



FloridaVoices forHealth



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Championing all Floridians through education, advocacy and action.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD



In Florida – Pregnant women aren't receiving adequate and culturally competent prenatal care; children with toothaches can't see a dentist because their parents can't afford it; and the programs that take care our elderly citizens are being threatened every day.

It's hard to believe that these tragedies are happening in the United States of America, but they are. They're happening right next door to us- to our neighbors, our coworkers, or maybe our friends.

How do Floridians in such dire situations make their crises known? Where do they find solutions and how do they demand change? Who do they talk to? Where do they look?

Florida Voices for Health is Florida's statewide consumer healthcare advocacy organization. We are the voice for and of consumers to make health care challenges known to legislators, the media and the public. Our goal is to improve health care policies so that people can live healthier lives.

We are so proud of our achievements after only being in existence a little over a year. Our staff has decades of experience in consumer advocacy and has been exemplary in bringing our organization to a position of leadership in this field.

The next year will be even stronger because we keep building relationships with consumers who want to get involved, funders who want to support us, media who to help us spread to the word, and legislators who are ready to make change.

Sincerely,

Lisa Grossman, Board Chair

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS!



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Ministries



COMMUNITY CATALYST



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OUR PRIORITIES

Strengthening Florida Medicaid

Medicaid covers 4.4 million low-income children, pregnant women, parents, seniors, and people with disabilities in Florida. The state legislature continues to cut Medicaid funding and explored "block granting" the program. Florida Voices for Health is fighting for Medicaid expansion and other reforms to improve the program for hardworking Floridians.



Improving Dental Health

In 2016, only 37% of eligible children enrolled in Medicaid received a preventive dental service.

As an active member of the FL Oral Health Alignment Network, we're working to improve Florida's dental health. The network is growing a grassroots movement promoting early access and prevention for children and the integration of oral health into overall healthcare.



Protecting Seniors

Florida has a large and growing senior population. It is crucial to defend the programs meant to secure their health and futures, including Medicaid and Medicare. Florida Voices for Health is also working to address the rising costs of prescription drugs, by promoting transparency and more consumer protections.



WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION

Florida Voices for Health (FVH) was founded in January 2017. Our mission is to achieve health equity in a consumer driven health care system through collective power.

We have built a statewide coalition of community organizations, businesses and individuals, working to create a health care system that works for every Floridian. Our partners work together with us to bring the latest resources and information into our communities. We also make sure that the stories and interests of hard working low and moderate income Floridians are represented in the health reform debate.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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OUR IMPACT IN 2017

Built Infrastructure for Statewide Advocacy

At the start of 2017, the gains Florida had made in health care were under significant threat from policy-makers on all levels. Vulnerable Floridians needed a defense against these threats and in support of a better system of care.



Through the year, FVH worked our partners to establish a coalition infrastructure to support advocacy including grassroots organizing, policy analysis, and lawmaker education. We have built a diverse coalition of over 50 active stakeholder organizations and even more individual advocates.

We convened the statewide coalition regularly through conference calls and the first annual Fight Like Health Summit in February 2017. FVH supported the growth of local health care coalitions in Miami, Broward, Orlando, Tampa, and Gainesville. Together with local partners we hosted strategic planning meetings, community education events, and coordinated calls to action.

Defending Health Care and Promoting Health Equity

2017 began with Congress' zealous pursuit of a repeal of the Affordable Care Act and an attempt to transform Medicaid funding into block grants. With support from Community Catalyst, we engaged in a statewide public education and advocacy campaign to defend health care in Florida. We created and disseminated toolkits providing our partners with state and local data, messaging, and sample content.



OUR IMPACT IN 2017 (CONT'D)



We used multiple vehicles to engage and educate the wider public, including: hosting town halls, Facebook Live streams, newsletters, palm cards, and one pagers. Our efforts generated over 50 earned media hits statewide. By connecting health care to other issues like veterans, the elderly, affordable housing, education and

transportation we were able to make Medicaid and health coverage relevant to the lives of more Floridians. Ultimately, key Florida lawmakers voted in support of these harmful measures, but we captured the momentum of civic engagement and established relationships with influential legislative champions.

Elevated the Voice and Stories of Floridians

Our primary goal as an organization is drive health policy reform with the experiences of hardworking Floridian consumers. Florida Voices for Health is proud to have played a pivotal role in connecting lawmakers, their staff, and other health care stakeholders with the stories and experiences of vulnerable Floridians.



Throughout 2017, we worked to identify compelling consumer stories that illustrated the potential impacts of ACA repeal and block grants. Among the consumers we identified were Elizabeth Isom, Faith Olivia Babis, and Karen Clay. Elizabeth overcame an illness after finding coverage in the marketplace, Faith, born without both arms, relies on the ACA for affordable, comprehensive coverage, and Karen is a mom and caretaker for her son Mike who relies on Medicaid waivers to keep him out of institutions.

OUR IMPACT IN 2017 (CONT'D)

In July 2017, we worked with Senator Nelson and his staff to arrange an intimate roundtable meeting in Tampa. At the meeting, these three consumers shared their health care stories with the media and the Senator. A week later Senator Nelson delivered a floor speech highlighting the experiences of the Floridians he met at the roundtable, their stories reaching the venue where it matters the most.



We continued to highlight the stories of Floridians through a broad media outreach strategy that included a statewide editorial board tour. Over the course of 2 months, we met with the Orlando Sentinel, the Palm Beach Post, the Tampa Bay Times, the Florida Times Union, and the Gainesville Sun. The meetings were attended by various partners including Florida Voices for Health, the Florida Policy Institute, the Hispanic Federation, Aging Advocacy Coalition, Florida Alliance for Assistive Services Technology, and Jacksonville Legal Aid. Each meeting focused on the potential impact of state cuts to Medicaid and the impact of federal block grants on Medicaid recipients. The tour generated several published pieces, including two editorials and a published letter to the editor, and helped forge a relationship with key media outlets around the state for this and future campaigns.



VISION FOR 2018

Healthier Communities and Medicaid Expansion

While 2017 featured significant fights on the federal and state level, moving forward, Florida Voices for Health is focused on driving change in local communities. We're focused on identifying and addressing the social determinants that act as barriers to health in vulnerable neighborhoods.

FVH will continue to make the case for Medicaid expansion in 2018 and beyond. Medicaid expansion still remains the greatest opportunity Florida has to improve health care for its most vulnerable residents. We will educate advocates and communities on the merits of expansion and establish important relationships with media and elected officials who will be key to closing the coverage gap.

OUR PARTNERS

- The Aging Advocacy Coalition
 - Alachua County Labor Coalition
 - Allegany Franciscan Ministries
 - Broward Regional Health Planning Council
 - Catalyst Miami
 - Catholic Charities Legal Services
 - Community Labor Alliance
 - Democratic Disability Caucus of Florida
 - Doctors for America
 - Epilepsy Foundation
 - Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology
 - Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy
 - Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
 - Florida Health Justice Project
 - Florida National Organization for Women
 - FIU NHelp
 - Florida Pediatricians Association
 - For Florida's Future
 - Greenpeace Miami
 - Health Council of South Florida
 - League of Women Voters of Miami Dade
 - Hispanic Federation
 - Mental Health Care Association of Central Florida
 - Miami Worker's Center
 - MomsRising
 - National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
 - Oral Health Florida
 - Our Way-Labor Union of Walmart
 - Progress Florida
 - Planned Parenthood
 - SEIU Florida
 - SEIU 1199
 - South Florida Interfaith Workers Justice
 - Tampa Bay Healthcare Collaborative
- Full list of partners available at www.healthyfla.org**