

Letter to The Editor

Dealing with Addiction

I applaud the Tallahassee Democrat for your editorial on dealing with addiction. The acknowledgement of substance abuse addiction as a chronic, permanent public health challenge is right on target and long overdue. Today, more than ever, we need the leadership of the health community to work with other neighborhood organizations to address the disease of drug addiction, a disease that kills the dreams of so many in Florida and exacts a terrible toll in human suffering. Addiction is an equal opportunity affliction that knows no ethnic, gender or socio-economic boundaries. Unfortunately, drug addiction is being fueled now by a frightening increase in the abuse of doctor-prescribed medications. The misuse, abuse, and illegal diversion of prescription drugs is now the number one drug problem facing Florida. Prevention and treatment remain the keys to long term success. However, funding for drug treatment is one of those budget items that is easily cut in lean economic times, but it is precisely in these tough times that we must sustain our efforts, otherwise we risk paying greater downstream costs. Investing in prevention and treatment today saves us from having to pay for the medical costs, crime, and incarceration rates driven by addiction and the lack of adequate treatment.

Bruce D. Grant

Director, Florida Office of Drug Control

