Collaboration is key when it comes to working toward a solution. This is true for a number of issues, and community health is no exception.

The Health Council of South Florida recently had the opportunity to take part in the launch of the Florida Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease (PFCD), a coalition of patient, provider, community, business and labor groups, and health policy experts, working to raise awareness of the number one cause of death, disability and rising health care costs: chronic disease.

Participating in an engaging panel discussion at West Kendall Baptist Hospital alongside respected colleagues from the national Partnership, the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County, and hospital leadership including CEO Javier Hernandez-Lichtl, it was apparent that the passion each of these individuals possesses is what will make this Florida Partnership a success.

Just looking at our host facility’s commitment to its employees and the community it serves, made me proud to see how far we’ve already come.

The impressive focus on prevention under Hernandez-Lichtl’s leadership is changing the West Kendall community and is a shining example of what can be accomplished with determination and a willingness to meet individuals where they are.

Our Florida chapter of PFCD, which I’m proud to help lead as an executive committee member, has its share of challenges ahead.

From getting the community engaged to educating the presidential candidates visiting our state on the seriousness of chronic disease, our work will not be easy.

Yet having the support and commitment of our fellow partners and champions will make all the difference.

MARISEL LOSA, PRESIDENT & CEO, HEALTH COUNCIL OF SOUTH FLORIDA, DORAL