



PASCO EDC
NORTH TAMPA BAY, FLORIDA.

PRODUCTIVITY & WELLNESS

TASK FORCE REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2026

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

"Maintaining a healthy workforce is essential to the success and sustainability of any organization. Whether you lead a team of five or a workforce of more than 1,000, building a high-performing, resilient culture begins with leadership. Simply put, your leadership matters. My hope is that the insights in this report will inspire you to look deeper—asking meaningful questions, fostering openness, and creating space for your teams to grow together. Regardless of the size of your organization, you will find resources here designed to provide a strong foundation as you cultivate a healthy, engaged, and productive workforce."

– Mike Murrill, AdventHealth

- **Chair, Mike Murrill, AdventHealth**
- Dr. Eddie Williams, PHSC
- Nick Carideo, BayCare
- Lisa Gibbings, Metro Development Group
- Jerome Salatino, CareerSource Pasco-Hernando
- Jamie Wilson, Moffitt
- Brent Freese, Rasmussen
- Nanette Wilcox, BayCare
- Rachel Rutledge, Touchpoint Medical
- Lauren Phillips-Koen, AdventHealth
- Ashley Jablonski, AdventHealth
- Ryan Gessman, Pasco EDC
- Tom Ryan, Pasco EDC

FOR MORE INFORMATION



Ryan Gessman
Economic Development Manager
Pasco EDC
rgessman@pascoedc.com
PascoEDC.com

Tom Ryan, CECD
Vice President, Business Development
Pasco EDC
tryan@pascoedc.com
PascoEDC.com

PRODUCTIVITY & WELLNESS TASK FORCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Productivity and Wellness Task Force, organized by the Pasco EDC, is dedicated to advancing the mental and physical well-being of Pasco County's workforce as a means of enhancing overall productivity, engagement, and retention. Composed of business leaders, health professionals, workforce experts, and community partners, the Task Force will research best practices and emerging trends in workplace wellness. Members will assess local workforce needs, examine barriers to health and productivity, and provide practical, actionable recommendations for employers. By promoting a healthier, more resilient workforce, the Task Force aims to strengthen business performance, improve quality of life, and support Pasco County's long-term economic vitality.

Focus areas included:

- Mental health awareness
- Stress management
- Ergonomic and safe work environments
- Access to preventive care
- Healthy lifestyle initiatives
- Programs that foster work-life balance



GUIDING STATEMENT

The Productivity & Wellness Task Force will move Pasco County from awareness to action by developing clear, data-informed recommendations to the Pasco business community that reduce burnout, expand access to timely support, close resource gaps, and normalize the consistent use of available wellness resources so that every employee, at every level, can sustain high performance and well-being over the long term.

METHODOLOGY

The Task Force focused on reviewing existing data, confirming and validating trends within key demographic subsets, compiling verified community resources, cultivating strategic partnerships to make recommendations advocating for action over awareness so that insights translate into tangible community impact.

MEETINGS & DISCUSSIONS

1. October 23, 2025 – Pasco EDC

Intro & Kickoff

The Task Force agreed that mental health should be the primary focus of its productivity and wellness work, with the broader goal of reducing stigma and improving support for Pasco County employers and employees. The group identified key barriers such as limited awareness of EAPs, confidentiality concerns, resource gaps for small business and frontline workers, and rising addiction-related issues, then outlined a strategy to aggregate and amplify existing community resources while leveraging larger partners to support smaller employers.

2. November 20, 2025 – Virtual

Emotional Vaccines Presentation by Dr. Rahul Mehra

This meeting centered on a presentation by Dr. Rahul Mehra and Dennis Hartin on the proactive “Emotional Vaccines” model and Care Champion Community training, emphasizing upstream, skills-based tools to reduce structural stigma and address stress before it becomes clinical. The Task Force explored how these short, practical video modules and layperson training could improve workforce productivity, normalize conversations about stress, and complement existing EAP resources while addressing employer concerns about confidentiality and evidence. The group then shifted to implementation planning, aligning this work with Leadership Pasco’s Healthcare Day and GROW Pasco, where targeted sessions and calls to action for business and entrepreneurial leaders will help advance the Task Force’s productivity and wellness mission.

3. January 22, 2026 – TouchPoint Medical

Architecture of Resilience Presentation by Ryan Gessman, Pasco EDC

This meeting advanced the Task Force from general awareness to actionable recommendations by framing mental health as critical economic infrastructure within an “architecture of resilience” and clarifying that the key deliverable will be a foundational report highlighting productivity challenges and available solutions. The group reviewed successful external models to inform Pasco’s approach, confirmed Leadership Pasco’s Healthcare Day as a flagship focus-group project to capture qualitative insight from local business leaders, and adopted a two-pronged data strategy combining a short digital survey with the Leadership Pasco focus group to validate findings and guide recommendations. Action items centered on drafting survey and focus group questions, finalizing the Leadership Pasco framework, and confirming member participation to ensure strong engagement and robust input for the final report.

MEETINGS & DISCUSSIONS

March 19, 2026 – Saint Leo University Wellness Center

GROW Pasco Wellness for Entrepreneurs Panel

Moderated by Ryan Gessman - Pasco EDC

- Kate Composto-Lazzarotti, KCL Wellness, LLC
- Tracey Kaly, BayCare
- Dr. Eddie Williams, Pasco-Hernando State College



4. March 26, 2026 – Virtual

Prep for Leadership Pasco Healthcare Day

This meeting reaffirmed the Task Force mission to advance the mental and physical well-being of Pasco County's workforce as a driver of productivity, engagement, and retention, with continued emphasis on burnout prevention, resource gaps, stigma, and recovery-centric approaches to addiction. Members focused on refining the Leadership Pasco Healthcare Day focus group, updating the participant survey, and shaping an interactive workshop to surface real-world productivity barriers and feasible employer solutions. The group also reviewed Task Force deliverables and aligned these with the upcoming calendar of meetings and events leading to the Board presentation.

April 9, 2026 - Pasco-Hernando State College

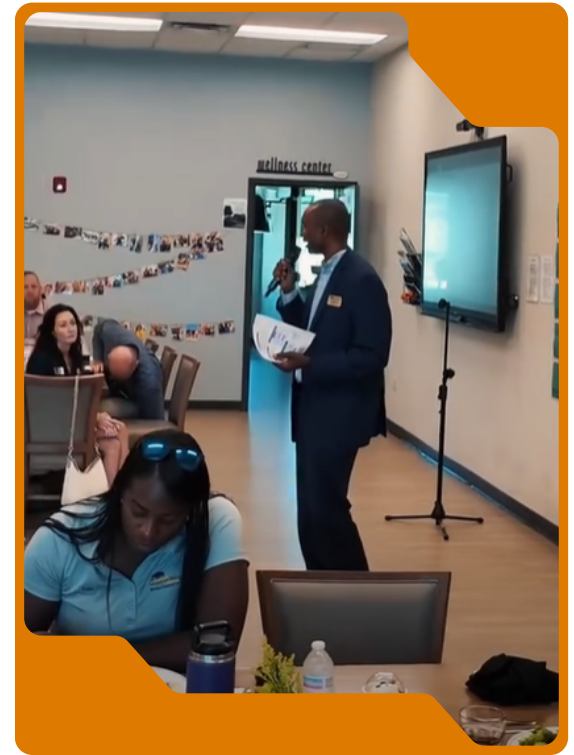
Pasco-Hernando State College Wellness Expo

- Aligned Integrative Medicine - Joanie Scarangella
- BayCare Morton Plant North Bay Hospital - Santina Garner
- Early Learning Coalition - Wynter Reese
- Florida Recovery Schools - Dana Johnson
- FloridaCentral Credit Union - John Geheb
- Health Choice Network - Susan Roberts
- Meridian Counseling Center - Emily Gilbert
- Pasco Sheriff's Office - Justin Ross
- Suncoast Clinical Research - Andrea Bowersox
- The R.O.P.E. Center - Gregory Hicks
- Twinkle Toes - Hariana Haghani
- Warrior Wellness Program - Chris Sowell
- You Thrive Florida - Alexandra Mateo
- Youth and Family Alternatives Inc - Cheyenne Miranda

MEETINGS & DISCUSSIONS

5. April 16, 2026 – Vincent House **Leadership Pasco Wellness Workshop**

The Leadership Pasco Healthcare Day workshop used the lunch hour for a structured focus group with approximately 35 business leaders, positioning mental health as critical economic infrastructure and linking workforce wellness directly to productivity, engagement, and retention. Task Force members facilitated table-level discussions using a targeted set of questions to surface real-world barriers, existing practices, and resource gaps around burnout, crisis response, and recovery-centric support for addiction. The session generated qualitative insights to complement survey data and the GROW Pasco panel, providing a richer understanding of employer needs that will feed directly into the Task Force's final report and actionable recommendations.



6. June 9, 2026 – Virtual **Chamber Cares Working Uninsured Presentation by Hope Kennedy, North Tampa Bay Chamber**

The Task Force convened to explore the North Tampa Bay Chamber's Florida Blue-supported 'Chamber Cares' initiative for the working uninsured, debrief the Leadership Pasco Healthcare Day tabletop exercise, and confirm the focus and format of its final deliverable. The group affirmed that leadership behavior and organizational culture are the primary levers linking wellness and productivity, and agreed to produce a concise written report for the Pasco EDC Board and broader business community that summarizes key findings, elevates leadership-focused recommendations, and packages a neutral resource library, including programs like Chamber Cares and other vetted wellness and training tools, that partners can share with employers countywide.

7. July 21, 2026 - Virtual **Task Force Final Report Review**

This final meeting of the Task Force served as a working session to review, refine, and finalize its draft report, solidifying a shift from awareness to action with clear, leadership-focused recommendations around burnout prevention, resource gaps, accessibility, and stigma reduction. Members aligned the structure and messaging for the August Pasco EDC Board presentation, ensuring key findings and outcomes are framed in concise, business-centric terms. The group also confirmed the broader package of deliverables, including the Leadership Pasco wellness survey & workshop report, online resource hub, marketing collateral, and a proposed ongoing wellness advisory structure, before closing with reflections on sustaining impact and employer engagement beyond the Task Force's formal work.

GOALS, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 1: USE COMMUNITY DATA TO GUIDE ACTION

Findings

Task Force research, employer input, and the Leadership Pasco Healthcare Day focus group confirmed that workforce mental health, burnout, stigma, limited awareness of available support, and gaps in access to care affect productivity, engagement, and retention across Pasco County. Small businesses and frontline workers may face particular barriers to identifying and accessing timely, confidential, and practical support.

Recommendations

- Chambers, trade organizations, healthcare systems, education partners, public agencies, and community organizations can use regularly updated All4HealthFL data and community-health information to identify workforce and wellness needs, guide programming, and target outreach.
- Stakeholders are encouraged to frame workforce-wellness efforts in business-relevant terms, including productivity, engagement, retention, absenteeism, leadership capacity, and employee well-being.
- Organizations may use their existing communication channels, employer networks, and community programming to identify emerging barriers related to burnout prevention, crisis support, addiction response, confidentiality, and access to care.
- Employers should seek employee input and periodically reassess the usefulness and accessibility of their wellness supports as workplace needs change.

GOALS, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 2: AGGREGATE & AMPLIFY RESOURCES

Findings

Pasco has a range of wellness resources and potential supports, but employers and employees may not know which options exist, how to access them, or whether they are confidential. A clear, employer-friendly pathway to trusted resources can reduce confusion and help organizations act before challenges escalate.

Recommendations

- The Pasco EDC will host a neutral online Productivity & Wellness Resource Library that links employers, managers, employees, and community stakeholders to relevant local and regional resources.
- The Pasco EDC will periodically add new organizations, services, and other relevant resources to the library as contacts are established and new community entities emerge.
- Chambers, trade organizations, healthcare systems, education partners, public agencies, and community organizations are encouraged to submit additions and share the library/resources through their existing communications, programming, and employer networks.
- Employers can use the library to identify supports relevant to their workforce, including employee-assistance-program education, burnout prevention, crisis response, addiction support, preventive care, and manager training.

GOALS, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 3: LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS

Findings

The Task Force found that meaningful, sustainable progress depends on voluntary coordination among organizations that already serve employers, employees, and residents. Larger institutions and specialized providers may have wellness infrastructure, subject-matter expertise, training capacity, or referral networks that can help smaller employers expand support without building standalone programs.

Recommendations

- Chambers, trade organizations, healthcare systems, education partners, public agencies, and community organizations are encouraged to coordinate voluntarily through existing programming and, where community or workforce needs warrant, develop new collaborative initiatives.
- Partners should align messaging around the connection between workforce wellness, productivity, engagement, retention, and long-term business resilience.
- Organizations with relevant expertise or established programs can share educational opportunities, referral pathways, practical tools, and training resources with employers that may have limited internal capacity.
- Stakeholders may consider employer-focused activities, such as leadership education, wellness-related workshops, shared training opportunities, or community information sessions, when they respond to documented community or workforce needs.
- Partners are encouraged to promote practical, non-stigmatizing approaches that normalize early support, protect confidentiality, and make it easier for employers and employees to navigate available resources.

CONCLUSION & CALL TO ACTION

The Productivity & Wellness Task Force has completed its work with a clear conclusion: workforce wellness is not solely a health issue; it is a business, talent, and economic-resilience priority. Pasco County employers and their partners have an opportunity to move from awareness to practical action by making trusted resources easier to find, reducing stigma, strengthening leadership capacity, and responding to documented workforce needs.

Implementation is suggested to begin at the start of Fiscal Year 2026–2027 on October 1, 2026, through the following actions:

- Launch the Productivity & Wellness Resource Library: Pasco EDC will launch a neutral online library that provides employers, managers, employees, and community stakeholders with a clear pathway to vetted local and regional resources.
- Maintain and update the Resource Library: Pasco EDC will periodically update the library as new providers, programs, tools, and referral resources are identified, with community partners encouraged to submit relevant additions.
- Promote resources through existing networks: Chambers, trade organizations, healthcare systems, education partners, public agencies, and community organizations will be encouraged to share the Resource Library and related wellness information through employer communications, events, programming, and business networks.
- Leverage advisory and collaborative structures: Chambers, trade organizations, healthcare systems, education partners, public agencies, community organizations, and employers will be encouraged to establish or use existing advisory committees, coalitions, and collaborative forums to identify community needs, share resources, support employer education, and advance locally appropriate initiatives.
- Support employer-led action: Pasco County employers and organizational leaders will be encouraged to assess workforce needs, increase awareness of available supports, and adopt practical, confidential, and non-stigmatizing approaches to wellness, burnout prevention, crisis support, addiction response, and preventive care.

Participating organizations are encouraged to leverage the All4HealthFL Community Data Platform, Community Health Needs Assessment findings, and related regional resources to identify workforce and community wellness needs, guide programming, target outreach, and monitor emerging priorities over time. Using shared, regularly updated data will help partners focus their efforts on documented needs and align wellness initiatives with the conditions affecting employees, employers, and the broader Pasco County community.

The Task Force encourages participating institutions to establish advisory committees or use comparable existing structures when doing so would help coordinate resources, identify emerging needs, and support action. These groups should be locally led and tailored to the organizations and populations they serve.

AdventHealth's Community Benefit Advisory Council provides a local example of how an established institution can use an advisory structure to identify community needs, convene appropriate partners, align available resources, and support community-based action. The Task Force encourages chambers, trade organizations, healthcare systems, education partners, public agencies, and community organizations to consider similar advisory structures, or to use existing collaborative forums, when they can advance workforce wellness priorities and respond to documented local needs.

No new public funding, ordinance, or regulatory action is requested through these recommendations. Instead, the Task Force calls on existing institutions to use their respective strengths, networks, expertise, and programs to make workforce wellness resources more visible, accessible, and actionable across Pasco County.