

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**

February 20, 2014

Contact: Charles Griggs
(904) 253-1004**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CELEBRATES 125 YEARS
OF FLORIDA PUBLIC HEALTH**

Jacksonville – The Florida Department of Health in Duval County (DOH-Duval) is celebrating 125 years of public health during 2014 with educational and commemorative events. The state Legislature created the State Board of Health on February 20, 1889, in response to a yellow fever epidemic in Jacksonville, and Dr. Joseph Yates Porter from Key West became Florida's first State Public Health Officer. Yellow fever in Florida was eradicated in 1905.

"Jacksonville's place in Florida's public health history is a key starting point that has resulted in 125 years of protecting our community," said Dr. Kelli Wells, Director, DOH-Duval. "Today, our integrated approach to improving public health outcomes better equips us to meet future challenges.

Throughout 2014, DOH-Duval will offer educational and health information opportunities. DOH-Duval will celebrate with facility open houses and the launch of an internal employee wellness program called **Step to It**. Statewide, a resource featuring "Public Health Heroes" from all 67 counties will be released. During the week of April 7-11, the DOH-Duval will further highlight the 125th Anniversary as part of National Public Health Week. In September 2014, the Florida Department of Health will unveil a full historical exhibit of Florida Public Health heritage at Florida's Historic Capitol Museum in Tallahassee.

"Florida's dramatic growth was made possible through public health efforts that controlled disease and improved environmental health," said Dr. John Armstrong, State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health. "Just as Dr. Porter and colleagues saved Floridians from yellow fever over a century ago, we are committed to solving the top public health threat to Florida families now: overweight and obesity."

DOH-Duval invites Florida's residents and visitors to join them in recognizing 125 years of protecting, promoting and improving the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. More information is available at www.FLHealth125.gov.

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Florida Department of Health in Duval County

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