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Health Care District of Palm Beach County's Outpatient Addiction Treatment Program Receives Florida Blue Foundation Sapphire Award

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The Health Care District of Palm Beach County was honored to be named the first-place program recipient of the Florida Blue Foundation 2023 Sapphire Award in recognition of the public health system's innovative outpatient addiction treatment model, which is now being replicated by the state in counties across Florida. The award, along with a \$100,000 check, was presented to Belma Andrić, MD, MPH, the Health Care District's Vice President and Chief Medical Officer at a ceremony in Orlando, Florida on April 12, 2023.



“It’s an honor to accept this prestigious award on behalf of our dedicated team of professionals who brought so much hope to our patients when hope was hard to find,” said Dr. Andrić. “This recognition highlights our five years of data-driven, evidence-based care that treats substance use disorder like any other lifelong, chronic medical condition.”

The Sapphire Award recognized nine programs, individuals and organizations that are “...doing exemplary work to provide mental health care services and support to those who otherwise may not have access to this type of care.” The Health Care District can apply the monetary award to further expand access to patient care.

“I’m proud of our Federally Qualified Health Center teams who integrate primary care and mental health to keep our patients’ minds and bodies healthy and strong,” said Darcy J. Davis, the Health Care District’s CEO.

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“This award is a testament to our efforts along with community leaders to curb the opioid crisis by creating a public-private partnership with HCA Florida JFK North Hospital and the Palm Beach County Commission.”

The Florida Blue Foundation highlighted that partnership and the addiction treatment model where fire rescue agencies bypass the closest hospital to transport overdose patients to the county’s Addiction Stabilization Unit (ASU), an emergency department at HCA Florida JFK North specialized in treating substance use disorder. Once treated and stabilized in the ASU, patients are discharged using a “warm handoff” to the Health Care District’s outpatient health center just steps away on the hospital’s campus where they receive further treatment regardless of their ability to pay.



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Also attending the award ceremony in support of the Health Care District

was Florida Department of Health Deputy Secretary for Health, Kenneth Scheppke, MD. Dr. Scheppke assisted in the early development of the program and is now advancing its expansion statewide through Florida's Coordinated Opioid Recovery (CORE) Network.



“The Health Care District’s investment in specialized, emergency care for^{TOP} the indigent combined with comprehensive outpatient addiction treatment

on an ongoing basis is helping patients -- regardless of their financial circumstance -- break the cycle of addiction and restore their overall health, family relationships and lives," Dr. Scheppke wrote in a letter recommending the District for the Sapphire Award. "Through this outstanding program, they are truly improving the mental well-being of their community."

"As a mission-driven company focused on helping people and communities achieve better health, we are committed to improving access to care, including mental health support, to reduce the stressors that often impact entire families and communities," said Susan Towler, executive director of the Florida Blue Foundation.

"We are truly impressed with the results these nine awardees have achieved and look forward to working with them as they continue to make a difference for the individuals and communities they serve."

Patient Matthew Lawrence, who has been sober for two years, recently earned a master's degree in history, started a new job in academia and now helps others who are struggling with addiction.

"This place has saved my life. It saved my life. I know that for a fact because coming in here they've given me all of the support, they've given me medication, and now I come here knowing that I can save other people's lives, which is very gratifying in itself."

The Health Care District's ten primary care clinics, including the outpatient addiction treatment center located in Mangonia Park, offer adult primary medical care, behavioral health, women's health and referrals for labs, pharmacy services, diagnostics and specialty care. Pediatric services and dental care are also provided at several health center locations. All patients

are served regardless of ability to pay, with or without insurance. For more information about the Health Care District's community health centers, services and locations, visit www.brumbackclinics.org. To learn more about the Health Care District's outpatient addiction program, watch the Sapphire Award video [here](#).

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C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics-District Clinic Holdings, Inc. Board of Directors

Date: April 24, 2024

Location:

In-Person & Zoom Meeting - SEE MEETING DETAILS INCLUDED.

Lakeside Medical Center
39200 Hooker Highway
Belle Glade, FL 33430

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