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## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN BAY COUNTY CELEBRATES NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK



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**Panama City, Fla.** — This week, April 1 – 7, the Florida Department of Health in Bay County is acknowledging National Public Health Week (NPHW). NPHW presents an opportunity for communities across the United States to reflect on the contributions of public health and highlight issues that are important to improving our health.

Public health professionals across Bay County make it their life's work to help keep people and communities healthy- from better maternal and child health to improvements in disease control and prevention to addressing environmental concerns and emergency preparedness.

"Public health recognizes that there are many factors that impact the health of a community. These include housing, employment, and education.", said Holly Holt RN, BSN, MSM, Interim Health Officer, Florida Department of Health in Bay County. "Public health seeks to prevent problems from happening or recurring through health education and promotion, policy, and services through a health equity lens."

"We are grateful for the opportunity to celebrate the hard work and dedication of our public health employees in Bay County," Bay County Commission Chairman Philip "Griff" Griffiths said. "Particularly in light of the challenges and difficulties our community faces right now, the services provided by these committed men and women are so vitally important to our citizenry."

"The Community Health Improvement Plan is a venue that addresses the health needs of all of Bay County, to include Mental Health and Substance Use", said Ann Wing, Network Coordinator for Big Bend Community. "Through the continued partnership with the DOH-Bay, it is my hope that Bay County will continue the forward motion of Recovery Oriented System of Care."

In Bay County, the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is designed to address specific opportunities for improved health that have been identified by the community. The department has partnered with many stakeholders to implement the CHIP and collaborates regularly to track progress.

The current CHIP addresses three priorities; healthy weight/healthy lifestyles, mental health/substance use, and chronic diseases including diabetes. To address these community needs a farmer's market was established at DOH-Bay to increase access to healthy foods. In collaboration with the hospitals and cardiologist, heart health education was added as a service at DOH-Bay. DOH-Bay is also proud to be a member of Bay County's Recovery Oriented System of Care with the goal of providing mental health and substance use recovery options, education, and awareness.

DOH-Bay will hold its first community meeting for the 2019 Community Health Assessment on Monday, April 8 from 10 am to 1 pm. The meeting will be held at DOH-Bay in the auditorium at 597 W 11<sup>th</sup> ST, Panama City. The meeting is opened to the public. We invite you to come and be a partner in improving the health of Bay County.

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board, works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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