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## **Prudential Productivity Awards Recognize Four Teams from AHCA**

- Efficiencies from projects result in annual savings of more than \$275,000 -

**Tallahassee, Fla.** – The Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) is proud to announce that four teams of Agency staff members have been selected as winners in the annual Prudential Productivity Awards.

The Prudential Productivity Awards committee receives hundreds of nominations each year and publicly recognizes state employees whose innovative work significantly and measurably increases productivity and saves money for Florida taxpayers. These projects have resulted in over \$8 billion in added value (savings, increased revenue) since the program started in 1989.

“My appreciation for these individuals cannot be overstated,” said Agency Secretary Elizabeth Dudek. “Thanks to the innovative efforts of these four teams, Florida taxpayers will see recurring, annual savings of over \$275,000. Across the Agency, we are constantly seeking out new ways to improve our processes so that we better serve our stakeholders while minimizing the impact on the Florida taxpayer. Programs like the Prudential Productivity Awards support this goal by offering incentives for state workers who approach their job with an entrepreneurial mindset and come up with ways that we can be even more efficient.”

Out of the hundreds of nominations received by the awards committee, the following four teams of Agency employees were selected as winners:

### **Biennial Assessment Team**

**Winners:** *Ryan Fitch, Josh Doerr, Swetha Nomula, Barbara Fincher, Michael Murphy*

This project modified the previous method of billing and collecting the health care facility annual assessment fee. The Agency now pairs this invoice with an existing process, eliminating the need for a separate mailing and improving collection rates.

Prior to the change, an annual invoice was mailed to the over 12,000 providers on July 1st of each year. Now, this billing is due every two years at the same time providers must renew their license, delivering savings to taxpayers and cutting red tape.



This change eliminated the labor cost (approximately 1,080 staff hours needed to bill and proceed with collection actions equivalent to approximately \$14,000 in wages) and the cost of mailing a separate invoice (\$4,942).

Because the assessments are now due at licensure renewal, the Agency will not renew a license unless the assessment fee is paid, resulting in 100% compliance. This new method also reduces the occurrence of late fees (totaling about \$104,607 per year on average) as well as the cost the Agency incurred for collection efforts (\$24,600).

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### **Florida Independent Information Dispute Resolution Team**

**Winners:** *Polly Weaver, Kimberly Smoak, Mary Maloney, Donah Heiberg, Patricia McIntire, Carol Higgins, Patricia Kaczmarek, Eddie Alday*

The Agency licenses nursing homes and conducts federal inspections for Medicaid and Medicare certification. Federal regulations require each state have an Independent Informal Dispute Resolution (IIDR) process, which enables nursing home providers to dispute citations before an independent organization.

The Agency had a contract with an independent peer review organization to conduct the IIDR process for several years (annual cost of \$42,590). When the agreement expired in 2014, instead of contracting with another private entity, the Agency worked with similar regulatory agencies in two other states (North Carolina and South Carolina) to develop a process to conduct IIDRs for each other at no cost. This agreement eliminated the cost of each state independently hiring a third party evaluator. Each state was able to supply these reviews through existing resources.

This change also means each state now has the ability to share quality assurance activities, leading to greater cross-state consistency in the application of federal nursing home regulations.

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### **Applied Behavior Analysis Process Improvement Team**

**Winners:** *Leigh Meadows, Pam Kyllonen, Charles Ball, Tammy Brannon, Anne Allen, Ken Baugh*

This team used available technology and resources to streamline the process of approval for Medicaid-reimbursed Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services for children. The Agency currently receives about 300 requests for ABA services each month. The previous process, completed manually, required 40+ hours per week and at least 5 pages of printed paper for each service request.

The approval process previously took approximately two weeks from receipt of request to letter of approval. By implementing an electronic document storage and review process, the team has

reduced workload by more than 50%, reduced paper to only the approval letter sent to the recipient, and reduced turnaround time to less than one week. The additional staff hours gained from this improved efficiency have been assigned to quality monitoring to ensure appropriate service delivery by Medicaid providers.

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### **Medicaid Provider Renewal Automation Team**

**Winners:** *Shawn McCauley, Tamara Strayer, Sherryel Beverly, Lynn O'Conner, Stephanie Powers, Muriel Etienne, Vijay Rani*

The Medicaid Provider Renewal Automation Team designed, developed, tested, and implemented an automated, web-based licensure renewal process for providers.

The online tool eliminates costs associated with paper renewals, including postage and handling costs for mailing the paperwork to providers and back to the Agency. There were also additional efficiencies gained as staff that previously received, logged, and processed paper submissions became available to take on other tasks.

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*The Agency for Health Care Administration is committed to better health care for all Floridians. The Agency administers Florida's Medicaid program, licenses and regulates more than 45,000 health care facilities and 34 health maintenance organizations, and publishes health care data and statistics at [www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov](http://www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov). Additional information about Agency initiatives is available via [Facebook \(AHCAFlorida\)](#), [Twitter \(@AHCA\\_FL\)](#) and [YouTube \(/AHCAFlorida\)](#).*

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