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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Florida's Graduate Medical Education Programs Reaping Strong Results in Reducing Physician Shortages

MIAMI – Oct. 25, 2016 – Florida's top teaching and safety net hospitals today released the first comprehensive report detailing the success of their efforts to reduce the state's doctor shortage.

Since Florida policymakers began focusing on graduate medical education in 2013, hospitals have filled 736 more residency slots, a laudable increase of 19 percent. A total of 310 newly filled residency slots were in physician specialties facing the most severe shortages.

The report, titled *Training Tomorrow's Doctors: Graduate Medical Education in Florida 2016 Annual Report*, provides unprecedented insights into Florida's physician shortage and ongoing efforts to tackle the issue through statewide initiatives. It was produced by the Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida (SNHAF) and the Teaching Hospital Council of Florida to document and evaluate progress toward increasing residency slots and achieving goals that remain. This first edition will become a cornerstone annual report providing policymakers a roadmap for fine-tuning future efforts.

"This is our first glimpse at both where we are now in terms of medical residency slots and where we need to be," said Carlos Migoya, president and CEO of Jackson Health System and immediate-past chairman of SNHAF, whose hospitals provide more than 70 percent of Florida's GME programs. "This report makes it clear that while we're not where we want to be yet in solving the physician shortage crisis, the concerted efforts of SNHAF members to increase the training opportunities for Florida's next generation of doctors are already paying off."

The seeds of this success were sown in 2013 when the state of Florida joined SNHAF members in their efforts to address a worsening physician shortage. That year, Gov. Rick Scott and the Florida Legislature appropriated \$80 million in recurring state and matching federal funds to create the Medicaid Residency Program (MRP). Since its inception, the MRP has grown 19 percent, from initially funding 3,896 residency slots to funding 4,632 this year (SFY 2016-17) - an increase of 736 slots. Notably, 19 hospitals that previously had no residency programs now do, raising the number of participating hospitals to 60.

However, while the MRP effectively increased the number of residency slots, it was only part of a comprehensive solution. Since it was generally accepted that most doctors choose to practice in the city where they were trained, simply creating more residents doesn't ensure all areas of the state will have enough doctors in the necessary medical specialties. Nor does it guard against developing local surpluses of doctors in certain specialties.

Realizing the need for such a comprehensive solution, the Teaching Hospital Council and the Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida commissioned IHS Markit to model current and future physician workforce supply and demand. The resulting report was released in 2015 and immediately changed the way governments and hospitals understood and approached graduate medical education.

Teaching Hospitals

Broward Health Jackson Health Mount Sinai Medical Center Orlando Health UF Health Shands Hospital UF Health Jacksonville Tampa General Hospital

Public Hospitals

Halifax Health Lee Memorial Health System Memorial Healthcare System Sarasota Memorial Health Care System

Children's Hospitals

All Children's Hospital Miami Children's Hospital

**Regional Perinatal Intensive
Care Center**

Sacred Heart Health System



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Ultimately, the study found that Florida was facing a shortage of approximately 7,000 physician specialists through 2025 and confirmed that the location of a physician's residency is the top determining factor in their choice of where to ultimately practice. Crucially, the study went deeper into its findings, concluding that the shortages spanned every Medicaid region of the state and 20 medical specialties; including psychiatry, family medicine, general surgery, adult and pediatric anesthesia, cardiology, neurology and pulmonology.

These findings spurred the 2015 Florida Legislature to augment the MRP by appropriating an additional \$100 million in new GME funding through the new Graduate Medical Education Startup Bonus and Retention Programs. These new programs provide hospitals a one-time \$100,000 bonus for every residency slot created in a shortage specialty and at the end of each fiscal year direct any remaining funding to hospitals that have slots in the shortage areas as retention incentives.

In the first year of the GME Startup Bonus Program, 66 new residency positions in seven shortage specialties - psychiatry, family medicine, general surgery, adult and pediatric anesthesia, cardiology, neurology and pulmonology - qualified for the bonus. Under the GME Retention Program, the number of filled residency slots in shortage specialties grew from 1,869 in SFY 2014-15 to 2,179 in SFY 2015-16, an increase of 310 slots.

Thanks to *Training Tomorrow's Doctors: Graduate Medical Education in Florida 2016 Annual Report*, we now know definitively that through the leadership of Florida's teaching and safety net hospitals and the funding assistance of the state's GME programs real progress is being made in reducing our physician shortage. Even though SHNAF's members make up only 10 percent of Florida's hospitals, they are the heart and soul of Florida's graduate medical education system. Our 14 hospital members operate more than half of Florida's residency slots as well as more than half of the residency slots in the shortage specialties that our families' health care depend on.

Training Florida's next generation of doctors is central to SNHAF's mission to ensure every Floridian has access to quality health care, and we are committed to ensuring future annual GME reports will show even greater progress in reducing shortages.

"We are confident that state leaders and policymakers will see not only the progress we are making together in securing Florida's health care future, but the remarkable return on the public's investment in GME," said Dr. Jonathan Ellen, president and physician-in-chief at Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital and chairman of SNHAF. "These are real results that are making a real impact on Floridians' lives and a heck of a bargain to boot."

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The Teaching Hospital Council of Florida represents the state's leading teaching hospitals: Broward Health, Jackson Health System, Mount Sinai Medical Center, Orlando Health, Tampa General Hospital, UF Health Shands Hospital and UF Health Jacksonville. All are part of the 14-member Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida, a coalition of teaching, public, children's and regional perinatal intensive care hospitals that provide highly specialized medical care, level one trauma care, and train tomorrow's doctors.

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