

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH THANKS NURSES FOR THEIR SERVICE  
DURING NATIONAL NURSES WEEK**

*Marion County nurses serve the community as dedicated, trusted professionals*

Ocala—The Florida Department of Health in Marion County is proud to celebrate our community's nurses during National Nurses Week, May 6–12.

"Thanks to the dedication of the nurses in our community, our health care system is stronger and patients receive better care," said Herman Hale, director of nursing at the Florida Department of Health in Marion County. "National Nurses Week gives us a chance to thank nurses at all levels who help make quality care possible."

Nurses play a critical role in delivering the highest level of quality care to their patients. For the past 13 years, the annual Gallup survey on trust in professions shows the public continues to rate nursing as the most honest and ethical.

Department of Health nurses focus on overall community health. They help protect against the spread of HIV and AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis and others. Immunizations nurses gave free vaccines to more than 11,000 children last year, helping protect the county against vaccine-preventable diseases. Public school nurses serve more than 42,000 Marion County students. Department nurses serve the community through the Healthy Start program, and Healthy Start provided services to more than 3,700 women and infants in 2014, mostly in the homes of these families.

Department nurses plan, organize and staff special needs shelters to help take care of the community's medically fragile residents in the event of a hurricane or other emergency. The department is practicing its disaster response on Wednesday, conducting a special needs shelter exercise at the Department's Ocala facility.

"Marion County is a healthier, better community thanks to the nurses who serve here," said Hale. "We are grateful for their service and sacrifice."

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