

## Information On Florida Department of Corrections' Mental Health Reforms

In the past two years, Governor Rick Scott has recommended nearly \$210 million in additional funding for the Department of Corrections to implement meaningful reforms in Florida's prison system.

FDC has led the nation becoming the first state in 2015 to establish a Mental Health Ombudsman program which is dedicated solely to inmates with severe mental illness. The program is currently implemented at Dade C.I., Lake C.I., Union C.I. and Suwannee C.I.

Florida's Department of corrections was also the first in the nation to have staff complete the American Correctional Association's (ACA) Correctional Behavioral Health Certification (CBHC) in 2015 – the first nationally standardized behavioral-health certification in the United States. These firsts are a testament to FDC's commitment to the mentally ill in our custody.

- Added additional Behavior Health Technicians to further facility out-of-cell programming in the Dade C.I. Mental Health Unit.
- Audio recording and additional CCTV cameras have been installed in the Dade C.I. Mental Health In-Patient Unit to capture more interior areas of the building.
- Created an Assistant Warden positions at Dade C.I., Union C.I. and Lake C.I. to oversee the daily operations of the Mental Health In-patient Unit, delivery of care, and supervision of security staff.
- Established Behavioral Risk Management Teams to monitor and provide assistance to staff in in-patient mental health units.

In Governor Scott's Fighting for Florida's Future Budget, nearly \$19 million in funding to enhance mental health services including \$16 million and 104 positions to create a Residential mental Health unit (RMHU) at the Wakulla Correctional Institution, will ensure that inmates with mental health issues are provided prompt and effective treatment in a rehabilitative environment.

The Governor's recommended budget also includes \$2.5 million to increase a Correctional Officer's base pay when the officer is serving in a mental health unit. The pay increase will only apply to Correctional Officers who have obtained the Correctional Behavioral Health (CBH) Certification, which will enhance the officers' skill sets in dealing with a difficult inmate population and improve the safety of staff and inmate interactions.