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## APRIL IS NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH



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**Sanford, Fla.** – April is National Minority Health Month. The theme for 2016 is “Accelerating Health Equity for the Nation.” National Minority Health Month began 100 years ago as National Negro Health Week. In April 1915, Dr. Booker T. Washington dispatched a letter to the leading African American newspapers, proposing the observance of "National Negro Health Week."

Health was the key to progress and equity in all other things, Dr. Washington argued: "Without health and long life, all else fails." He called on local health departments, schools, churches, businesses, professional associations, and the most influential organizations in the African American community to "pull together" and "unite... in one great National Health Movement."

In July 2013, DOH-Seminole established the Office of Minority Health to address health concerns within minority populations in Seminole County. Health concerns include chronic conditions such as diabetes, obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, asthma, and cancer. The Office of Minority Health spearheads five major events each year in observance of National Public Health Week, Hispanic Heritage Month, Take a Loved One to the Doctor Month, Minority Health Month, and Black History Month.

“Poor health outcomes for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders are apparent when comparing their health indicators to Florida’s general population,” said Dr. Swannie Jett, Health Officer for DOH-Seminole. “In 2013, African American Seminole County residents had a higher age-adjusted death rate from stroke (43.2 per 100,000) than Caucasians (31.8 per 100,000).”

Visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health [website](#) for more information. Additional information is located at [www.SeminoleCoHealth.com](http://www.SeminoleCoHealth.com).

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