



PRESS RELEASE
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Alachua County residents to voice their opinions on health and healthcare

GAINESVILLE, Fla.—Alachua County residents are invited to share their views about health and healthcare in their community through focus groups, phone surveys, interviews and a “community visioning” event. This community input will be used to document current and future health needs of Alachua County and to create solutions for those needs. The Alachua County Health Department has partnered with CHOICES Health Services, North Florida Regional Medical Center, Shands HealthCare and Palms Medical Group to engage WellFlorida Council, the region’s local health council, to elicit community input on health issues as part of a community health needs assessment.

Focus groups on health and healthcare in Alachua County will be held throughout October and November. Eligible participants will receive a \$20 gift card for participating in these group discussions. Residents can determine if they are eligible to participate in a focus group by calling Kim Gokhale at WellFlorida at 352-313-6500, ext. 127.

In addition, WellFlorida will be coordinating a telephone survey of 500 Alachua County residents in late fall. Structured interviews with key informants will also provide a range of perspectives on community health issues.

Results from the focus groups, surveys and interviews, along with health outcomes and healthcare data, will be used by WellFlorida to create the *2009 Alachua County Community Health Status and Access Assessment* for the Alachua County Health Department. The report will be available in January 2010.

As a follow-up to this report, members of the community are encouraged to attend a “community visioning” event in January 2010. Based on the report’s findings, attendees will identify possible initiatives and activities that will address the leading health and healthcare concerns in Alachua County. For more information, call Jeff Feller at WellFlorida at 352-313-6500 ext. 115.

WellFlorida’s mission is to forge partnerships in planning, research and service that build healthier communities.

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