



2022

POLICY POSITIONS

FPN HEALTH FUNDERS AFFINITY GROUP

ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

Access to behavioral health services is critical to ensuring the health of all Floridians.

- Early-intervention and prevention is a more cost-effective treatment. (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality)
- **2,889,000** adults in Florida have a mental health condition

People with mental health conditions should have accessible, adequate and affordable care options.

- Of the 796,000 adults in Florida who did not receive needed mental health care, **49.7%** did not because of cost. (National Alliance on Mental Illness)
- Floridians are over 5x more likely to be forced out-of-network for mental health care than for primary health care — making it more difficult to find care and less affordable due to higher out-of-pocket costs.
- Florida currently only has enough psychiatrists to meet the needs of 16.9% of the population. (Bureau of Health Workforce, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services)

Access

Provide comprehensive health insurance coverage to all Americans that affords access to mental health and substance use services that are effective, high-quality, culturally and linguistically appropriate, integrated, person-centered, trauma-informed, strengths-based, affordable, and accessible. This should include prevention, early-intervention, treatment, and rehabilitation services, including promising as well as proven, evidence-based practices, which address the continuum of behavioral health needs. (Mental Health America)

Suicide Hotline

Support 988, the new national hotline for suicide prevention and behavioral health by ensuring adequate infrastructure and staffing at all Lifeline call centers. (Florida Mental Health Advocacy Coalition)

NURSING SHORTAGE

The pandemic shed light on the extremely demanding toll nurses faced-physically, emotionally and mentally. During the height of COVID-19 pandemic, the number of nurses working in Florida was already considered low.

Florida will face a shortfall of 59,100 nurses by 2035. (Florida Hospital Association and the Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida: Florida Nurse Workforce Projections: 2019 to 2035.)

- Florida has the highest nursing shortage as a state in the US. (Registerednursing.org)
- To address projected shortages by year 2035, an additional **2,300 RNs** and **1,700 LPNs** would need to enter the workforce each year.

Ensure an adequate supply of nurses to meet current and future needs for Florida through the promotion of: nurse education, recruitment and retention, nurse scope of practice, geographic distribution, and data collection.

TELEHEALTH

Telehealth (or telemedicine), the use of telecommunications technologies to deliver healthcare, public health services, and health education from a distance, is revolutionizing the delivery of clinical care and health-related services in the United States and elsewhere. During the COVID-19 crisis, telehealth emerged as an essential component of healthcare.

Internet connectivity, particularly access to broadband, is playing an increasingly important role in both healthcare and public health. In Florida, the digital divide, or the gap between residents who have access to the latest internet technologies and those who do not, is still present.

- Currently, **96.8%** of Floridians have access to wired broadband connection with speeds of 25 Mbps or faster. Still, **464,000 people** in Florida are left without a wired connection capable of these high speeds.
- There are **1.0 million people** in Florida that have access to only one wired provider, and over a quarter-million people who do not have a wired provider operating at their place of residence.
- **59.8%** of Floridians have access to a monthly internet plan that costs \$60 or less per month. In this regard, Florida is slightly ahead of the national curve, since on average only 51.5% of Americans have access to the same. (broadbandnow.com/Florida)

On April 29, 2019, the Florida State Legislature passed **HB 23**, a law providing additional guidelines on the use of telehealth in the Sunshine State. This encourages the continued creation and adoption of laws enabling and supporting the delivery of health care via telehealth.