonatal abstinence syndrome. The workgroup has been meeting monthly to develop key interventions that will help reduce adverse birth outcomes in conjunction with identifying quick wins that the Agency can work on to make improvements in these areas. These meetings are comprised of Statewide Medicaid Managed Care plans, the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Department of Children and Families and community organizations (i.e., healthy start coalitions, hospitals, Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative, Florida Hospital Association, DONA Doulas, American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, etc.).

Potentially Preventable Hospital Events Workgroup

The Agency has convened a potentially preventable hospital events stakeholder workgroup charged with identifying key strategies and evidence-based interventions focused on reducing potentially preventable hospital admissions, readmissions and emergency department visits. The workgroup has been meeting monthly to develop key interventions in conjunction with identifying quick wins that the Agency can work on to make improvements in these areas. These meetings are comprised of Statewide Medicaid Managed Care plans, the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Department of Children and Families and community organizations (i.e., Florida Medical Association, hospitals, Florida Academy of Emergency Physicians, Florida Hospital Association, etc.).

Housing Assistance Pilot Program

In April, the Agency announced federal approval had been granted to allow the creation of a Housing Assistance Pilot Program as part of the Florida Medicaid program. In November, the Agency announced new details regarding the Housing Assistance Pilot Program, including that that program will go live December 1, 2019.

The Agency's goal with the housing assistance pilot is to facilitate housing stability and improve health outcomes for up to 4,000 Medicaid recipients that can be served annually.

The Agency is proud to be a part of this bold new direction for Florida's Medicaid program as we work to support individuals with serious mental illness (SMI) and substance use disorders (SUD) with supportive housing services. In partnership with community providers, the Agency through selected managed care plans, will address a major social determinant of health for individuals with mental illness or substance use disorder by focusing on efforts to support stable housing to improve their health outcomes and reduce preventable hospitalizations.

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