



## 2012 Agenda: A More Prosperous Oklahoma

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### Health

Healthy living is important, not just because we want Oklahomans to live full and happy lives, but because the effects of unhealthy life choices hurt our economy, drain taxpayer dollars and drive up the cost of health care for everyone. Oklahoma is currently ranked 48<sup>th</sup> in overall health indicators in the nation. The state has extremely high rates of obesity and smoking-related illness, costing billions of dollars in health care expenses and lost productivity. The initiatives outlined below will lead to a healthier Oklahoma and help contain the growth of increasing health care costs currently straining the budgets of families, businesses and state government.

#### Tobacco Ban on State Property

The governor has issued an Executive Order to ban tobacco use on all state property. Smoking is the number one preventable cause of death in the United States and in Oklahoma. The purpose of the ban is to protect the health of employees and citizens visiting state-owned properties. In addition, the ban will drive down one of the major factors of increasing health care costs for state employees, decrease employee absenteeism and increase productivity. This ban will save an estimated \$5.2 million in taxpayer dollars each year. The ban will become effective as of July 1, 2012, in order to give state employees the opportunity to take advantage of smoking cessation programs prior to implementation. Smoking cessation programs are available through employee health insurance plans and counseling is available through the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline. For more information, please call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

#### Certified Healthy Businesses and Schools

As the chief executive for the state of Oklahoma, the governor is committed to worksite wellness and her office has received certification through the Certified Healthy Business program. She has challenged her cabinet officials and all state agencies to become certified healthy businesses as well. The Governor is equally concerned with the health and wellness of our children. The governor's budget includes \$1.5 million in funding for the Certified Healthy Schools Reward Program. This program will provide financial rewards to each Oklahoma school that voluntarily achieves Certified Healthy School status by creating a healthy place for children to learn through increased physical activity and access to nutritious foods, providing wellness opportunities for school staff, referring children for needed physical and mental health services and teaching children how to take responsibility for their health. The Certified Healthy Business and Certified Healthy Schools programs are part of a larger program that includes Certified Healthy Communities, Restaurants and Campuses. In 2011, about 490 Oklahoma businesses, schools, and communities received Healthy Oklahoma Certification and more than 1,000 have voluntarily been certified since the program began.

#### Infant Mortality Program

Governor Fallin's budget includes \$1.7 million in funding to help deal with the high rate of infant death in Oklahoma. This funding will enhance the current statewide infant mortality initiative, by implementing targeted interventions through hospitals, key state and local agencies, and partner organizations to improve health outcomes for Oklahoma mothers and infants. Infant mortality can be improved in Oklahoma through simple, evidence-based steps such as laying a baby on its back to sleep, encouraging women to breastfeed, teaching parents about normal infant crying in order to reduce abusive head

trauma, and reducing smoking among pregnant women and family members. This program will utilize the existing health care and public health systems to give parents the tools they need to raise a healthy infant.

## **Rural and Underserved Area Residency Program**

Sixty-four of Oklahoma's 77 counties are experiencing health professional shortages. The United Health Foundation also ranks Oklahoma 49<sup>th</sup> in the country for the number of primary care physicians for its population. The lack of access to health care providers, especially primary care physicians, is a significant factor in Oklahoma's poor health outcomes. In an effort to reduce the shortage of health professionals in rural and underserved areas, the governor is supporting the expansion of rural residency programs in Oklahoma. Rural residency programs have been shown to help retain physicians where they are needed the most. The governor's budget proposal includes \$3.08 million to establish 40 new residency slots at five hospitals. After three years, federal funding will become available to sustain this program.

## **Promoting Physical Activity**

### Capitol Gym

In order to advance worksite wellness and improve employee health, the Governor is proposing to close the smoking room in the basement of the state Capitol and create an exercise room for employees working in the building. Research studies indicate that having access to places to exercise at the worksite increases physical activity of employees and improves fitness. The Oklahoma Hospital Association has offered to donate funds to match a grant application that was submitted to the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust to fund the conversion. No appropriated dollars are included in the governor's budget for this proposal.

### Shared Liability

The governor has endorsed Shared Use Agreement legislation limiting liability of school districts that open their facilities on a voluntary basis (both indoor and outdoor) to community groups and/or individuals for physical activity. Currently, school districts are reluctant to open school property to the community after hours, due to concerns about the legal risks. A state law that clarifies liability laws and protects schools from lawsuits will encourage partnerships that keep schools open to promote physical activity and reduce childhood obesity. This legislation will also assist schools in becoming a Certified Healthy School and provide increased opportunity for schools to receive Certified Healthy School Rewards.

## **Mental Health / Smart on Crime Initiative**

The governor's budget continues to build on last year's initial investment of \$3 million in the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) Smart on Crime proposal which increased the number of women receiving addiction treatment to prevent incarceration and created 24/7 mental health emergency responders and services to assist law enforcement in Oklahoma County. This investment will continue to help preserve families, increase employment and reduce the state's high incarceration rate for women.

### Community Based Crisis Centers

Law enforcement has been traveling further distances and at a greater frequency transporting persons with mental illness who are in need of crisis services. As an example of the scope of this issue, for one moderate size county alone, local law enforcement made nearly 450 trips during the past year, each a minimum of 50 miles one way, taking up at least 1,400 hours of officer time. The governor's budget includes \$2.5 million for one additional crisis center. Community-based crisis centers are the best practice in intensive short-term treatment because they are close to local communities. Investing in these centers means these critically needed mental health services will be available locally allowing our citizens to receive treatment closer to home and keeping our officers on the street fighting violent crime as opposed driving hundreds of miles. For persons receiving treatment, it will reduce risks of suicide and involvement with the criminal justice system.

### Jail Screenings

Currently, district attorneys, defense attorneys and the judiciary rarely receive objective information regarding the mental health and substance abuse needs and the level of risk of the person standing in front of them. This information would aid prosecutorial and defense decisions as well as help inform sentencing decisions. The ODMHSAS has proposed to develop jail screeners through its network of community providers across Oklahoma. These screeners will utilize evidenced-based, objective tools for mental health and addiction screening and determine the risks and needs of each individual. The governor's budget includes \$500,000 for this initiative.

### Systems of Care Grant

About 10 percent of Oklahoma youth have a mental health disorder and an additional 10 percent have a substance abuse issue. Without early and effective identification and interventions, childhood disorders can lead to school failure, poor employment opportunities, poverty and criminal justice involvement in adulthood. The governor's budget includes \$3,083,163 for the state match portion of the Systems of Care Grant. Systems of Care is a comprehensive spectrum of mental health and other services that are organized into coordinated networks to meet multiple needs. The program provides community based, family driven, youth-guided, and culturally competent services statewide. These family centered programs have led to healthier Oklahoma families through significant reductions in self-harm attempts (39 percent decline), reduced law enforcement contacts (47 percent decline) and reduced school detentions (53 percent decline). The Systems of Care program is the backbone of the children's treatment system and Oklahoma is the national leader in this evidence-based approach to serving children and youth with mental illness and substance abuse disorders. This investment underscores the importance of serving these youth now to avoid more expensive consequences down the road.