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Gov. Scott's Securing Florida's Future Budget Makes Investments to Increase Protections and Transparency for Patients and Families

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) highlighted Governor Rick Scott's Securing Florida's Future budget, which invests \$28.7 billion in the agency. The Governor's proposed budget includes important initiatives to improve transparency and protect patients at Florida health care facilities, and invests funding to reduce administrative burdens on health care providers and the Floridians they serve.

Governor Scott said, "Since I have taken office, we have worked to fight price gouging and make Florida's health care system more transparent so families have the tools they need to make informed health care decisions. The investments I am proposing this year build on that commitment by increasing protections and transparency for patients and families across the state."

AHCA Secretary Justin Senior said, "Governor Scott's proposed Securing Florida's Future budget helps our Agency exemplify our priority of better health care for all Floridians. Our Agency has worked to streamline processes and create efficiencies allowing staff to focus on areas of health care, such as access, cost and quality, ensuring that Medicaid recipients and those on private-pay insurance are receiving high quality care. These investments will allow health care facilities to spend more time focused on patients and less time dealing with burdensome regulations, and allow our Agency to offer more transparency while increasing the accuracy and dependability of reporting."

The Securing Florida's Future budget includes:

\$925,000 for the Claims Data Analytics tool that will allow AHCA to enhance analysis and transparency of health care claims data. This supports Governor Scott and AHCA's ongoing mission for transparency in health care pricing. It also continues the fight against price gouging and helps Floridians make informed health care decisions about providers, quality and pricing.

\$500,000 for a Health Facility Inspection Scheduling system to streamline the scheduling process for the facilities AHCA licenses, allowing the Agency to streamline

health facility inspections by consolidating visit and staff schedules. This investment from the Securing Florida's Future budget will reduce travel costs and increase staff productivity and reduce possible burdens by duplicative visits on facilities so they can spend more time on the health and safety of the patients that they serve.

Florida Hospital Association President Bruce Rueben said, "FHA commends the Scott administration for its commitment to transparency and protections for patients and families. These investments will have a real impact on the patients we serve. FHA is proud to be a partner in the mission of better health care for all Floridians."

Samira Beckwith, President and CEO of Hope Hospice & Palliative Care, "Ensuring the health and safety of our patients is the number one priority. The investments Governor Scott's budget is proposing will create efficiencies in the health care field that will allow facilities like ours to spend less time handling on paperwork and more time with the patients we serve."

Lourdes Rivas, President, Florida Medicaid, Simply Healthcare Plans, "As a Medicaid provider we have worked with the Agency for years to utilize data collection in order to improve the experience for our Medicaid members and increase cost effectiveness. The data analytics tools in the Governor's recommended budget will improve practice and referral data thus further enhancing access to quality healthcare for all Florida Medicaid members."

Chris Paterson, CEO of Sunshine Health said, "Sunshine Health is committed to transforming the communities we serve, and with Governor Scott's investments in a claims database there will be improved transparency in health care and more access to information leading to better health outcomes."

Elizabeth Miller, State President, WellCare of Florida said, "We applaud Gov. Scott and AHCA's commitment to investing in health information technology, which ultimately will lead to better health outcomes for Floridians. With enhanced tools to analyze the data collected, we can help stabilize prices and improve the quality of care for patients and the population."

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