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DeSantis Administration Investing \$1.1 Billion to Support Home and Community-Based Services for Floridians

TALLAHASSEE, FL – With the recent approval of \$1.1 billion to support Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), Florida will invest the enhanced funding to allow Florida health care providers to recruit and retain staff to care for the most vulnerable and bolster the ability of Floridians to receive care in a community-based setting. Florida's HCBS programs serve the state's aging population, as well as individuals with physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities.

Highlights of Florida's plan to invest the \$1.1 billion include:

- **More than \$669 million** to directly address HCBS providers' ongoing workforce challenges.
- **Over \$266 million** in one-time payments to aid eligible HCBS providers in recruiting and retaining qualified staff.
- **\$191 million** to allow more Floridians to enroll in services through the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD).
- **Nearly \$128 million** to enhance the services of older Floridians enrolled in the DOEA Home Care for the Elderly (HCE) program, keeping *Seniors First* by helping them age in their homes alongside a caregiver, rather than in a long-term care setting.
- **More than \$63 million** to promote independence, allowing Floridians to receive essential tools such as eyeglasses, wheelchair transfer boards, and adaptive cooking equipment.
- **More than \$63 million** to ensure Floridians living at home have personal technology devices to allow them to remain connected to their communities and loved ones, reducing isolation and increasing the mental wellbeing of this population.
- **\$50 million** to assist eligible individuals in receiving care for mental health and substance use disorder.

- **\$12 million** to increase safety within group homes and adult day training centers which care for Floridians with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- **Nearly \$11 million** to bolster funding for the care of vulnerable children with medically complex conditions.

“Since taking office, Governor DeSantis has been committed to providing the highest quality care for Florida’s most vulnerable residents,” said **Agency for Health Care Administration Secretary Simone Marsteller**. “With the approval of our spending authority request, our team can reinforce the Governor’s commitment to ensuring Florida’s Medicaid members have access to high quality home and community-based care. With this funding, Florida’s seniors and vulnerable residents will have even greater opportunity to receive the care they need to live and thrive in their homes and communities.”

“Governor DeSantis has remained committed to keeping *Seniors First*,” said **Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) Secretary Richard Prudom**. “And DOEA’s collaboration with AHCA helps us accomplish that goal. Florida will now be able to assist more seniors by allowing them to stay in their home with a caregiver by simply making proactive home modifications. This coordination furthers the Governor’s priority to promote the well-being, safety, and independence of Florida’s seniors, their families, and caregivers.”

“The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) thanks Governor DeSantis for his leadership in securing these important funds to meet the ongoing daily needs of customers,” said **Agency for Persons with Disabilities Director Barbara Palmer**. “APD is very pleased that COVID-19 Relief Funds will be going to frontline workers who deliver vital services to our APD customers. We appreciate having this money available to help protect our customers and ensure their health and safety.”

Having now received the necessary legislative approval to expend these funds, AHCA will begin the implementation steps necessary to initiate the application process for eligible providers and ensure appropriate measures are put in place to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. For more information about Florida’s strategy for increased FMAP funding for HCBS providers and to obtain updates on upcoming application cycles, please visit: www.AHCA.MyFlorida.com/HCBSApplication.

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