



HEALTH
SYSTEMS

HELPING PEOPLE HEAL



Access That Makes a Difference

Connecting Communities to Behavioral Health Care

FY24-25

lsfhealthsystems.org

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Message from Our CEO Dr. Christine Cauffield

Despite being consistently ranked among the states with the lowest per capita spending on mental health, Florida has developed a decentralized, private community-based system for providing behavioral healthcare to the uninsured that consistently delivers positive outcomes for Floridians experiencing behavioral health challenges.

Recent reviews of this system by Florida TaxWatch reinforced calls for more investments in the state's Managing Entity (ME) behavioral health safety net.

Florida taxpayers spend more than \$1 billion each year providing a robust system of behavioral health care for those without adequate insurance. State leaders last spring passed legislation requiring an independent audit of Florida's Behavioral Health Managing Entities that manage the safety net system of care.

That audit, completed recently by the highly respected firm of Ernst & Young, confirmed the system operates without fraud, waste or abuse at an administrative rate of less than 3%. I'm very proud that LSF Health Systems – the ME covering 23 Northeast and North Central Florida counties – had the lowest administrative costs in the state.

The audit, like the March 2025 TaxWatch report, noted the substantial return on investment MEs produce by garnering billions of dollars in private and federal grants that enhance and multiply the effectiveness of taxpayer investments. Auditors praised the engaged leadership teams at the MEs as well as the overwhelming support for the system shown in surveys of private providers in the networks.

Legislators also called for streamlined collection and reporting of essential data that show services, outcomes and the return on investment. MEs have developed a dashboard that answers this call which is now available to the public on the Department of Children and Families website.

We encourage state leaders and others to take a close look at the new audit as well as the March 2025 Florida TaxWatch report and the data on our new DCF dashboard. We believe all this valuable information calls for increased investment in our state's extremely efficient and enviable privatized, community-based ME system.

MEs ensure that the system of care is available and accessible when needed. There are no other entities in the country that can accomplish these vital services with the level of professionalism and accountability that we do.

I'm proud of the work that LSF Health Systems provides through our network of 98 community partners that serve our 23-county region, lives are saved every single day.



Dr. Christine Cauffield, CEO, LSF Health Systems



Our Vision

We envision communities where every child, adult, and family has access to the behavioral health care services they need to live well and be well.

Our Mission

Our mission is to develop and sustain an integrated system of behavioral health care through a network of services built on integrity, innovation, and collaboration.

Our Values

- Compassion
- Generosity
- Honesty
- Innovation
- Justice

Follow us on our social media channels: [f LSFHealthSystems](#) [in Isf-health-systems](#) [X LSFHealthSys](#) [@Isfhealthsystems](#)

The Suicide Crisis

Summit Kicks Off Zero Suicide Jax Campaign

Emma Benoit was a good student and an attractive high school cheerleader with a strong support system of family and friends all around her. As far as anyone could tell, she had no reason for the extreme anxiety and depressive episodes she battled.

That was a large part of what led to her 2017 suicide attempt that left her partially paralyzed, Benoit recalls.

"I had everything, and that's why I felt so ashamed about my emotions," said Benoit who was among the speakers at LSF Health Systems' Zero Suicide Jacksonville Summit in August. "I thought the problem had to be me and my shame about my emotions. I became such a people pleaser. I told my friends and family exactly what they wanted to hear to create a facade that hid what I was going through."

Benoit shared her story of survival and recovery as one of the speakers at the inaugural summit kicking off the Zero Suicide Jax public awareness campaign.

Every 11 minutes, someone in the U.S. takes their own life. The suicide crisis affects every community including Duval County where the suicide rate in 2023 was 16 per every 100,000 people, markedly higher than the state average. These grim statistics were part of the impetus for the launch of the Zero Suicide Jax campaign that focuses on engaging the community in learning the warning signs, reaching out to those struggling and making workplace changes to help prevent suicide.

"The first people to notice a shift in someone's behavior are often those closest to them - friends, family, colleagues, bosses, teachers or coaches," said



LSF Health Systems CEO Dr. Christine Cauffield.

"That's what Zero Suicide Jax is about. We're asking people to step up and learn the warning signs, understand how to best reach out to those who are struggling and make changes where we work. When we know the warning signs, we can get help for someone more quickly."

This local initiative is based on the 2012 movement launched by the U.S. National Strategy for Suicide Prevention that focuses on enhancing suicide care in healthcare systems. It has made a positive impact in communities that have adopted the model, and LSF Health Systems is convinced expanding the campaign beyond healthcare facilities can be the key to saving even more lives.

LSF Health Systems' approach to suicide prevention holds tremendous promise for making real change, said Commander Randi Glossman of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office was among the first Jacksonville organizations to take the Zero Suicide Jax pledge.

"They emphasize early intervention, wraparound care and community-based support," Glossman said. "The strategy mirrors JSO's efforts to proactively address officer wellness and prevent crisis before it escalates. LSF is helping to normalize the conversations, promote hope and reinforce that no one has to face mental health struggles alone."

The campaign is a bold step in the right direction, according to Nick Padlo, a Jacksonville military veteran who struggled with suicidal ideations prior to creating a local resource to serve veterans fighting mental health challenges.

"LSF Health Systems is a megaphone in our community," Padlo said. "Simply by having rooms where conversations take place helps start the changes. We need people in every corner of Jacksonville to be carrying the message of life and support. If enough people know that healing is possible, then they can carry the message to people who are struggling to see a future."

For more information about LSF Health Systems' Zero Suicide Jax campaign, please visit ZeroSuicideJax.org.



LSF Health Systems Associate Vice President of Clinical Program Operations Erin Whitaker-Houck is interviewed by WOKV's Rich Jones about the launch of the Zero Suicide Jax campaign.

LSF Health Training Academy

Addressing Critical Workforce Shortages

More than 122 million Americans live in areas with critical shortages of mental health professionals. The U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration estimates the country needs to add more than 200,000 mental health and addiction counselors during the next decade to meet the growing demand – especially in rural areas.

LSF Health Systems' Training Academy presents a promising solution to help address the behavioral health profession's critical workforce shortage.

The Academy trains and certifies about 3,000 people annually in areas ranging from peer counseling certification to continuing education for professionals. The program's subject matter experts and leaders are looking to dramatically expand what they offer using innovation to meet changing market demands.

"We knew the shortage was coming in the behavioral health field," said Samantha Lawson Davis, senior director of training for LSF Health Systems. "For a variety of reasons, not enough people are entering our field through the normal paths anymore."

LSF Health Systems, one of Florida's seven designated Managing Entities, has for years been a national leader in the effort to train and certify individuals with lived experience who can serve as peer recovery specialists. The Academy is among the strategies the nonprofit organization is using to help address the behavioral health workforce crisis in the region it serves.

The National Center for Health Workforce Analysis projects shortages in 2037 for many key behavioral health occupations, including:

113,930
addiction counselors

87,840
mental health
counselors

79,160
psychologists

50,440
psychiatrists

34,170
marriage and family
therapists

39,710
school counselors



LSF Health Systems CEO Dr. Christine Cauffield teaches a class on Traumatic Brain Injuries to staff at the nonprofit child-serving agency Daniel in Jacksonville.

The Academy offers in-person, virtual and blended programs with specialized training for groups such as first responders, family caregivers, child psychologists, new parents, case managers and human trafficking victim counselors – among many others.

Thanks to federal and state funding, most of the training is offered to students in three-month courses at costs far below what LSF Health Systems requires to operate the program. The program also assists students with job placements after their courses are completed.

Dr. Christine Cauffield said she sees the training as an essential element of her organization's mission.

"Our organization is a nonprofit with a mission to develop and sustain an integrated system of behavioral health in our 23-county service area," Cauffield said. "Helping meet the demand for trained professionals today and into the future is a crucial part of that mission."

LSF Health Systems' Academy has been extremely successful because of the quality of instruction it provides, said Elisha Gumataotao, Opioid Impacted Family Support Program manager at the Academy.

Courses stress evidence-based practices, immersive skill building and active student engagement – regardless of the teaching format, Gumataotao said.

"We hear positive feedback from our students in all the surveys we do," she said. "They love our instructors, and they appreciate how we tailor our training to their needs. We focus on the specific needs of the students as well as the needs of their communities."

Along with courses leading to certification as a peer recovery specialist, LSF Health Systems has a 12-month CRPS apprenticeship program that includes 144 hours of classroom training and 2,000 hours of field training.

Lawson Davis, who has been with the Academy for 12 years, believes it holds tremendous untapped potential. She's hoping to move the program toward more partnerships with traditional academic institutions.

"Our goal is to expand our ability to support workforce in the helping professions" she said. "We aim to achieve college-level distribution to create a clear pathway for graduates who want to continue their education. At the same time, we remain deeply committed to those who may not seek a degree but are driven by a desire to make a meaningful impact."

Core Accredited Training Programs

- Mental Health First Aid teaches key skills to assist someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis.
- This training provides expertise for individuals providing peer support services to individuals, family, youth and veterans recovering from substance misuse and/or mental health challenges.
- Our suicide prevention trainings include QPR, ASIST and CALM. Students will learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade and refer someone to help.
- Courses ranging from introductory care coordination/case management to advanced clinical counseling skills while working with diverse populations.
- Our opioid response trainings provide tools, education and resources on a variety of substance use topics, equipping individuals to recognize the signs and symptoms of an overdose and how to provide the appropriate care.

For more information about LSF Health Systems' Training Academy, visit us online at lsfhealthsystems.org/training-institute or email the program at training@lsfnet.org.



Samantha Lawson Davis (right), senior director of training for LSF Health Systems, runs the organization's successful Training Academy which has become a vital tool for helping rural communities battle the state's mental health crisis.

Focusing Needed Attention On Our Rural Communities

While LSF Health Systems continues to support growing demands for behavioral healthcare throughout North and North Central Florida, it's increasingly the rural areas of our 23-county service area where our help is needed most.

Our rapidly changing industry has seen the recent closings of many rural hospitals and mental health resources in these areas. This while the need for case managers, counselors and certified peer recovery specialists continues to rise in counties without major urban population centers LSF Health Systems has responded with several new initiatives designed to address issues specific to these unique communities.

We're working hard to expand our successful Training Academy that has become an effective weapon to fight the critical shortage of behavioral healthcare professionals. The Academy helps professionals in our industry get the continuing education they need while training citizens with invaluable lived experience to help meet demands.

At the same time, we continue hosting our bi-annual Rural Health Summit, bringing experts and stakeholders together to discuss innovative solutions to the most pressing behavioral health issues in Florida's rural communities. This year's summit focused much attention on our rapidly growing Uplift Communities initiative. Launched in 2022, Uplift is building powerful collaborations with faith communities in smaller counties.

We're also expanding our new paramedicine programs across the Northeast region with paramedicine programs in 18 counties with additional counties onboarding over the next year.

We're proud to work closely with state leadership that has ignited renewed attention on the needs of residents in Florida's rural communities.

News Briefs

Everly Elected Board Chair

Community leader Lise Everly was elected as chair of LSF Health Systems Board of Directors in December 2024. Everly is a seasoned leader with extensive experience in nonprofit management, strategic planning and leadership development.

With more than 30 years of experience in human resources and having served as a board member for five other Jacksonville entities, Everly is prepared to help LSF Health Systems make addiction recovery support, suicide prevention services and other vital resources widely more accessible.

"I am honored to serve as chair of the Board of Directors for LSF Health Systems," Everly said. "This organization has an incredible history of empowering individuals and transforming lives. I look forward to working with my fellow board members and the dedicated team at LSF Health to ensure high-quality services and support for our communities, especially during this critical time of growth in the healthcare landscape."



Lise Everly

Community Paramedicine Programs Fills the Gaps For Rural Florida Communities

Almost one-third of rural hospitals in America, including eight of 22 such facilities in Florida, are at risk of closing according to a recent report from the Center for Healthcare Quality and Payment Reform. Five rural hospitals in Florida closed in the last four years, and the current crisis in rural healthcare has huge implications for underserved patients in areas like Williston that lost its regional hospital in 2019.

LSF Health Systems is working with officials and private providers in its 23-county service area to expand a new community paramedicine program that's proving to be an important solution to this growing problem.

"Community paramedicine programs are changing patient outcomes in rural areas that lack adequate healthcare facilities," said Dr. Christine Cauffield, CEO of LSF Health Systems. "The program not only leads to healthier residents, but 911 dispatchers have also noticed significant reductions in emergency calls. This means faster response times for emergencies, less strain on the EMS system and better outcomes for patients."



Gainesville Fire and Rescue's Mobile MAT program staff support the new community paramedicine program.

LSF Health Systems is supporting community paramedicine programs who collaborate with other community resources and partners to address behavioral health problems. The programs use specially trained paramedics to treat individuals in their homes, preventing unnecessary ambulance transports and hospital admissions.

New community paramedicine programs LSF Health Systems funded in 18 counties across the Northeast region of Florida work with residents at risk of drug overdoses. Community paramedics and peer support specialists work with those who don't qualify for medical referrals.

Cauffield says the innovative approach provides tremendous benefits in rural communities where access to healthcare facilities is becoming increasingly difficult and emergency rooms are inundated with patients who could be treated in their homes.

Cauffield in *Florida Trend's* Florida 500 Again

LSF Health Systems CEO Dr. Christine Cauffield was honored for the second year in a row to be named on *Florida Trend* magazine's Florida 500 list of the state's most influential business leaders.

The 500 executives featured were selected through in-depth research, interviews and connections within regional business circles, according to *Florida Trend*. The result is a highly selective list of the individuals driving Florida's economic growth and innovation.

Cauffield was among 32 state leaders listed in the Florida 500 health and life sciences category for 2025.

News Briefs

Stopping Teen Marijuana Use Successfully

LSF Health Systems is playing a key role in getting help for teens in North and North Central Florida experiencing or at high risk for marijuana substance use disorder.

Thanks to SAMSHA's Youth and Family TREE Grant, LSF Health Systems was able to better support its providers in educating parents about the dangers of teen marijuana use and the availability of a free treatment programs.

LSF Health Systems CEO Dr. Christine Cauffield noted that because there are many more dangerous drugs out there, marijuana misuse often gets overlooked despite posing serious risks to teens in particular.



LSF Health Systems is playing a key role in getting help for teens at high risk for marijuana substance use disorder.

"Research indicates that marijuana use during adolescence can thin the brain's prefrontal cortex, which continues developing until age 25," Cauffield said. "This can negatively impact planning, decision making and impulse control."

Gateway Community Services, a provider in Duval County, offers a program that utilizes a combination of one-on-one and group therapy sessions to teach teens coping skills that help them avoid turning to drugs or alcohol.

LSF Health Systems helped Gateway build awareness for this program by developing a new, user-friendly web page that provides parents with helpful information about marijuana use and how to access free help. LSF Health Systems also managed an awareness campaign to get parents to that site. The campaign achieved 1.4 million impressions and resulted in more than 11,000 web page visits in two months.

Coaches Program Creating Better Paths for Kids

Families that have kids struggling with behavioral issues can become overwhelmed and end up lost in the healthcare system. With rising emotional and behavioral challenges among students in St. Johns and Putnam counties, the St. Augustine Youth Services' Coaches Program has become an essential source of support.



The St. Augustine Youth Services' Coaches Program has become an important mental health resource for youth in St. Johns and Putnam counties.

The program uses a team including a case manager, a therapist and a peer support specialist that visits families in their homes to provide wraparound support that helps their children stabilize and thrive.

The families the program serves face problems ranging from not being able to get off a treatment waitlist to legal issues, and almost everything in between, said Program Supervisor Fred Baker.

Baker said one of the biggest benefits to the program is that, with his team's help, there is finally one coordinated plan with the youth's needs at the center. They help families navigate the system, assist with benefit access and referrals as well as connect them with services such as support groups and community programs. They also work with the children one-on-one to help them develop better coping strategies and skills.

Thanks to Coaches, 91% participants were able to void higher levels of care, 92% avoided future Baker Act hospitalization and 97% stayed clear of legal issues.

LSF Health Systems oversees the program enrollment and success metrics as well as helping the teams with marketing and public awareness.

LSFHS FY24-25

By The Numbers

98 **organizations** working with us to provide state-funded mental health and substance use programs in a 23-county region

807 **at-risk children and adults** served by our Care Coordination program that promotes care transitions for individuals with complex behavioral health needs

\$7 per day

The cost per person for which LSF Health Systems ensures access to a comprehensive continuum of behavioral health services, from prevention to crisis care.

755 **individuals trained**

since 2015 to become certified as either Certified Recovery Peer Specialists or Certified Recovery Support Specialists

143 **training** sessions provided to community stakeholders

3,361 **individuals** trained in specialty behavioral health topics

39,574 **total** mental health/substance misuse clients



3,190 **law enforcement calls** in 2024-2025 that included mental health co-responders through programs we fund that diverted 70% of individuals from jail into treatment

15 **community partners certified** to deliver Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training of Trainers

358 **callers served**

by our Access to Care Line, a free resource that offers 24/7 screenings, referrals and information about mental health and substance use programs

151 **diversions**

from both civil and forensic state hospitals for individuals who are either at-risk of or have already been committed to a state hospital

Overview

Funding for FY24-25

Funding Total

\$292,585,349

DCF SAMH Total

\$287,119,659

including carry forward



OTHER FUNDING TOTAL

\$1,827,644	STATE GRANTS/LOCAL MATCH TOTAL <i>DCF First Responder, COPS, Hernando Drug Court, CJMHSA Hernando</i>
\$3,592,450	FEDERAL GRANTS TOTAL <i>HRSA OIFSP, SAMHSA COACHES, SBIRT SETS, ZERO SUICIDE, TREE</i>
\$36,525	MANAGED CARE FUNDED PROGRAMS <i>Fla Blue Care Program for SMI; Simply Healthcare IPS</i>
\$468	SPONSORSHIPS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TOTAL
\$8,603	TRAININGS TOTAL



LSFHS FY24-25

Surpassing Goals

REDUCED RECIDIVISM

1%

of adults enrolled in care coordination who were admitted into a crisis stabilization unit/inpatient or inpatient detoxification were readmitted within 30 days after discharge

LIVING IN A STABLE HOUSING ENVIRONMENT

ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

93% **of adults** with severe and persistent mental illnesses live in a stable environment
Goal 85%

93% **of adults** in forensic involvement live in a stable housing environment
Goal 64%

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

99%

of children served for mental health lived in a stable housing environment

Goal 91%

ADULT SUBSTANCE ABUSE

91%

of adults with substance abuse lived in stable housing at time of discharge

Goal 89%

CHILDREN'S SUBSTANCE ABUSE

93%

of children with substance abuse lived in stable housing at time of discharge

Goal 88%

LSFHS FY24-25

Surpassing Goals

SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE SUBSTANCE TREATMENT SERVICES

67%

of adults receiving substance abuse services completed treatment

Goal
51%

82%

of children receiving substance abuse services completed treatment

Goal
48%

IMPROVED LEVEL OF FUNCTIONING

85%

of children experiencing emotional and serious emotional disturbances had improved functioning after receiving services

Goal
65%

SUCCESSFUL DAYS WORKING AND COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT

75 DAYS

annual average of amount of time adults with severe, persistent mental health challenges worked

Goal 40
Days

43%

of adults with serious mental health challenges were competitively employed

Goal
24%

CONTRACTED NETWORK SERVICE PROVIDER AGENCIES

- Ability Housing of Northeast Florida, Inc.
- ACE Foundation of Florida, Inc.
- Alachua County Board of County Commissioners
- Alachua County Board of County Commissioners d/b/a Alachua County Fire Rescue and Alachua County Court Services
- Andrews Healthcare Consulting, LLC
- Baker County Board of County Commissioners
- Baker County Medical Services, Inc. d/b/a Ed Fraser Memorial Hospital
- Bay Area Youth Services, Inc. d/b/a BAYS
- BayCare Behavioral Health, Inc.
- Bethany Christian Services of Florida
- Bradford County Board of County Commissioners
- Camelot Community Care, Inc.
- CDS Family and Behavioral Health Services, Inc.
- Child Guidance Center, Inc.
- Children's Home Society of Florida
- Children's Trust of Alachua County
- Chrysalis Center, LLC
- Citrus County Children's Advocacy Center, Inc. d/b/a Jessie's Place
- Citrus County, Florida for and on behalf of Citrus County Fire Rescue
- City of Gainesville
- City of Ocala
- Clay Behavioral Health Center, Inc.
- Clay County Board of County Commissioners for and on behalf of Clay County Fire Rescue
- Columbia County Board of County Commissioners
- Community Coalition Alliance, Inc.
- Community Rehabilitation Center, Inc.
- County of Hamilton
- CRC Health Treatment Clinics, LLC d/b/a Volusia County Comprehensive Treatment Center d/b/a North Florida Comprehensive Treatment Center
- Daniel Memorial, Inc.
- DaySpring Village, Inc.
- Dolores Barr Weaver Policy Center
- Dixie County Board of County Commissioners
- Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc.
- El-Beth-El Development Center, Inc.
- EPIC Community Services, Inc.
- Flagler Cares, Inc.
- Flagler Hospital, Inc.
- Flagler Open Arms Recovery Services, Inc.
- Fresh Ministries, Inc.
- Gainesville Opportunity Center, Inc.
- Gateway Community Services, Inc.
- Gilchrist County Board of County Commissioners
- Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services, Inc.
- Halifax Hospital Medical Center
- Hanley Center Foundation, Inc.
- HELP-US HELP-U, Inc.
- Here Tomorrow, Inc.
- Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
- Hernando County Community Anti-Drug Coalition, Inc.
- I.M. Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless, Inc.
- Inspire to Rise, Inc.
- Lafayette County Board of County Commissioners
- Levy County Board of County Commissioners
- LifeStream Behavioral Center, Inc.
- Living Hope, Inc.
- Marion Senior Services, Inc.
- Mental Health America of East Central Florida, Inc.
- Mental Health Resource Center, Inc.
- Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. d/b/a Meridian Healthcare
- Metro Treatment of Florida, L.P., d/b/a Jacksonville Metro Treatment Center, d/b/a Orange Park Treatment Center
- Mid Florida Homeless Coalition, Inc.
- NAMI Hernando, Inc.
- Nassau County Mental Health, Alcoholism & Drug Council, Inc. d/b/a Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare
- Northwest Behavioral Health Services, Inc.
- Operation PAR, Inc.
- Outreach Community Care Network, Inc.
- Partnership for Strong Families, Inc.
- Project Health, Inc. d/b/a Langley Health Services
- Putnam County Board of County Commissioners
- Rebel Recovery Florida, Inc.
- Recover Together, Inc. d/b/a Groups Recover Together
- Recovery Point Palatka, Inc.
- ReNew Recovery Café, Inc.
- School District of Clay County - SEDNET
- SMA Healthcare, Inc.
- St. Augustine Youth Services, Inc.
- St. Johns County Sheriff's Office
- Sumter County Board of County Commissioners
- Suwannee County Board of County Commissioners
- TaskForce Fore Ending Homelessness, Inc.
- The House Next Door, Inc.
- The LJD Jewish Family & Community Services, Inc.

- The Nehemiah Project, Inc.
- The Ora Clubhouse, Inc.
- The Volusia/Flagler County Coalition for the Homeless
- Union County Board of County Commissioners
- United Way of Northeast Florida, Inc.
- University of Florida Board of Trustees
- Urban Jacksonville, Inc., d/b/a Aging True
- Van Gogh's Palette, Inc. d/b/a Vincent House
- Volunteers of America of Florida, Inc.
- Volusia Recovery Alliance, Inc.
- Zero Hour Life Center, Inc.

FUNDERS & GRANTORS

- State of Florida, Department of Children and Families
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- City of Jacksonville
- Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
- Florida Blue

ZERO SUICIDE JAX SUMMIT SPONSORS

- Mental Health Resource Center
- Child Guidance Center
- University of Central Florida Restores
- Carisk Partners
- HOPE Box Resources
- Health-Tech Consultants, Inc.
- Optum Services
- The Vines Hospital
- Lutes Family Foundation

*List as of 2/01/2026



LSF Health Systems is a managing entity contracted with the Department of Children and Families to serve a 23-county region in North Florida. Learn more at lsfhealthsystems.org.

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