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Community Services to Improve Health, Well-Being, Now More Accessible with One-Stop Local Website

Vivida Health "Community Connect" addresses essential services gaps many face with a platform to help SWFL residents search for free and reduced-cost services

(Fort Myers, Fla. - Feb. 11, 2019) For Southwest Florida residents seeking local resources, a new online portal from Vivida Health may be the answer.

Vivida Community Connect is a one-stop guide for a host of community services that offers information about everything from low-cost health care centers and legal services to food pantries and much more. The site is open to everyone and free to use. By making human service program information more accessible to those in need, Vivida Health hopes to help more people reach self-sufficiency.

"Social determinants of health, including access to healthy food, safe shelter and reliable transportation are some of the most important things affecting a person's overall well-being. As a physician, I have seen patients experience the stress of finding these essentials and know the crucial role they play in their health. By improving access through an easy-to-use portal, we can help those in need lead healthier, happier lives," said Jon Hart, M.D., chief medical officer at Vivida.

To take advantage of this resource, community members simply need to visit www.VividaCommunityConnect.com and enter their zip code to start searching. Based on this information, visitors can see resources available right here in Southwest Florida including:

- Health care (or health services)
- Food
- Housing
- Household Goods (furniture, toys, clothing)
- Transportation
- Money (taxes, financial assistance, etc.)
- Care (adoption, foster care, animal services)
- Education
- Work
- Legal

Each section contains details about the services provided, hours, directions and an option to connect with selected organizations. This allows visitors to make appointments or refer friends and family who might benefit from certain services. Visitors to the Community Connect site are encouraged to call 211 if they would like to speak with someone by phone.

Community Connect enables social service organizations, large and small, to have a streamlined, easily searched web presence along with the capability of referring community members to needed services via email and text messaging. The Vivida engagement team will help interested non-profit community organizations to help enter information into the database to close gaps where necessary.

“Our goal with Vivida Community Connect was to make resources as accessible as possible. Many people don’t know where to look, what services are offered and what they qualify for. Search engines aren’t always helpful in finding this information and even if they locate a resource, website information can be outdated or nonexistent. In building our portal, we’re removing barriers and connecting organizations with those in need,” said Lynne Thorp, Vivida contract manager.

Vivida Health, is a provider service network (PSN) created exclusively for Medicaid enrollees in Southwest Florida. It is owned and operated by Lee Health and helps provide underserved or vulnerable residents with the care and resources they need through this innovative program.

About Lee Health

Since the opening of the first hospital in 1916, Lee Health has been a health care leader in Southwest Florida, constantly evolving to meet the needs of the community. A non-profit, integrated health care services organization, Lee Health is committed to the well-being of every individual served, focused on healthy living and maintaining good health. Staffed by caring people, inspiring health, services are conveniently located throughout the community in four acute care hospitals, two specialty hospitals, outpatient centers, walk-in medical centers, primary care and specialty physician practices and other services across the continuum of care. Formerly known as Lee Memorial Health System, the organization began its second century of service with a new name in 2016. Learn more at www.LeeHealth.org.