

What's at Stake?

The current economic turmoil will drive decisions during the 2009 Legislative Session, and continued state revenue losses will most certainly have an impact on health care.

What will it be for 2009? Further cuts to programs and funding? Or alternative revenues to protect our safety-net hospitals and the most vulnerable citizens they serve in times of need? Lee Memorial Health System has joined other hospitals to encourage finding new revenues.

We can protect valuable programs for those who need them most by identifying new and reliable funding. We want to help ensure that affordable health care in the state of Florida remains the best that it can possibly be.

We want the right choices during rough economic times.

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For more information about the priorities listed in this pamphlet, please contact...

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**LEE MEMORIAL
HEALTH SYSTEM**

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2009 Legislative Priorities

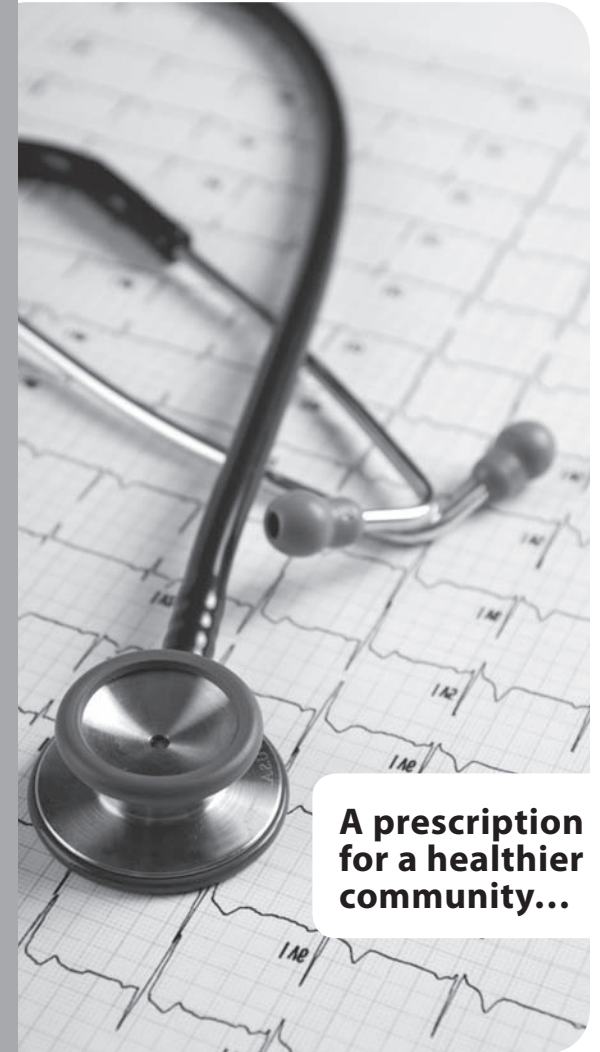
The right choices during rough economic times.

Our quality is recognized by:



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2009 Legislative Priorities



**A prescription
for a healthier
community...**

**LEE MEMORIAL
HEALTH SYSTEM**

Lee Memorial Health System's 2009 Legislative Priorities

INCREASE FEDERAL SHARE OF MEDICAID

Support a temporary, tiered federal Medicaid increase in any economic stimulus bill to...

- Increase federal match for Medicaid through 2010.
- Avoid further state reductions in Medicaid reimbursement.
- **Lee County:** More than half of LMHS patients rely on Medicaid and Medicare for their health care, yet Medicare only covers 88 percent of cost, and Medicaid only covers 84 percent, leaving a big funding gap.

TOBACCO USER FEE INCREASE

Support a \$1 per pack tobacco user fee increase to...

- Dedicate a funding stream for health care during rough economic times.
- Protect Medicaid programs for low-income groups, such as the Medically Needy and Medicaid/Aged and Disabled programs.
- Encourage a decrease in tobacco use.
- Put Florida in the middle of states' tobacco user fees. We're currently 46th.
- **Lee County:** Our county has the second highest percentage of uninsured residents in the state. Combine that with our underinsured population, and one-third of our residents cannot afford health care.

MEDICALLY NEEDED/MEDICAID AGED AND DISABLED

Reauthorize these programs and identify a recurring funding stream to...

- Protect chronically ill, needy residents who have no other health care coverage. These programs will sunset in 2009 unless action is taken now!
- Put to good use the funding from the \$1 tobacco user fee increase.
- **Lee County:** Catastrophic illnesses can happen to anyone. Many patients in the area who have benefitted from these programs used to have jobs and health insurance, until their illnesses forced them to quit working.

MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT

Preserve Medicaid reimbursement to...

- Guarantee continued existence of Medicaid services that benefit low-income patients.
- Limit the losses health care providers incur from unreimbursed costs of care.
- Protect unprofitable safety-net services for trauma, children's hospitals and the uninsured, which are provided to meet local needs in spite of losses.
- **Lee County:** Nearly one-fourth of LMHS patients in 2008 were dependant on Medicaid or had no insurance. As a result, we lost more than \$58 million in unreimbursed Medicaid expenses and charity care, putting other vital programs at risk. We have no local tax funding to offset these costs, and last year's operating margin equaled 0.3 percent, which is not adequate to meet future needs.

ADDITIONAL MEDICAID ACTIONS

- Review and reform other Medicaid pilots before further expansion.
- Clarify Medicaid HMO rates for out-of-network services.
- Support Recommendations of the Low-Income Pool Council and keep the current membership structure.
- Safeguard Nursing Home Reimbursements, which now cover only 80 percent of costs.
- Protect Home Health reimbursement, which is currently the lowest in the nation and only covers 20 percent of costs.
- Support Medicaid KidCare and fund all 10 children's cancer centers.

TRAUMA FUNDING AND RISKY DRIVERS

Support legislation to increase fines for risky drivers to...

- Provide funding for trauma centers.
- Ensure that Florida's trauma network remains viable.
- **Lee County:** LMHS has the only designated trauma center between Tampa and Miami, and we lost \$4 million last year. We have no local tax funding in the five-county area to offset losses like this.

CONTINUING EFFORTS

- **Support the Lee County Triage Center's continued Department of Children and Families Criminal Justice Diversion grant for behavioral health care.**
- **Add an annual inflation adjustment to Personal Injury Protection (PIP).**
- **Clarify regulatory best practices for Free Standing Emergency Departments.**