



# Health Care Innovation Council Meeting

**February 5, 2025**

**Virtual**

**Health  
Care**  
Innovation  
Council

Florida  
HEALTH

# Call to Order & Welcome

**Jay Collins**

Lieutenant Governor of Florida

Council Chair

# Today's Agenda

- Roll Call and Approval of Minutes
- Agenda Items
  - Department Staffing Updates
  - Loan Program
    - Application Review Process
    - Eligibility Requirements
    - Scoring Rubric
  - Application Submission Review: FY25-26 Cycle 1
  - Council Discussion and Recommendations for Funding
- Public Comment
- Closing Remarks

# **Roll Call and Approval of Minutes**

**Emma Spencer, PhD, MPH**

Division Director, Public Health Statistics and Performance Management

Florida Department of Health

# Roll Call

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**Membership of the Health Care Innovation Councils includes six state officials, and six members of the public appointed by the Governor, and one member each from the Florida Senate, Florida House of Representatives.**



**When your name is called, please confirm your attendance.**

# Approval of Meeting Minutes

## Health Care Innovation Council Meeting

**Meeting Date:** November 12, 2025

**Location:** Virtual Meeting

### **Chair to Request Motion:**

*“Motion to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2025, Council meeting as presented.”*

### **Actions Needed:**

Council Member to move for approval  
of November 12, 2025, minutes

Second by another member

Vote by the Council

# Department of Health Staffing Updates

**Emma Spencer, PhD, MPH**

Division Director, Public Health Statistics and Performance Management  
Florida Department of Health

# **Loan Program: Application Review Process Eligibility Requirements Scoring Rubric**

**Emma Spencer, PhD, MPH**

Division Director, Public Health Statistics and Performance Management  
Florida Department of Health

# Application Review Process

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**DOH and  
Third-Party  
Administrator**

## **Preliminary Review of Applications:**

- Eligibility Requirements
  - Loan Matching Requirements
  - Inclusion of all required Supporting Documentation
  - Initial Financial Risk Assessment
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**HCI Council**

## **Tiered Review and Recommendations:**

**Loans < \$500K** = Subcommittee makes recommendations to DOH

**Loans between \$500K - \$2M** = Subcommittee makes recommendation to Council who finalizes recommendations to DOH

**Loans Over \$2M** = Full Council review and recommendations to DOH

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# Eligibility Requirements

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## Eligible Applicants

- 1 Entities licensed, registered, or certified by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) as outlined in Section 408.802, Florida Statutes. \*
- 2 Educational or clinical training providers in partnership with eligible health care entities.

**\* Includes Hospitals, Ambulatory Surgical Centers, Nursing Homes, Home Health Agencies, Assisted Living Facilities, Residential Treatment Centers, etc.**



## Priority Focus

- 1 Prioritizes applicants in rural or medically underserved areas, specifically rural hospitals as defined in Section 395.602(2), Florida Statutes, and nonprofits that accept Medicaid patients.
- 2 Projects must meet specific focus areas as identified by the Council.

# Scoring Rubric

## Rule 64WER25-3 (4) Health Care Innovation Loan Application Submission and Review

Criteria	Description	Points
<b>(a) Strategic Impact</b>	Aligns with statutory requirements to reduce costs, improve access, and scale statewide. Prioritizes patient outcomes and access through innovative technologies or care delivery models. Demonstrates scalability and statewide impact through growth and replication.	30
<b>(b) Return on Investment</b>	Demonstrates cost savings, financial viability, and long-term benefits. Includes measurable objectives (e.g., reducing disease burden, obesity rates, hospital admissions) to show economic and health system impact.	25
<b>(c) Strength of Implementation</b>	Shows subject matter expertise, realistic timeline, budget, and collaboration plan. Timeline feasibility assessed based on scope, budget, and team capacity.	20
<b>(d) Patient Outcomes &amp; Population Benefits</b>	Delivers measurable benefits to patients, workforce, and communities. Emphasizes wellness and preventive interventions (e.g., diet, nutrition, mental health, cancer screening) supported by evidence from prior studies or implementations.	15
<b>(e) Geographic Priority</b>	Targets rural or underserved areas designated as MUA/P by HRSA, demonstrating need and impact.	5
<b>(f) Nonprofit – Medicaid Recipients</b>	Targets nonprofit entities that accept Medicaid recipients.	5

# **Application Submission Review:**

## **FY 2025-2026 Cycle 1**

**Emma Spencer, PhD, MPH**

Division Director, Public Health Statistics and Performance Management  
Florida Department of Health

# FY 2025-2026 Cycle 1 Applications (November 2025)- Breakdown

Entity Name	Description	Total # of Applications	Total Loan Amount Requested
<b>Eligible and Complete Applications with Sufficient Cash Flow</b>	Applications that meet the eligibility requirements and provided all supporting documentation and information required and upon preliminary financial assessment completed by the Third-Party Administrator have been determined to have cash flow to support both existing and proposed financial obligations.	<b>7</b>	<b>\$13,388,500</b>
<b>Eligible and Complete Applications with Insufficient Cash Flow</b>	Applications that meet the eligibility requirements and provided all supporting documentation and information required and upon preliminary financial assessment completed by the Third-Party Administrator have been determined to <b>NOT</b> have cash flow to support both existing and proposed financial obligations.	<b>1</b>	<b>\$1,500,000</b>
<b>Ineligible Applications</b>	Applications that did not meet the eligibility requirements for the loan program.	<b>4</b>	<b>\$1,203,745</b>
<b>Disqualified Applications</b>	Applications that meet the eligibility requirements where the applicant failed to provide the required supporting documentation and/or provide response to errors and omissions related to their applications.	<b>4</b>	<b>\$1,319,500</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>\$17,411,745</b>

# 1. Jackson Hospital- Summary

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**Loan Amount: \$2,538,500**

## **Surgical Robotics Program Expansion – da Vinci 5 Acquisition**

This includes the acquisition of a da Vinci 5 robotic system to bring minimally invasive surgery to a rural hospital for the first time, improving patient outcomes, reducing complications, and expanding local access to advanced surgical care without added costs.

**Preliminary Risk Assessment: Sufficient** cash flow to support both existing and proposed financial obligations.

# 1. Jackson Hospital- Scoring

Criteria	Application Review Package	Score
(a) <b>Strategic Impact</b> (Max Points 30)	<b>Innovation Scope</b> - introduces robotic surgery to a rural hospital for the first time, addressing geographic and access barriers; offers a replicable model for other rural hospitals through state-supported loan programs; incorporates da Vinci 5 robotic system with full staff training and workflow integration; includes training for surgeons and operating room staff in robotic procedures.	<b>26</b>
(b) <b>Return on Investment</b> (Max Points 25)	<b>Cost Savings</b> - reduces hospitalizations and complications through minimally invasive surgery; eliminates high-interest lease payments; improves operational efficiency and patient throughput; no cost passed to patients; care quality increases without added financial burden.	<b>24</b>
(c) <b>Strength of Implementation</b> (Max Points 20)	<b>Innovation Impact</b> - strong alignment with improving access, reducing costs, and enhancing care quality in rural areas. <b>Replicability</b> - offers a scalable model for rural surgical robotics programs.	<b>18</b>
(d) <b>Patient Outcomes &amp; Population Benefits</b> (Max Points 15)	<b>Expected Benefits</b> - reduced complications, shorter recovery times, and fewer readmissions; improved recruitment of surgical staff and service lines; enhanced local access to advanced surgical care.	<b>13</b>
(e) <b>Geographic Priority</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>MUA- Yes</b>	<b>5</b>
(f) <b>Nonprofit – Medicaid Recipients</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>Non-Profit Medicaid- Yes</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Overall Score</b>		<b>91</b>

# 1. Jackson Hospital- Justification

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**Originality:** While robotic surgery is not new statewide, its introduction in a designated Rural Area of Opportunity is a significant advancement in access and equity.

**Technology Integration:** The da Vinci 5 system represents state-of-the-art surgical technology, paired with comprehensive staff training and workflow redesign.

**Scalability:** The project demonstrates how rural hospitals can adopt advanced technology through strategic financing, offering a model for replication.

**Impact:** Improves patient outcomes, reduces travel burdens, and strengthens the local healthcare workforce and economy.

**Conclusion:** This project meets the innovation threshold defined in section 381.4015 by bringing advanced surgical technology to a rural hospital, improving access, outcomes, and sustainability.

## 2. Calhoun Liberty Hospital- Summary

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**Loan Amount: \$5,000,000**

### **Restoring Full Inpatient Capacity and Health Innovation Project:**

This project includes a \$7.75M smart-care expansion that restores inpatient capacity lost after Hurricane Michael by adding 16 technology-enabled beds and modern infrastructure to improve rural access, reduce transfers, support telehealth, and strengthen long-term sustainability for patients across four Florida counties.

**Preliminary Risk Assessment: Sufficient** cash flow to support both existing and proposed financial obligations.

## 2. Calhoun Liberty Hospital- Scoring

Criteria	Application Review Package	Score
(a) <b>Strategic Impact</b> (Max Points 30)	<b>Innovation Scope</b> - treats inpatient expansion as a platform for smart rural care; standardized vendor neutral smart room design adaptable statewide; infrastructure supports telehealth, smart beds, and team based-care.	<b>28</b>
(b) <b>Return on Investment</b> (Max Points 25)	<b>Cost Savings</b> - reduces emergency transport and referral costs; keeps care local reducing travel and out-of-pocket expenses; enables chronic disease management; avoids costly complications.	<b>22</b>
(c) <b>Strength of Implementation</b> (Max Points 20)	<b>Innovation Impact</b> - strong alignment with improving access, reducing costs, and enhancing care quality <b>Replicability</b> - offers a scalable model for rural hospital modernization.	<b>18</b>
(d) <b>Patient Outcomes &amp; Population Benefits</b> (Max Points 15)	<b>Expected Benefits</b> - 1,500 additional admissions/year; 25% reduction in patient transfers; 20+ new clinical/support jobs.	<b>11</b>
(e) <b>Geographic Priority</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>MUA- Yes</b>	<b>5</b>
(f) <b>Nonprofit – Medicaid Recipients</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>Non-Profit Medicaid- Yes</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Overall Score</b> (Max Points 100)		<b>89</b>

## 2. Calhoun Liberty Hospital- Justification

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**Originality:** The project restores inpatient capacity lost to Hurricane Michael but does so with a forward-looking design that integrates smart-room-ready infrastructure. It treats physical expansion as a platform for a new model of rural care, not just added space.

**Technology Integration:** The infrastructure supports telehealth, remote monitoring, and in- room displays, enabling virtual specialty care in a rural setting.

**Scalability:** The design is standardized and vendor-neutral, allowing replication across other rural hospitals in Florida.

**Impact:** The project addresses access gaps in a four-county rural region, reduces transfers, and improves continuity of care.

**Workforce Development:** It creates over 20 new clinical and support jobs and supports team- based staffing models.

**Conclusion:** This project introduces a replicable, technology-enabled model for rural hospital modernization and meets the innovation threshold defined in section 381.4015.

# 3. Hendry Regional Medical Center (HRMC)- Summary

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## **Loan Amount: \$4,000,000 (Updated to Meet Matching Requirements)**

This project aims to purchase an old CVS pharmacy to pass on 340b drug savings to patients and employees and be able to provide other telehealth services.

**Preliminary Risk Assessment: Sufficient** cash flow to support both existing and proposed financial obligations.

# 3. Hendry Regional Medical Center (HRMC)- Scoring

Criteria	Application Review Package	Score
(a) <b>Strategic Impact</b> (Max Points 30)	<b>Innovation Scope-</b> Combines pharmacy, behavioral health, and telehealth in a single rural access point; retail-to-clinic conversion model adaptable statewide; telehealth infrastructure integrated with pharmacy and behavioral health; none specifically, would pass savings also onto employees.	<b>26</b>
(b) <b>Return on Investment</b> (Max Points 25)	<b>Cost Savings-</b> pass-through of 340B savings to consumers; reduced travel and referral costs; improved chronic disease management and reduced complications.	<b>24</b>
(c) <b>Strength of Implementation</b> (Max Points 20)	<b>Innovation Impact-</b> strong alignment with improving access, reducing costs, and enhancing care quality. <b>Replicability-</b> offers a potential scalable model for rural hospital modernization.	<b>17</b>
(d) <b>Patient Outcomes &amp; Population Benefits</b> (Max Points 15)	<b>Expected Benefits-</b> lower drug costs for patients and employees; expanded behavioral health access locally; telehealth reduces travel and improves specialty access.	<b>11</b>
(e) <b>Geographic Priority</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>MUA- Yes</b>	<b>5</b>
(f) <b>Nonprofit – Medicaid Recipients</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>Non-Profit Medicaid- Yes</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Overall Score</b>		<b>88</b>

# 3. Hendry Regional Medical Center (HRMC)- Justification

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**Originality:** It introduces a combined model of outpatient pharmacy (leveraging 340B savings), behavioral health, and telehealth specialty services in a rural HPSA setting, a unique integration for underserved areas.

**Technology Integration:** Telehealth is central to the design, enabling specialty care access that currently doesn't exist locally.

**Scalability:** Retail-to-clinic conversion and telehealth workflows are replicable across rural Florida.

**Impact:** The proposal demonstrates strong conceptual alignment with statutory innovation goals (telehealth, behavioral health, 340B pharmacy integration), but lacks fully documented measurable outcomes, detailed pro forma financials, and a complete implementation plan.

**Conclusion:** This project introduces a replicable, technology-enabled model for rural hospital modernization and meets the innovation threshold defined in section 381.4015.

# 4. Special Friends Inc.- Summary

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**Loan Amount: \$150,000**

**Skilled Nursing and Private Duty Nursing Project:**

This project will broaden home health services across 15 counties by adding skilled and private duty nursing, implementing EMR-enabled care coordination, and launching workforce training partnerships to improve access, reduce hospitalizations, and strengthen staffing in underserved areas.

**Preliminary Risk Assessment: Sufficient** cash flow to support both existing and proposed financial obligations.

# 4. Special Friends Inc.- Scoring

Criteria	Application Review Package	Score
<b>(a) Strategic Impact</b> (Max Points 30)	<b>Innovation Scope-</b> combines skilled nursing expansion, EMR-enabled care coordination, and workforce development into a unified home health model; designed for statewide replication using standardized training, EMR workflows, and nursing school partnerships; uses MatrixCare/KanTime for real-time documentation, scheduling, and care coordination; upskills HHAs/CNAs and trains new RNs, LPNs, and PDNs structured programs.	<b>27</b>
<b>(b) Return on Investment</b> (Max Points 25)	<b>Cost Savings-</b> prevents costly hospitalizations and facility-based care; reduces errors and duplication through EMR coordination; lowers recruitment and turnover costs via local workforce development; enables more affordable services for patients and families.	<b>23</b>
<b>(c) Strength of Implementation</b> (Max Points 20)	<b>Innovation Impact-</b> strong alignment with improving access, reducing costs, and enhancing care quality. <b>Replicability-</b> offers a scalable, integrated model for home-based skilled nursing.	<b>18</b>
<b>(d) Patient Outcomes &amp; Population Benefits</b> (Max Points 15)	<b>Expected Benefits-</b> reduces hospitalizations and ER visits; improves access to in-home care in 15 counties; strengthens workforce capacity and retention.	<b>11</b>
<b>(e) Geographic Priority</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>MUA- Yes</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>(f) Nonprofit – Medicaid Recipients</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>For-Profit</b> <b>Medicaid- Yes</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Overall Score</b>		<b>84</b>

# 4. Special Friends Inc.- Justification

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**Originality:** The project integrates skilled nursing, private duty nursing, EMR technology, and workforce training into a single, scalable care model tailored for underserved communities.

**Technology Integration:** Real-time EMR documentation and care coordination improve efficiency, reduce errors, and support proactive care.

**Scalability:** The model is designed for replication across Florida using standardized protocols and nursing school partnerships.

**Impact:** Expands access to high-quality in-home care, reduces hospitalizations, and builds a sustainable healthcare workforce.

**Conclusion:** This project meets the innovation threshold defined in section 381.4015 by offering a replicable, technology-supported model that improves care access, quality, and cost-effectiveness in rural and underserved areas.

# 5. Open Arms & Heart Services- Summary

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**Loan Amount: \$900,000**

## **Integrated Pediatric and Disability Care Hub:**

The scope of this project will combine PPEC, skilled home health, and medical transportation services into a single technology-enabled model to improve care continuity, reduce hospitalizations, and expand access for medically fragile children and individuals with disabilities in underserved communities.

**Preliminary Risk Assessment: Sufficient** cash flow to support both existing and proposed financial obligations.

# 5. Open Arms & Heart Services- Scoring

Criteria	Application Review Package	Score
(a) <b>Strategic Impact</b> (Max Points 30)	<b>Innovation Scope</b> - combines three distinct services—PPEC, Skilled Home Health, and NEMT—into one integrated, technology-supported care system; designed for replication across Florida using Medicaid reimbursement structures and standardized training protocols; uses electronic health records, telehealth platforms, and transportation routing software for real-time coordination; includes cross-training CNAs and HHAs to LPNs and RNs to address nursing shortages.	27
(b) <b>Return on Investment</b> (Max Points 25)	<b>Cost Savings</b> - prevents hospitalizations and institutional care; reduces administrative overhead and staff turnover; enables early intervention and lowers costs for families and payers.	22
(c) <b>Strength of Implementation</b> (Max Points 20)	<b>Innovation Impact</b> - strong alignment with improving access, reducing costs, and enhancing care quality. <b>Replicability</b> -offers a scalable, integrated model for pediatric and disability care.	19
(d) <b>Patient Outcomes &amp; Population Benefits</b> (Max Points 15)	<b>Expected Benefits</b> - estimated 30 percent reduction in emergency visits and hospital readmissions; up to 30 children served in Year 1, 60+ by Year 3; creation of 15–20 healthcare jobs.	11
(e) <b>Geographic Priority</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>MUA- Yes</b>	5
(f) <b>Nonprofit – Medicaid Recipients</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>For-Profit Medicaid- Yes</b>	0
<b>Overall Score</b>		<b>84</b>

# 5. Open Arms & Heart Services- Justification

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**Originality:** The project introduces a first-of-its-kind integrated care model in Central Florida that combines clinical, support, and transportation services under one coordinated system.

**Technology Integration:** Uses telehealth, electronic health records, and transportation routing software to streamline care delivery and improve outcomes.

**Scalability:** The model is designed for statewide replication using existing Medicaid frameworks and standardized training modules.

**Impact:** Addresses access gaps for medically fragile children and individuals with disabilities, particularly in rural areas, while reducing system strain and improving workforce capacity.

**Conclusion:** This project meets the innovation threshold defined in section 381.4015 by offering a replicable, technology-enabled care model that improves access, reduces costs, and strengthens Florida's healthcare infrastructure.

# 6. Blackstone Medical Services LLC- Summary

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**Loan Amount: \$600,000**

## **Mobile App for Expanded Access to Home Sleep Testing:**

This project will deploy an AI-driven app integrating telehealth, automated workflows, and low-cost sensors to streamline diagnosis, improve completion rates, and reduce healthcare costs for sleep apnea across Florida.

**Preliminary Risk Assessment: Sufficient** cash flow to support both existing and proposed financial obligations.

# 6. Blackstone Medical Services LLC- Scoring

Criteria	Application Review Package	Score
(a) <b>Strategic Impact</b> (Max Points 30)	<b>Innovation Scope-</b> introduces a fully automated, AI-supported mobile platform for home sleep testing, replacing traditional in-lab diagnostics; designed for statewide replication using centralized infrastructure, cloud-based workflows, and smartphone compatibility; includes AI chat support, automated education, telehealth integration, and backend systems for billing, tracking, and scoring; reduces administrative burden and enables clinicians to manage larger caseloads without increasing staff.	<b>29</b>
(b) <b>Return on Investment</b> (Max Points 25)	<b>Cost Savings-</b> Replaces \$1,000+ in-lab studies with low-cost home testing; reduces excess annual spending of \$19,566 per untreated sleep apnea patient; lowers operational costs through automation and centralized scoring; enables affordable services for uninsured and underinsured populations.	<b>24</b>
(c) <b>Strength of Implementation</b> (Max Points 20)	<b>Innovation Impact-</b> strong alignment with improving access, reducing costs, and enhancing care quality. <b>Replicability-</b> offers a scalable, AI-driven model for statewide sleep health access.	<b>17</b>
(d) <b>Patient Outcomes &amp; Population Benefits</b> (Max Points 15)	<b>Expected Benefits-</b> 99 percent test completion rate; 30 percent reduction in administrative workload; 15 percent reduction in onboarding-to-completion time; expanded access for rural and underserved populations.	<b>13</b>
(e) <b>Geographic Priority</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>MUA- No</b>	<b>0</b>
(f) <b>Nonprofit – Medicaid Recipients</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>For-Profit Medicaid- No</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Overall Score</b>		<b>83</b>

# 6. Blackstone Medical Services LLC- Justification

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**Originality:** The project transforms sleep diagnostics by replacing traditional in-lab testing with a fully automated, mobile-based model that integrates AI, telehealth, and remote monitoring.

**Technology Integration:** Uses AI chat support, automated workflows, and smartphone-enabled testing to reduce costs and improve access.

**Scalability:** Centralized infrastructure and turnkey deployment allow rapid replication across Florida without added staffing or facilities.

**Impact:** Expands access to underserved populations, improves early diagnosis, and reduces healthcare costs associated with untreated sleep apnea.

**Conclusion:** This project meets the innovation threshold defined in section 381.4015 by offering a replicable, technology-enabled model that modernizes sleep diagnostics and expands access statewide.

# 7. Old Cutler Retirement Home- Summary

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**Loan Amount: \$200,000**

**Behavioral Assisted Living Expansion and Innovation Initiative:**

This project focuses on expanding behavioral assisted living capacity by integrating housing, psychiatric care, tele-mental health, mobile outreach, and specialized workforce training into a single preventive care model designed to stabilize high-need individuals, reduce hospital and justice-system cycling, and create a scalable, technology-enabled solution for Florida's underserved psychiatric population.

**Preliminary Risk Assessment: Sufficient** cash flow to support both existing and proposed financial obligations.

# 7. Old Cutler Retirement Home- Scoring

Criteria	Application Review Package	Score
(a) <b>Strategic Impact</b> (Max Points 30)	<b>Innovation Scope-</b> integrates housing, mental health care, and daily living support in one setting, offering a preventive and continuous care model for psychiatric populations; designed for replication across Florida using flexible infrastructure and diverse funding sources; includes telepsychiatry, remote monitoring, and digital health tools for early intervention and continuity of care.	<b>28</b>
(b) <b>Return on Investment</b> (Max Points 25)	<b>Cost Savings-</b> prevents psychiatric crises and institutional cycling; reduces emergency room visits, inpatient stays, and law enforcement involvement; enables managed care plans to lower per-member costs and expand coverage.	<b>24</b>
(c) <b>Strength of Implementation</b> (Max Points 20)	<b>Innovation Impact-</b> strong alignment with improving access, reducing costs, and enhancing care quality. <b>Replicability-</b> offers a scalable, integrated model for behavioral health housing and care.	<b>18</b>
(d) <b>Patient Outcomes &amp; Population Benefits</b> (Max Points 15)	<b>Expected Benefits-</b> reduces hospitalizations and emergency visits; improves housing stability for individuals with serious mental illness; strengthens behavioral health workforce.	<b>11</b>
(e) <b>Geographic Priority</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>MUA- No</b>	<b>0</b>
(f) <b>Nonprofit – Medicaid Recipients</b> (Max Points 5)	<b>For-Profit Medicaid- Yes</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Overall Score</b>		<b>81</b>

# 7. Old Cutler Retirement Home- Justification

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**Originality:** The project introduces a psychiatric assisted living model that integrates housing, mental health care, and daily living support in one coordinated setting. This fills a gap between hospitalization and independent living, offering a preventive, continuous care model.

**Technology Integration:** Includes telepsychiatry, remote monitoring, and digital health tools to support early intervention and continuity of care.

**Workforce Development:** Proposes specialized training in trauma-informed care, de-escalation, suicide prevention, and psychiatric medication management for assisted living staff.

**Scalability:** The model is designed to be replicated across regions using flexible infrastructure and diverse funding sources such as Medicaid waivers, housing subsidies, and behavioral health budgets.

**Impact:** Addresses institutional cycling and homelessness among individuals with serious mental illness, reducing emergency visits, hospitalizations, and system strain.

**Conclusion:** This project meets the innovation threshold defined in section 381.4015 by introducing a scalable, integrated model of psychiatric assisted living that blends technology, workforce development, and coordinated care to address persistent gaps in Florida's behavioral health system.

# **Council Discussion and Recommendations for Loan Funding**

**Emma Spencer, PhD, MPH**

Division Director, Public Health Statistics and Performance Management

Florida Department of Health

# FY 2025-2026 Cycle 1 Applications (November 2025)- Score Summary

**Eligible and Complete Applications:** the following applications meet the eligibility requirements and provide all Supporting Documentation and information required:

#	Entity Name	Project Title/Overview	Loan Requested	Review Score
1	Jackson Hospital	<p><b>Surgical Robotics Program Expansion – da Vinci 5 Acquisition:</b>            This includes the acquisition of a da Vinci 5 robotic system to bring minimally invasive surgery to a rural hospital for the first time, improving patient outcomes, reducing complications, and expanding local access to advanced surgical care without added costs.</p>	\$2,538,500	91
2	Calhoun Liberty Hospital	<p><b>Restoring Full Inpatient Capacity and Health Innovation Project:</b>            This project includes a \$7.75M smart-care expansion that restores inpatient capacity lost after Hurricane Michael by adding 16 technology-enabled beds and modern infrastructure to improve rural access, reduce transfers, support telehealth, and strengthen long-term sustainability for patients across four Florida counties.</p>	\$5,000,000	89
3	Hendry Regional Medical Center (HRMC) (Handwritten Application)	<p>This project aims to purchase an old CVS pharmacy to pass on 340b drug savings to patients and employees and be able to provide other telehealth services.</p>	\$4,000,000	88
4	Special Friends Inc.	<p><b>Skilled Nursing and Private Duty Nursing Expansion Project:</b>            This project will broaden home health services across 15 counties by adding skilled and private duty nursing, implementing EMR-enabled care coordination, and launching workforce training partnerships to improve access, reduce hospitalizations, and strengthen staffing in underserved areas.</p>	\$150,000	84

# FY 2025-2026 Cycle 1 Applications (November 2025)- Score Summary

**Eligible and Complete Applications:** the following applications meet the eligibility requirements and provide all Supporting Documentation and information required:

#	Entity Name	Project Title/Overview	Loan Requested	Review Score
5	<b>Open Arms &amp; Heart Services</b>	<b>Integrated Pediatric and Disability Care Hub:</b> The scope of this project will combine PPEC, skilled home health, and medical transportation services into a single technology-enabled model to improve care continuity, reduce hospitalizations, and expand access for medically fragile children and individuals with disabilities in underserved communities.	\$900,000	<b>84</b>
6	<b>Blackstone Medical Services LLC</b>	<b>Mobile App for Expanded Access to Home Sleep Testing:</b> This project will deploy an AI-driven app integrating telehealth, automated workflows, and low-cost sensors to streamline diagnosis, improve completion rates, and reduce healthcare costs for sleep apnea across Florida.	\$600,000	<b>83</b>
7	<b>Old Cutler Retirement Home</b>	<b>Behavioral Assisted Living Expansion and Innovation Initiative:</b> This project focuses on expanding behavioral assisted living capacity by integrating housing, psychiatric care, tele-mental health, mobile outreach, and specialized workforce training into a single preventive care model designed to stabilize high-need individuals, reduce hospital and justice-system cycling, and create a scalable, technology-enabled solution for Florida's underserved psychiatric population.	\$200,000	<b>81</b>
<b>Total Loan Amounts Requested:</b>			<b>\$13,388,500</b>	

# Public Comments

We kindly request that you keep your questions to one minute or less to allow time for everyone.

Thank you!

# **Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

**Jay Collins**

Lieutenant Governor of Florida

Council Chair

**Thank you!**