



**For Immediate Release**  
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### NWF HEALTH NETWORK ANNOUNCES NEW “CORE” PARTNERSHIPS

The agreements represent the continuation of opioid treatment and recovery programs in two northwest Florida counties.

**Tallahassee, FL** – NWF Health Network (NWFHN), the network management agency for substance abuse and mental health services in 18 Northwest Florida counties is proud to announce new service partnerships in two critical counties: Escambia and Gulf. The partnerships are part of the state’s larger Coordinated Opioid Recovery (CORE) Network – a first in the nation coordinated program to provide full-scale treatment, overdose response and other services to reduce and prevent opioid addiction.

CORE partnerships include Escambia County Emergency Management Services, Community Health Northwest Florida, Gulf County Emergency Management Services, and PanCare of Florida. All services were effective and available in these communities as of Sunday, October 1, 2023.

“We are pleased to announce these partnerships and are immensely grateful to Governor and First Lady DeSantis for their tireless leadership and inspiration to create this innovative and effective opioid response,” said NWF Health CEO Mike Watkins. “We also thank Secretary Harris for her unwavering support and dedication to northwest Florida communities who are most in need.”

The state’s Coordinated Opioid Recovery (CORE) is the first of its kind in the United States and places Florida as a leader in opioid and addiction recovery and is coordinated through the cross-agency partnership and cooperation of the Florida Department of Health (DOH), Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), and the Agency for Health Care Administration. The CORE Network expands the key components of overdose response and builds an all-inclusive system of care to address the entire spectrum of substance use disorder.

As an example of this innovative approach, Dr Mark Stavros, CEO at Gulf Coast Addiction Medicine and a dedicated volunteer board member for NWF Health Network, provided that “the emergency departments in Pensacola, Florida are committed to helping patients struggling with opioid use disorder get the life-saving treatment they need. We are committed to CORE and getting medication treatment started in the emergency department or with EMS.”



NWF Health Network provides a broad range of services to children, adults, and their families through a managed network of accredited providers. These services include addiction, mental health, adoptions, case management, child abuse prevention, foster care and independent living. As the only entity in the state of Florida that is privileged to provide both behavioral health and child protection managed care, NWF Health Network is uniquely suited to serving the recovery and support needs of Florida's children and families.

For more information about NWF Health Network, visit [www.nwfhealth.org](http://www.nwfhealth.org).

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