



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 BUDGET HEARING

Success Stories **Health Care Safety Net**

Situational Analysis

Tennessee Comptroller analysis in 2022 estimated a range from 8.3 percent to 12.2 percent of Tennesseans without health insurance.

Gov. Lee's Commitment

- **\$31.1M** recurring state funding for Health Care Safety Net (vs \$8.4M in 2019).

Results

- **103** primary care and dental providers and more than **341K** encounters.
- **Project Access** now covers **all** counties through volunteer clinics, docs, & hospitals.
- **Dental services** include restorative work.
- **Improvements** in reimbursement rates, clinical efficiencies, and health outcomes.

Success Stories **Tennessee Strong Families**

Situational Analysis

The Tennessee Strong Families Initiative provides funding to improve health outcomes for mothers and children throughout the State.

Gov. Lee's Commitment

- **\$5.6M** recurring state funding for Tennessee Strong Families programs.

Results

- Enhanced CHANT **outreach targeting high-risk** counties for expectant mothers and newborns.
- Expanding **perinatal telehealth services** in East and West Tennessee.
- Increases in **consultations, outreach, and training** at regional perinatal centers.
- **Doula Pilot Project** serves pregnant and postpartum women statewide.

Success Stories **Rural Health Care Infrastructure**

Situational Analysis

Supporting efforts resulting from of Gov. Lee's Rural Health Task Force recommendations to improve access to health services in rural Tennessee.

Gov. Lee's Commitment

- **\$58.9M** in shared savings funding for improved access to health care in rural areas (FY 2025).

Results

- **\$50M** in competitive grants for rural providers to expand facilities, care delivery, and improve access to health care services.
- **Center of Excellence** to provide technical, planning, and implementation assistance to rural providers.
- Continued work with external partners to expand **provider training programs** and **specialty care services** in rural areas.

Success Stories **Healthy Smiles Initiative**

Situational Analysis

Tennessee ranked 45th nationally in population-to-dentist ratio, with 89 counties designated, partially or fully, as Dental Health Shortage Areas. Estimates showed the State needing 700 additional dentists to meet current practice standards.

Gov. Lee's Commitment – FY 23 | \$94.4M | 5yrs

- **\$66M** expand class sizes – UT & Meharry
- **\$20M** expand services – Prosthodontic & Seniors
- **\$8M** provider recruitment incentives

Results

- Class expansions at **UT & Meharry** with clinic rotations in rural and underserved areas.
- **Prosthodontic** procedures provided to **1,300** patients receiving through thousands of patient encounters.
- **Smile 65+** serves **5,000** seniors with **18,000** encounters.
- **Twenty-two** participants in **loan repayment program**.

Healthy Smiles Initiative

\$24.2 million

Identified Need

The pilot program met the goals of improving the pipeline of dentists in Tennessee, expanding services to rural areas, and expanding treatment for underserved populations. Recurring funding ensures these achievements are permanent.

Action Plan

- Recurring funding supports dental school efforts at maintaining expanded class sizes.
- Access to dental care in rural and underserved areas will continue to improve due to ongoing clinical rotations.
- Funding will continue to provide high-impact services to seniors and other underserved populations.
- Recruitment incentives will continue to place dental professionals in rural and underserved areas.

Social Drivers of Health Planning and Implementation Funds

\$6.0 million

Identified Need

Nearly half of health outcomes are driven by the conditions in which people live, work, play and worship. County Health Councils provide community-led solutions to improving these conditions.

Action Plan

- Grants to assess, create, and implement health improvement plans via County Health Councils.
- Implement technical assistance services to improve health outcomes.
- Build upon private investment efforts at the county level.
- Support capacity building for community driven priorities including food security, substance misuse, and mental health needs.

Alzheimer's Initiative

\$7.0 million

Identified Need

Over 120,000 Tennesseans have Alzheimer's Dementia. This disease is the 7th leading cause of death in all genders and the 4th leading cause of death for women. African Americans, Hispanics, and women are at an increased risk of developing dementia.

Action Plan

- Establish the Tennessee Memory Assessment Network to improve early diagnosis and treatment.
- Improve training programs for primary providers serving patients with dementia.
- Expand the Dementia Navigator program to provide personalized care management and coordination statewide.
- Cooperative effort with the Department of Disabilities and Aging.

Educational Dental Safety Net Care Fund - LMU

\$3.4 million

Identified Need

Partnership with the College of Dental Medicine at Lincoln Memorial University (LMU) provides access to comprehensive oral health care in underserved areas.

Action Plan

- Through clinical partnerships, LMU provides services through dental rotations in rural and underserved areas.
- Clinical partnerships yielded over 38,000 dental screenings including prosthodontic, surgical, and restorative procedures.
- Expanding dental class sizes improve the pool of dentists to work in Tennessee.
- Potential partnership with TDH to provide external rotations at county health departments.

Department of Health – Cost Increase Request

	State Appropriations								Total	Positions
	General Fund				Dedicated					
	Recurring	NR	Recurring	NR	Federal	Other				
1 Dental Pilot Program Recurring	\$ 24,222,100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 24,222,100	-
2 Social Drivers of Health Planning and Implementation Funds	-	6,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,000,000	-
3 Alzheimer's Initiative	7,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,000,000	-
4 Educational Dental Safety Net Care Fund – Lincoln Memorial University	3,375,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,375,000	-
5 State Funds to Offset Loss of Current Services Revenue at LHDs	5,291,400	-	-	-	-	-	(5,291,400)	-	-	-
6 JUUL Settlement - Youth Tobacco/Vape Cessation Programs/Media Campaign	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,600,000	2,600,000	-	-



Department of Health – Cost Increase Request

	State Appropriations								Total	Positions
	General Fund				Dedicated					
	Recurring	NR	Recurring	NR	Federal	Other				
7 Expansion of Cancer Screening Programs to Include Colorectal and Lung	\$ 2,205,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,205,000	-
8 Serology – STD – Syphilis Testing	500,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500,000	-
9 Centralized Accessioning Department	86,300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	86,300	-
10 Establish 1 Additional Pharmacy Board Staff	-	-	79,000	4,300	-	-	-	-	83,300	1
11 Expanded Scope of State Child Fatality Review	250,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	250,000	-
12 Administrative Support for State Public Health Laboratory Functions	143,900	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	143,900	-
13 Master Patient Index License	519,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	519,000	-
Total Cost Increases	\$ 43,592,700	\$ 6,000,000	\$ 79,000	\$ 4,300	\$ -	\$ (2,691,400)	\$ 46,984,600			1



THANK YOU