

Promoting a Healthy Alaska

... offering hope and opportunity



Alaska Health & Social Services • 2007 Annual Report

Sarah Palin, Governor • Karleen K. Jackson, Commissioner

Commissioner's Message



Karleen K. Jackson
Commissioner

Gov. Sarah Palin's new administration and fresh outlook supports Alaskans moving towards health and wholeness. "Moving forward" has been one of the Governor's overall themes since her inauguration, and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services is indeed moving forward toward fulfilling our mission: "to promote and protect the health and well-being of Alaskans."

Toward that end, the Health Care Strategies Planning Council, established by the Governor in February 2007, is not only preparing short- and long-term strategies for a health-care action plan to be delivered to the Governor and the Legislature in January 2008 — they have also identified a vision for Alaskans to be the healthiest people in the nation. That vision is consistent with the mission of the department and begs the question: *What can we do, individually and collectively, to empower Alaskans — including ourselves and our loved ones — to be the healthiest people in the nation?*

While some might suggest that such a grand vision is unrealistic, I believe it *is* achievable — perhaps not today or tomorrow, but incrementally, step-by-step, one day at a time — IF we are willing to envision and work toward that end.

As you read this fiscal year 2007 Annual Report, you will see many examples of ways people are working to provide opportunities for Alaskans to become as healthy as possible — one step at a time. And that means working toward being "healthy" in the most holistic way, by ensuring that children are placed in loving adoptive homes, that families receive temporary public assistance to meet basic needs, and disabled elders have access to necessary daily care.

Like the Health Council, the department also continues to work toward balancing the competing needs of access to quality health and social services for Alaskans with the cost of those services. As a result, you'll find a new organizational chart for our department on page 19, and on our Web site at www.hss.state.ak.us/commissioner/, that reflects a realignment of some work functions to more effectively use our resources to achieve our mission and vision. You can also check out the Health Council's activities at www.hss.state.ak.us/hspc/.

As the information on those Web sites and the material in this report demonstrate, the future of Alaskans is one of hope and opportunity, despite the challenges that we face. That hope is grounded in our shared vision for success, and together we have the opportunity to make that vision a reality, one action at a time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karleen K. Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karleen K. Jackson, Ph.D.
Commissioner

“... to promote and protect the health and well-being of Alaskans”

Alaska Department of Health and Social Services
Annual Report • Fiscal Year 2007

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Alaska Pioneer Homes



Virginia Smiley
Director

Mission :
... to provide quality assisted living in a safe home environment.



Alaska Pioneer Homes adopted a new logo in 2007.

The Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes provides an assisted living setting and prescription drug services to seniors in Pioneer Homes in Sitka, Fairbanks, Anchorage, Ketchikan, Palmer and Juneau. In 2007 the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs certified the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home in Palmer as the state's official veterans' home. The services are designed to maximize independence and quality of life.

Accomplishments fiscal year 2007

The division's most significant achievement during fiscal year 2007 was the certification by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs of the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home in Palmer as Alaska's official state veterans' home. Certification was the final step in Alaska's 30-plus-year initiative to create a state veterans' home. The certification means the VA will pay for a portion of the cost for veterans staying in the home.

Throughout the year, the division cared for 560 pioneer residents, with a focus on "resident-centered care." Central to that focus was the articulation and adoption of a set of core values:

Positive Attitude: "We enjoy what we do." Optimism inspires open-mindedness and creativity.

Love: "We love who we serve." Out of love and respect for our residents, we put their needs before staff convenience.

Accountability: "We do what we say." We are accountable to our residents, to their families and to each other. Accepting responsibility is essential as we plan and deliver care.

Trust: "We say what we mean." Open and honest communication is crucial to earning the trust of our residents, their families and our coworkers.

Excellence: "We provide excellent care to every resident, every day, every time." Our own excellence inspires excellence in others, including residents, families and our coworkers.

To bring the core values to life in the Pioneer Homes, the division challenged staff to propose creative ways to implement the core values, including posters, banners, and a "traveling" commemorative plate which passed between employees best exhibiting these values.

A major element of articulating the core values to the Alaska public was the development and adoption of a new division logo.

In fiscal year 2007, special events marked three pioneer home anniversaries. The Fairbanks Pioneer Home celebrated 40 years, the Anchorage Pioneer Home

celebrated 30 years, and the Ketchikan Pioneer Home celebrated 25 years.

In fiscal year 2007, the division wrote and implemented the Continuity of Operation & Disaster Plan (COOP). Division staff developed Home Plans to prepare for and respond to disasters including naturally occurring emergencies, disease outbreaks, weapons of mass destruction and/or terrorism events. COOP planning puts contingency options in place in the Pioneer Homes before a disaster occurs. This planning will help mitigate confusion, resident loss of life and injury, damage to property, and staff injuries.

In the spring of 2007, the Juneau Pioneer Home was the first state agency to earn Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Safety & Health Achievement Recognition Program Award, which recognizes excellence in health and safety for residents and employees.



Gov. Sarah Palin visits the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home in Palmer. Resident Flora Punches greets the Governor while staff nurse Ni'che Caye looks on.



Sitka Pioneer Home resident Al Gordon, an Alaska Native and U.S. Army veteran, has helped raise the flags over the Sitka home for a decade.

Now

Throughout fiscal year 2008, Pioneer Homes will continue to provide excellent care to every resident, every day, every time. All of the pioneer homes operate under the Eden Alternative, which is a philosophy that family, friends, pets and plants all contribute to creating a human habitat by revitalizing relationships and encouraging residents to be involved in a vibrant community. Central to the Eden philosophy is that decisions are made by teams which are comprised of the people closest to the resident. Team members sustain each other and are committed to providing compassionate care to residents in a manner that nurtures the human body, mind and spirit while preserving the dignity and individuality of residents.

Over the next five to eight years, the new Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home will be in a transition period. During that time, veterans will be gradually admitted

to the home until the home has 60 of the 79 beds occupied by veterans. The Veterans Affairs certification did not change current admission requirements and the home remains a state-operated facility.

Next steps

In the coming years, the division will pursue a pharmacy agreement with Veterans Affairs to reimburse for veterans' medications, so that the veterans can use and benefit from the Pioneer Home Pharmacy program. The division also will explore using electronic prescriptions for all participants.

The division is initiating a project to renovate the kitchen facilities of the Sitka Pioneer Home, the division's oldest and most historic building. Plans are also underway to repair the Sitka Pioneer Home roof.

Behavioral Health



Melissa Stone
Director

*Mission :
... to manage
Alaska's integrated
and comprehensive
behavioral health
system based on
sound policy, effective
practices and
partnerships.*

The Division of Behavioral Health manages programs previously delivered through the mental health portion of the former Division of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, the former Division of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and the Office of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

Accomplishments fiscal year 2007

New Business Practices

The Division of Behavioral Health has completed an evaluation and initiated an overhaul of its business practice and management philosophy. This will involve a shift away from its historical focus on oversight and compliance to a focus on delivery of high quality service and improving treatment outcomes. The expectation is that the grantee-provider's administrative burden — periodic reporting and operational oversight — will be reduced, and accountability and results-orientation will increase.

Performance Management System

Behavioral Health continues to progress in the development of a Performance Management System for behavioral health services. The goal of this performance-based system is to develop a continuous quality improvement process to guide policy development

and decision-making in improving the behavioral health system. Important questions to be answered include:

- Are Alaskans who need services getting them, and are they able to get them conveniently?
- Are the services of high quality?
- Is the behavioral health system efficient, productive, and effective?
- Do services produce the desired impact on the quality of life of consumers?
- Are efforts taking place to prevent or lessen problems that result in consumers needing services?
- Do Alaskans with serious behavioral health disorders live with a high quality of life?

A key component of the Performance Management System is the method of distributing treatment funding based on provider performance and outcomes. The development of this performance-based funding has several phases. The initial phase will focus on developing a method of measuring provider performance in the use of state grants for state fiscal year 2008. The second phase will focus on a methodology of funding allocation for fiscal year 2009.

The Behavioral Health Consumer Survey is part of the overall Performance Management System, using a nationally developed format and methodology

for a Consumer Satisfaction Survey. In 2007, the state's comprehensive report showed:

- 80 percent of adults evaluated services positively;
- 80 percent of parents and caregivers of children under age 13 evaluated services positively, and
- 73 percent of youths age 13-17 evaluated services positively.

Behavioral Health Integration Project

Behavioral Health has been integrating the previously separate service delivery systems that provided community mental health and community drug and alcohol treatment into a single behavioral health system in order to better serve individuals with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. From 2006 through 2007, an analysis of systems indicators shows an increase of "integration" among consumers reaching 53.6 percent (welcoming, accessible, integrated, continuity, and comprehensiveness). Also of note during fiscal year 2007, progress has been made on the writing of integrated regulations that will govern the Behavioral Health Service system.

Bring the Kids Home Initiative

In 2003, the department initiated the "Bring The Kids Home" project to return children being served in out-of state facilities back to in-state residential or community-based care. To date, significant progress has been achieved in diverting children and youth to in-state services, as well as reducing the total number of children placed in out-of-state facilities. As of June 30, 2007, there were

287 children in out-of-state placement, compared to 429 in spring 2006. This effort continues into 2007-2008.

Now

Behavioral Health 2008 Priorities

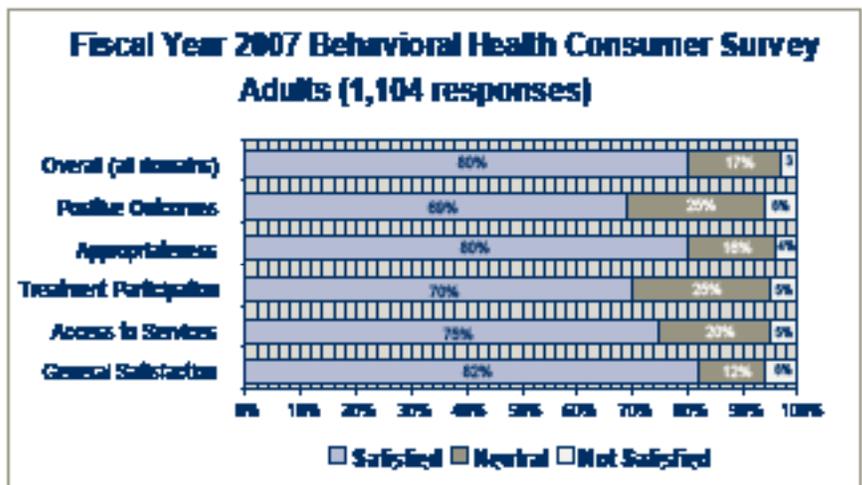
In conjunction with other divisions, Behavioral Health is working toward the development and implementation of a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Waiver. Children and youth with the disorder are particularly difficult to treat, are often misdiagnosed, and are subsequently provided with treatment that is ineffective. The average length of stay in residential facilities for this population is nearly twice as long as the general population. In older children, health issues are complex. Coping and learning skills are often compromised so they are more susceptible to pregnancy, poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, incarceration, and victimization. The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder waiver will offer services to divert youth from residential admission and allow them to transition to home communities from residential placements. The waiver began in October 2007.

Next

State Medicaid Waiver for Substance Abuse being studied

The 2007 Legislature independently reviewed the Alaska Medicaid System and appropriated funds to the department to develop several projects that could largely reform the Medicaid system.

One of the many projects relates to looking at substance abuse services and approaching the federal government for a waiver that would expand services. Behavioral Health is in the process of hiring a contractor familiar with Medicaid waiver law and policy to evaluate the feasibility of expanding the Medicaid program to provide services to individuals between 22 and 64 with substance abuse disorders. This evaluation will be submitted to the Legislature in 2009.



Office of Children's Services



Tammy Sandoval
Director

Mission :
... to promote
stronger families,
safer children.

The Office of Children's Services supports the well-being of Alaska's children and families through core programs including: the Infant Learning Program; Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Planning; and Child Protection and Permanency.

During the past fiscal year, Director Tammy Sandoval has emphasized continuous systems improvement within Children's Services. In the coming year, she plans to continue that emphasis by:

- improving recruitment and retention efforts;
- expanding information about services and increasing data available on the agency's Web site;
- improving Quality Assurance efforts in preparation for the next round of federal reviews;
- and continuing to take Children's

Services into the future as an effective, efficient agency.



The Office of Children's Services completed two 30-second public service announcements during fiscal year 2007, illustrating the need for foster and adoptive homes in Alaska. One broadcast statewide featuring the Adams family proved very popular. Michele Adams and adopted son Cord, shown above, volunteered for the project.

Accomplishments fiscal year 2007

Program Improvement Plan completed

In October 2006, Alaska's Department of Health and Social Services learned from the federal Department of Health and Human Services that it successfully completed its Program Improvement Plan, making substantial system improvements to its child protective services system. Children's Services began a two-year Program Improvement Plan in 2003 after the Administration for Children and Families conducted an on-site review. Children's Services also exceeded several goals. For example, the goal for achieving "permanency" for children was 70 percent, which was exceeded by 27 percent. Permanency goals include reunification with parents and a return to the home children were removed from; a legal guardianship or adoption; or stable long-term foster care, among other definitions.

ACTION reports released

In 2006, the Department of Health and Social Services contracted with ACTION for Child Protection, Inc. — a national child safety intervention organization — to study and evaluate internal operations of Children's Services. This evaluation was publicly released in March 2007. Legislative hearings on the findings were held the same month.

The consultant evaluated the operations of the Office of Children’s Services in four areas: Core training requirements; effectiveness of Policy and Procedures; Organizational structure; and Stakeholder relations.

Family Nutrition Programs

The Alaska Family Nutrition Programs continued efforts throughout fiscal year 2007 to increase services and caseload, and to present concise and consistent education messages.

Based on the unanimous recommendation of a department workgroup, the program was transferred to Public Assistance effective July 1, 2007, due to a better fit with Public Assistance’s mission, audience, services and emphasis on nutrition.

Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems

The Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Plan began the implementation phase in earnest and made significant strides in moving recommendations into action, especially in the areas of early childhood mental health and family support.

Infant Learning Program

The Infant Learning Program engaged in a pilot project implementing the Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act, which focused efforts on improving the rates of referral from Child Protective Services. The project resulted in three times more referrals than the previous year in one region. See Table 1. That work will continue, as will increasing the quantity and quality of services available for eligible children.

Now

Quality Assurance system

Federal and state standards require that Children’s Services have a “Quality Assurance” system in place. The Continuous Quality Improvement unit continued its schedule of on-site visits to offices across the state. Regular reviews of randomly pulled case records are conducted. Standards similar to the federal government’s are used to measure adherence to federal and state practice standards. The unit also conducts annual surveys of families who use the agency’s services, tribal groups, provider agencies, judicial members, foster parents, and relative caregivers. Information gathered helps managers better allocate resources and make changes to practice where needed.

Recruitment and retention:

Hiring and retaining the best staff remains a priority. Plans are underway for a 30-minute “Realistic job preview of a Child Protection Services worker” video to be shown to Alaska applicants.

Resource Family homes provide children — newborns to teenagers — a temporary, safe place to live until they can be reunited with their family, or, in some cases, placed permanently with another family. Some children stay in a resource family home for days or weeks; some stay for years.



Web site

Efforts continue to improve data and information available on the Children’s Services Web site to inform clients, stakeholders and the Alaska public of the work being done and its effectiveness.

Next

Major systemic initiatives — instituting a new safety appraisal system, a statewide Continuous Quality Improvement review system, and a new automated child welfare information system — represent the agency’s ongoing goal to implement continued systems reform and to improve and perfect systems already in place. The ultimate priority is to keep all Alaska children safe and better serve families.

Pilot Project implementing the Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act

State fiscal year	Total number of children referred	Total children referred by Child Protective Services	Target	Percent of children screened/evaluated	Estimated number of children eligible for services: 15%
2003	1,879	169	800	N/A	
2004	2,134	248	800	N/A	
2005	2,201	280	800	N/A	
2006	2,357	363	800	N/A	
2007	2,552	525	800	352	52

Table 1: The Infant Learning Program engaged in a pilot project implementing the Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act, focusing on improving the rates of referral from Child Protective Services

Health Care Services



William Streur
Deputy Commissioner

Mission :
*... to maintain access
to health care and
to provide health
coverage for Alaskans
in need.*

The Division of Health Care Services works with other divisions within the department to provide Medicaid core services to more than 100,000 Alaskans in need, both children and adults.

Alaska's Medicaid program is funded by both the federal and state government to provide adequate and competent medical care to Alaskans, particularly low-income families and people with disabilities. The program pays more than \$1 billion a year for care, transportation and other services provided by hospitals, doctors, dentists, pharmacies and others.

Health Care Services administers the Chronic and Acute Medical Assistance program and the State Children's Health Insurance Program, known as Denali KidCare in Alaska. This division also oversees the Medicaid Management Information System, which is the electronic claims billing system. Alaska has had a Medicaid Management Information System since 1987 and is now replacing the system to use new technology and provide more services for Medicaid providers and recipients.

Alaska's Medicaid program impacts the service delivery of every division in the Department of Health and Social Services, as well as divisions in six other state agencies.

Additionally, the division's Preferred Drug List, in conjunction with the National Medicaid Pooling Initiative, encompasses more than 51 therapeutic classes of medications that save about \$3.4 million annually through pharmaceutical company rebates.

Accomplishments fiscal year 2007

- Received approval from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to procure a new Medicaid Management Information System for Alaska. The state issued a Request for Proposal, and a Proposal Evaluation Committee successfully examined proposals submitted by two companies bidding to rebuild the system. A company was selected in fiscal year 2008.
- Expanded dental coverage to include adult preventative services.
- Integrated the National Provider Identifier into the state Medicaid Management Information System.
- Paid health care claims to enrolled providers for services to 117,479 eligible recipients.
- Maintained the Medicaid enrollment of 12,145 providers, with 47 percent of all providers enrolled actively participating in the Medicaid program.
- Paid more than 6 million claims for a

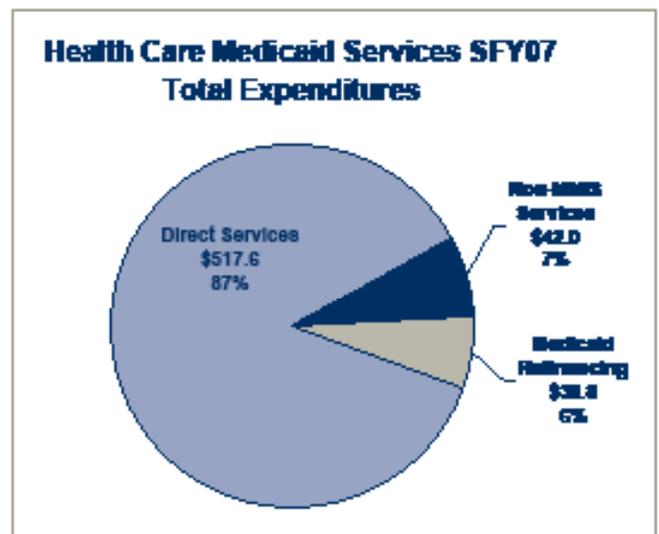
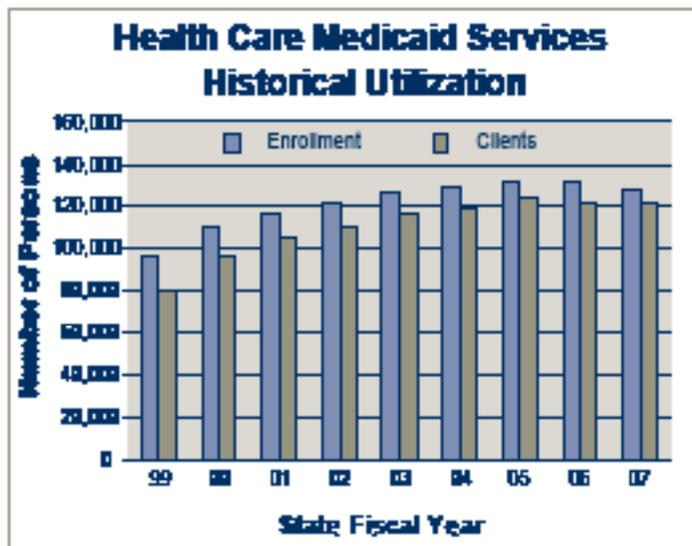
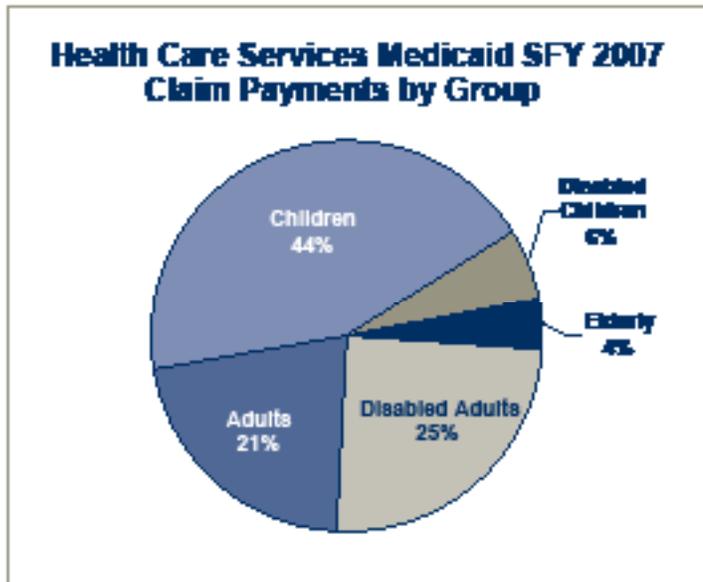
total of \$1.01 billion for Medicaid and other medical assistance benefits.

- Recovered \$7.3 million from third-party payers and insurance companies for the cost of care provided to recipients.
- Conducted and completed payment review and audits of 230 Medicaid-enrolled providers.
- Reduced Medicaid abuse by conducting clinical case reviews of Medicaid recipients, placing these clients in a Care Management Program. With 35 Medicaid recipients currently in the Care Management Program, the goal of Health Care Services is to place four to five recipients in the program each month.

Now and next steps

In July 2007, the Department of Health and Social Services signed a contract with Affiliated Computer Services to develop and implement a new Medicaid Management Information System. Affiliated Computer Services, based in Texas, will create a new management information system and improve services, including making it easier for Medicaid providers to submit bills and receive payment electronically.

The department awarded the contract to Affiliated Computer Services in fall 2007 and the contractor has begun work with state staff. The new Medicaid Management Information System is projected to be ready for use early in calendar year 2010.



Juvenile Justice



Steve McComb,
Director

Mission :
... hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior; promote the safety and restoration of victims and communities; and assist offenders and their families in developing skills to prevent crime.

The mission of Juvenile Justice is based on the “restorative justice” concept that seeks to support public safety through graduated incentives and sanctions, with the expectation that offenders must personally take part in restoring and repairing the harm caused as a result of their behavior. The agency also works to prevent crime by supporting competency and skill development for offenders so they will learn to choose alternatives to criminal behavior.

Accomplishments fiscal year 2007

The division:

- improved its oversight of the mental health needs of juveniles by focusing its efforts on identifying and documenting behavioral health issues among youth;
- consulted with a national expert about suicide among confined populations, and worked to improve suicide prevention, assessment, and intervention policies and procedures;
- partnered with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and with the Trust’s support, have placed nine mental health clinicians in juvenile facilities around the state;

- hired a research analyst, reassigned an existing position to take on more quality assurance oversight activities, and moved closer to the goal of developing a fully staffed quality assurance unit;
- moved facilities from the “candidacy” phase of Performance-based Standards, and became participants in a nationally recognized quality assurance system, developed by the national Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators for juvenile facilities;
- work groups updated the Policy and Procedure Manual for Field Probation Services, and the Juvenile Probation Officer Pre-Orientation Training manual; and
- implemented a case management system, which allows the agency to document certain costs incurred with Medicaid-eligible youth, and allows the state of Alaska to be reimbursed.

Now

The division maintains eight secure youth facilities and 17 field offices in four geographical management areas.

The division continues to achieve a balanced, information-based juvenile justice system, with the 2003 system improvement initiative. Managers are continually working to ensure that new tools and processes are being

used appropriately, that data are being generated accurately and that changes are put in place quickly when the data collected show that changes are needed in the juvenile justice system.

The partnership with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority is enhancing mental health clinician services for juveniles. A second grant with the Trust will assist Juvenile Justice in the planning and development of statewide policies and standards for evaluation, treatment planning, therapy, crisis intervention and referral.



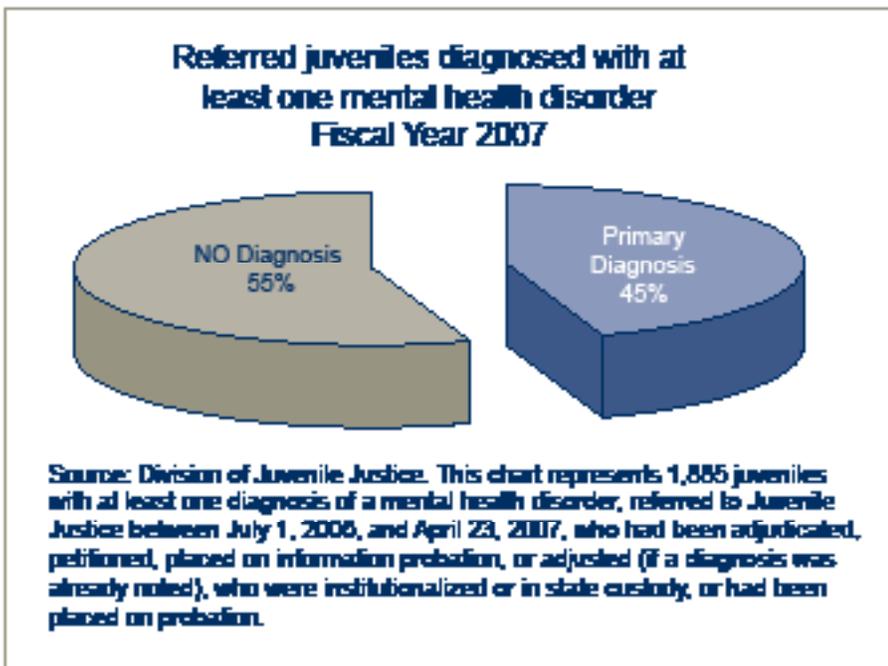
One-on-one work with troubled juveniles helps with behavioral issues and mental health needs.

Next

Juvenile Justice will focus its attention on serious juvenile offenders, particularly those involved in gangs. The division intends to expand the use of Aggression Replacement Training, a proven approach to reducing aggressive behavior in juveniles.

The division recently won an award from the U.S. Department of Justice to work with its partners in the Fairbanks Police Department, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and others to initiate gang prevention and youth violence activities in Fairbanks in fiscal year 2008.

During the next year, Juvenile Justice will also focus its efforts on increasing vocational and employment opportunities for juveniles. The division recently partnered with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board of the Department of Labor to help juveniles gain work skills in programs such as the Fairbanks culinary arts program, fish camp in Nome, and firefighting certification in the Interior. The agency will also help juveniles move from supervision and treatment to employment by helping them with tuition costs, computers, clothing and other needs.



Public Assistance



Ellie Fitzjarrald
Director

Mission :

... to promote self sufficiency and provide for basic living expenses to Alaskans in need.



At the Governor's annual picnic in Anchorage, Gov. Sarah Palin signs the Senior Benefits bill passed by the Legislature during a June 2007 special session. Health and Social Services Commissioner Karleen K. Jackson is seated on left. By the end of September, more than 8,700 Alaska elders were enrolled in the Senior Benefits Program. At that time, about 150 new applications were coming in each week.

Public Assistance provides help with cash, food, medical or heating assistance to thousands of Alaskans each year. The division's core mission is to provide services to eligible families and individuals, including the elderly, blind and disabled; and to help people achieve self-sufficiency.

Accomplishments fiscal year 2007

Public Assistance

- helped nearly 22,000* households meet nutrition needs through monthly Food Stamp benefits, and improved accuracy of payments for the fourth consecutive year, moving Alaska to the top of the national performance list and placing the state in competition for a national high performance bonus;
- met winter heating-assistance needs of almost 9,000 low-income households using new Online Heating Assistance Eligibility Calculator and Emergency Applicant worksheet;
- issued SeniorCare benefits to almost 7,000 Alaska seniors;
- provided Child Care Assistance to more than 5,600 children monthly and provided oversight of 738 child care facilities under stricter licensing standards that promote safety;

- met the Temporary Assistance needs of 3,319* families monthly (not including Native Family Assistance Programs) and helped more than 1,400 parents obtain employment or increase earnings, which reduced the amount of assistance needed;
- provided Medicaid benefits to more than 128,000 Alaskans, and made every effort to avoid a decline in enrollment while implementing new federal citizenship verification requirements;
- helped almost 17,000* elderly or disabled Alaskans with Adult Public Assistance;
- developed a new application form for services that earned national recognition for simplicity;
- investigated more than 1,000 cases of possible fraud, resulting in 13 indictments, eight convictions and the disqualification of more than 200 recipients, which saved the state hundreds of thousands of dollars and allowed the collection of \$419,190 in debt owed to Alaska;
- coordinated with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and Food Bank of Alaska to implement bulk food distribution programs in 13 Alaska Native communities;
- continued successful partnerships with Northwest Arctic Borough and other regional organizations to improve access and services for rural

Alaskans; and

- worked with agency partners and community-based organizations to improve outreach, such as Homeless Connect.

(*average)

By working together with local governments, community and faith-based organizations, and nonprofits, Public Assistance continues to ensure that opportunities to access and participate in assistance programs remain available to all who are eligible.

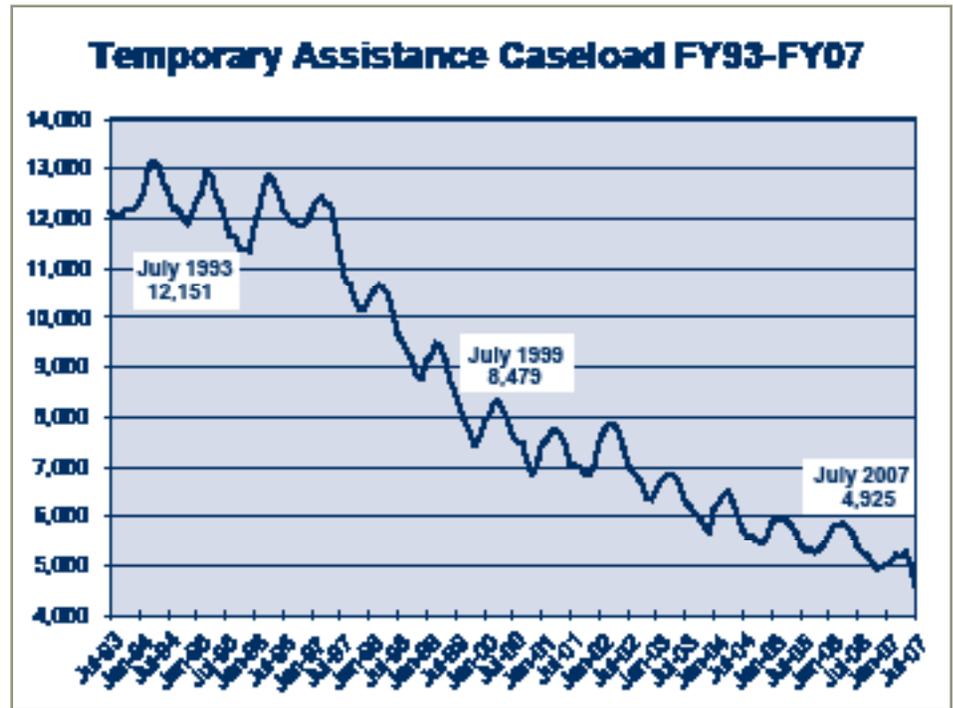
Now

Public Assistance offers many services to Alaska's most vulnerable populations.

Programs for seniors include a new Senior Benefits Program, approved during a special session of the Legislature, that offers \$125, \$175 and \$250 monthly payments. The division is also mailing heating assistance applications early to households that participated in the program last year.

Starting July 1, 2007, the Family Nutrition Program, including the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, was moved to Public Assistance. This program will continue to provide quality nutrition services while working on cost efficiencies, reducing childhood obesity and educating the public about nutrition.

The Heating Assistance Program serves all regions of the state and provides an average benefit of \$743 to eligible households. Almost 74 percent of the



households that receive assistance include a person who is over 65, under 5, or disabled.

Next

Public Assistance will continue to focus on the timely, accurate and effective delivery of services for needy Alaskans, respond to new federal program accountability requirements, such as the Temporary Assistance Work Verification Plan, and concentrate on Medicaid and child care payment accuracy.

More Alaska children will have access to medical care under increased eligibility income standards for Denali KidCare. The division will compare Child Care Assistance rates to market rates to ensure that beneficiaries contribute appropriately.

Public Assistance will continue to provide technical assistance to Native organizations expressing interest in implementing Native Family Assistance Programs. Finally, the division will provide ongoing support during the transition of the Tribal Energy Assistance Program in Southeast Alaska from the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska to the Tlingit and Haida Regional Housing Authority, helping to ensure households have continued access to these essential services.

Public Health



Dr. Jay Butler
Chief Medical Officer

Beverly Wooley
Director

Mission :
... to protect and
promote the health of
Alaskans.



A special health challenge in rural Alaska involves the use of iqmik, a popular form of homemade smokeless tobacco that combines leaf tobacco with punk ash. The addition of ash to tobacco has the effect of making nicotine more addictive. Public Health is researching the use of iqmik by pregnant women.

The Division of Public Health makes Alaska a better place to live, work and play by preventing illness and injury, promoting good health and protecting all of us. Division activities include: tracking and stopping disease outbreaks; educating Alaskans about health and safety; preventing childhood diseases and early deaths; promoting healthy behaviors; linking people to health services; and protecting Alaska by preparing for natural and man-made disasters and health emergencies.

Accomplishments fiscal year 2007

Public Health Laboratories

The division broke ground on a new virology laboratory in Fairbanks. The \$32 million lab is a joint effort of the department and the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The division will occupy the ground level and upper level and UAF will occupy the basement level.

Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

An evaluation of the Alaska Tobacco Quit Line was completed. The 41-percent, three-month quit rate compares favorably with those achieved by other states; 93 percent of participants indicated satisfaction with the Alaska Quit Line; 97 percent of participants would recommend the Alaska Quit Line to others.

The first Alaska K-12 Tobacco School Grant Program grants were distributed to six districts in the state: Juneau, Sitka, Yukon-Koyukuk, Nome, Kashunamiut, and Lake and Peninsula.

The division teamed with the Department of Education and Early Development, the Association of Alaska School Boards, the Alaska Parent Teacher Association, and others to combat childhood obesity by improving nutrition and increasing physical activity in schools through the Alaska School Wellness Initiative. The initiative provided sample wellness policies, a school wellness toolkit, training, resources and technical assistance to more than 30 school districts in Alaska.

Women's, Children's and Family Health

The division worked closely with rural Alaska teens, through focus groups and detailed pre-production editing, to develop the content and feel of five radio and four television Healthy Relationship public service announcements. This is an effort to increase teen, parent, male partner, health-care provider and communitywide knowledge of the characteristics of healthy relationships for teens, and to reduce teen and out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

The Alaska Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System received recognition from the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention for the "efficient coordination of policy and public health data," which gives legislators "crucial information they need to make sure their state's most vulnerable residents are thriving."

Epidemiology

The division obtained federal assistance to begin offering Gardasil®, the first vaccine for prevention of human papilloma virus (HPV), at no cost for all Alaska girls age 9–18.

Now and next steps

Public Health Laboratories

The new Fairbanks lab will provide surge capacity for critical public health laboratory work in the event of a health emergency or other disaster that could overwhelm the Anchorage laboratory.

The 29,000-square-foot facility is expected to be completed by December 2008 and opened in January 2009.



Shown June 12, 2007, at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Fairbanks Virology Laboratory, are, from left, University of Alaska Fairbanks Vice Chancellor for Research Buck Sharpton; Director of UAF Office of Research Integrity John Black; Department of Health and Social Services Commissioner Karleen K. Jackson; Public Health Director Dr. Jay Butler; and UAF Chancellor Stephen Jones.

Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Increased funding of the Alaska Tobacco Program has resulted in total funding levels (including federal funds), reaching the Centers for Disease Control's recommended minimum for the first time.

Public Health is continuing its support of local ordinances establishing tobacco-free policies for all public buildings and is supporting major medical centers, hospitals, and clinics across the state in going tobacco free.

The division is assisting schools in developing, implementing and evaluating effective wellness policies.

Women's, Children's and Family Health

The Healthy Relationship public service announcements are currently airing statewide with additional emphasis in targeted regions of the state.

The Alaska Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System program will publish the first data on population-based prenatal iqmik use in an upcoming Epidemiology Bulletin. Iqmik is a form of homemade smokeless tobacco.

Epidemiology

The Environmental Public Health Program has evaluated contaminant data from more than 2,400 fish from Alaska waters and issued updated fish consumption recommendations in fall 2007.



A series of television and radio public service announcements designed to increase teen and community awareness of the social and legal consequences of inappropriate relationships between teens and young adults is airing statewide.

Senior and Disabilities Services



Rod Moline
Director

Mission :
...to maximize the independence and quality of life for older and disabled Alaskans.

The Division of Senior and Disabilities Services provides a full range of care for Alaska seniors and disabled Alaskans, offering services that help consumers attain and maintain a level of independence for as long as possible.

Accomplishments fiscal year 2007

Developmental Disabilities Waitlist

Senior and Disabilities Services reduced the number of people on the Developmental Disabilities Waitlist by 121 names, offering more people services and clearing off more names of people who weren't eligible than in any of the prior five years. The list is a registry of people with mental retardation or other developmental disabilities who need support in the workplace and at home, and help for their family caregivers who need respite. Senior and Disabilities Services leadership set a goal in fiscal year 2007 of responding to everyone on the waitlist in four years.

State care coordinator program

The division hired two care coordinators as an ongoing pilot project. Studies of long-term care in Alaska had recommended adding that choice for consumers to existing private and agency-based care coordination options. Parents and advocates have started requesting state care coordinators, so the program will likely expand.

Aging and Disability Resource Centers

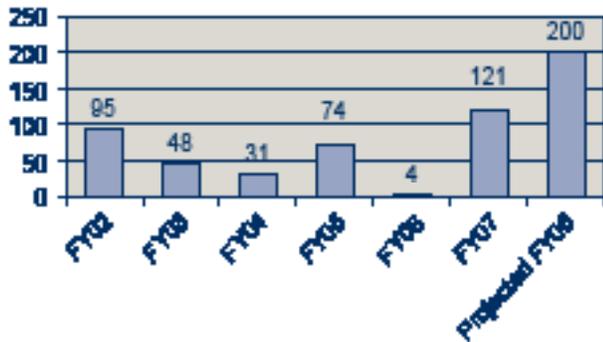
In 2004, Alaska Housing Finance Corp. received a federal grant to establish several Aging and Disability Resource Centers statewide to streamline public access to services. In fiscal year 2007, AHFC, the Alaska Commission on Aging, Independent Living Centers, and Senior and Disabilities Services signed a memorandum of agreement, and Senior and Disabilities Services will manage the centers.

Nursing home care

Alaska's senior population is ballooning. To care for our elders, the state provides a range of support options to help improve quality of life while containing costs. One successful strategy is helping seniors remain home as long as they choose. Personal Care Assistance helps otherwise-independent seniors with chores they find difficult, from bathing to lifting heavy groceries. Medicaid can provide eligible Alaskans with a care coordinator, meals, adult day care, medical equipment, transportation, assisted living and more.

If people have resided in a nursing home but are feeling better, Nursing Facility Transitions can help them move back into the community. The project helped 36 Medicaid-eligible seniors and people with disabilities move home in fiscal year 2007. Nearly that many have already made the shift in the first few months of fiscal year 2008.

Developmental Disabilities Waitlist Selections Number of Individuals Removed Annually*



*Reflects Alaskans served or no longer eligible or interested.

people, which will result in reducing or eliminating the waitlist.

- By 2030, the state’s senior population is expected to double. A top priority in fiscal year 2008 is helping people with Alzheimer’s become eligible for Medicaid-funded care.
- Senior and Disabilities Services plans to start a caregiver advisory group of consumers and their caregivers to be a sounding board on new policies.
- The new rural long-term care manager will work with community partners to grow the Aging and Disability Resource Center network. The federally mandated centers will be resource clearinghouses for seniors and people with disabilities.

Now

Behind the scenes, Senior and Disabilities Services has started using a new data system to track services provided to consumers. Known as DS3, it’s faster and easier to use than the spreadsheets and databases that it replaces.

The division recently hired a rural long-term care manager to help small remote communities develop long-term care options. The long-term care manager is also the project manager for the Aging and Disability Resource Center network.

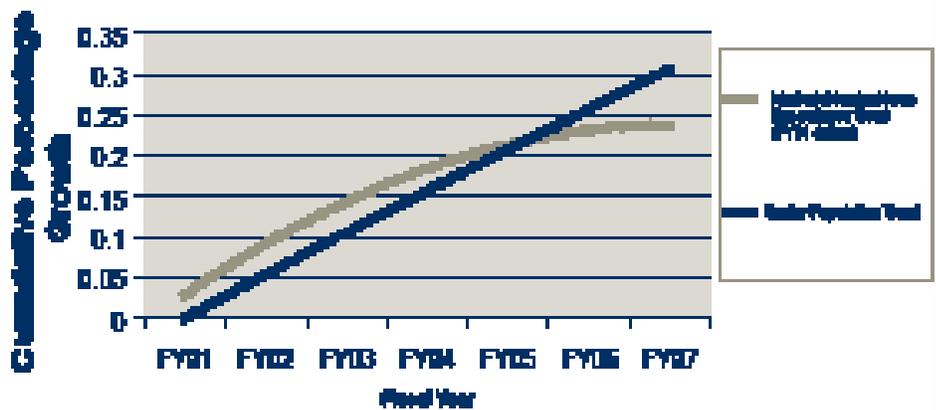
Senior and Disabilities Services managers are reviewing the state care coordinator project for possible expansion into Fairbanks and Juneau.

Next

In fiscal year 2008, the division expects to serve more Alaskans, increase consumer involvement, and build resources for the future.

- Toward the goal of erasing the Developmental Disabilities Waitlist, the division plans to double the number of people who are offered services next year to more than 200

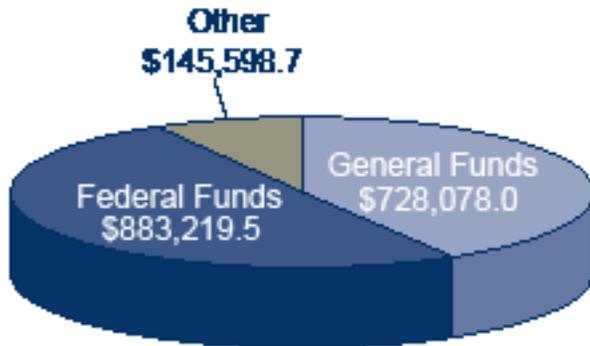
Growth of Nursing Home Medicaid Spending and Senior Population



Financial Report

Fiscal Year 2007

FY07 actual expenditures by funding source (in thousands)



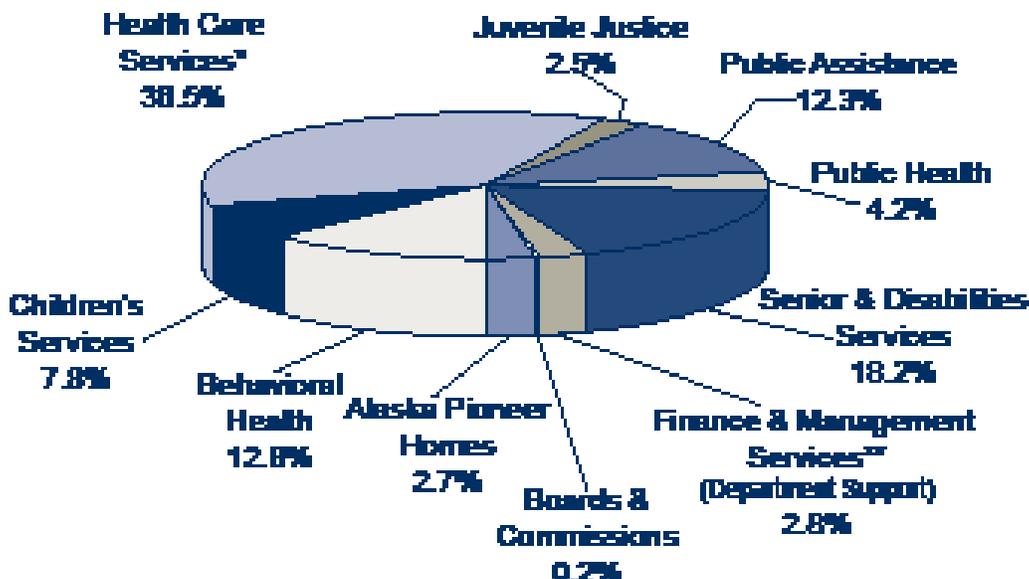
Division actuals

(in thousands)

Division	FY06	FY07
Alaska Pioneer Homes	\$43,669.3	\$47,854.4
Behavioral Health	214,001.6	225,121.0
Children's Services	132,397.0	137,846.3
Health Care Services*	658,371.8	640,859.6
Juvenile Justice	40,119.6	43,136.2
Public Assistance	225,398.0	215,650.6
Public Health	66,478.8	73,406.2
Senior & Disabilities	314,172.8	320,002.7
Department Support**	43,704.1	50,033.4
Boards & Commissions	3,437.1	2,985.8
Human Services Match	1,235.3	incl. in Department Support
TOTAL	\$1,742,985.4	\$1,756,896.2

FY07 actual expenditure comparison by division

(Total Funds)

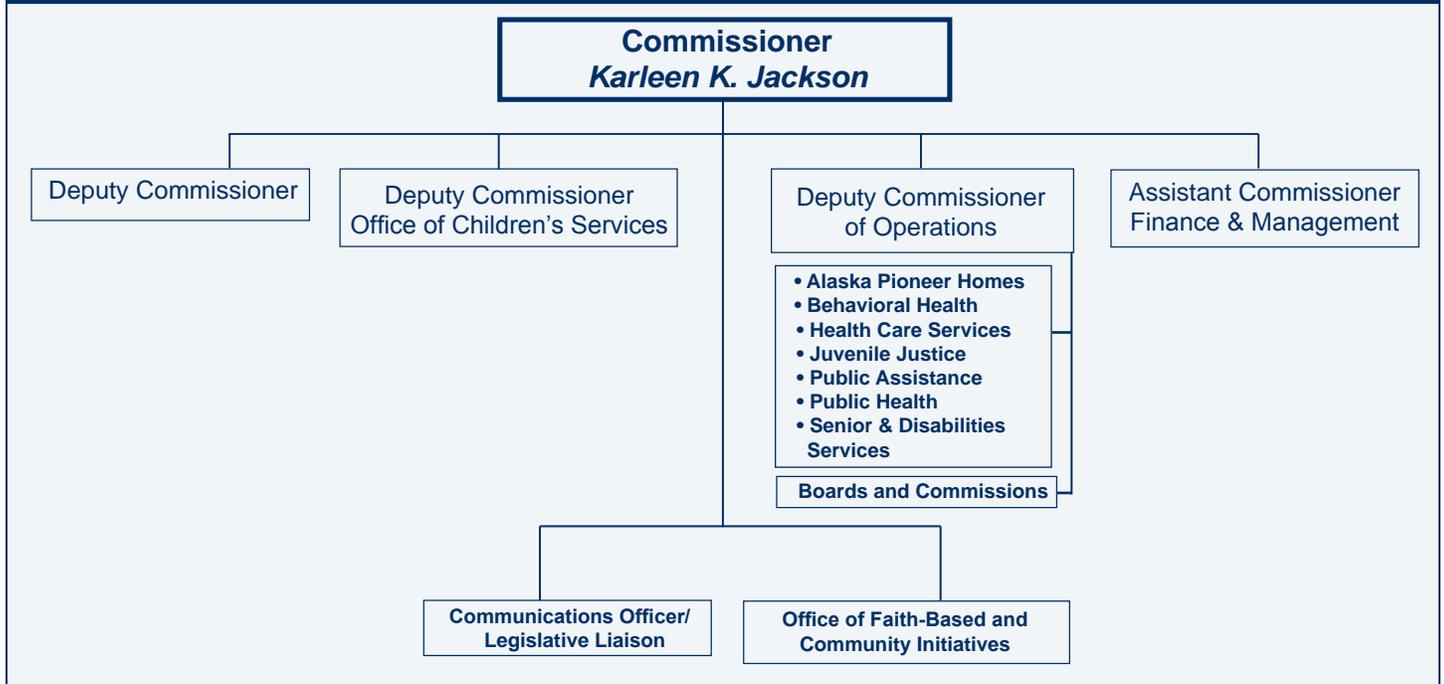


*Adult Dental added to Health Care Services

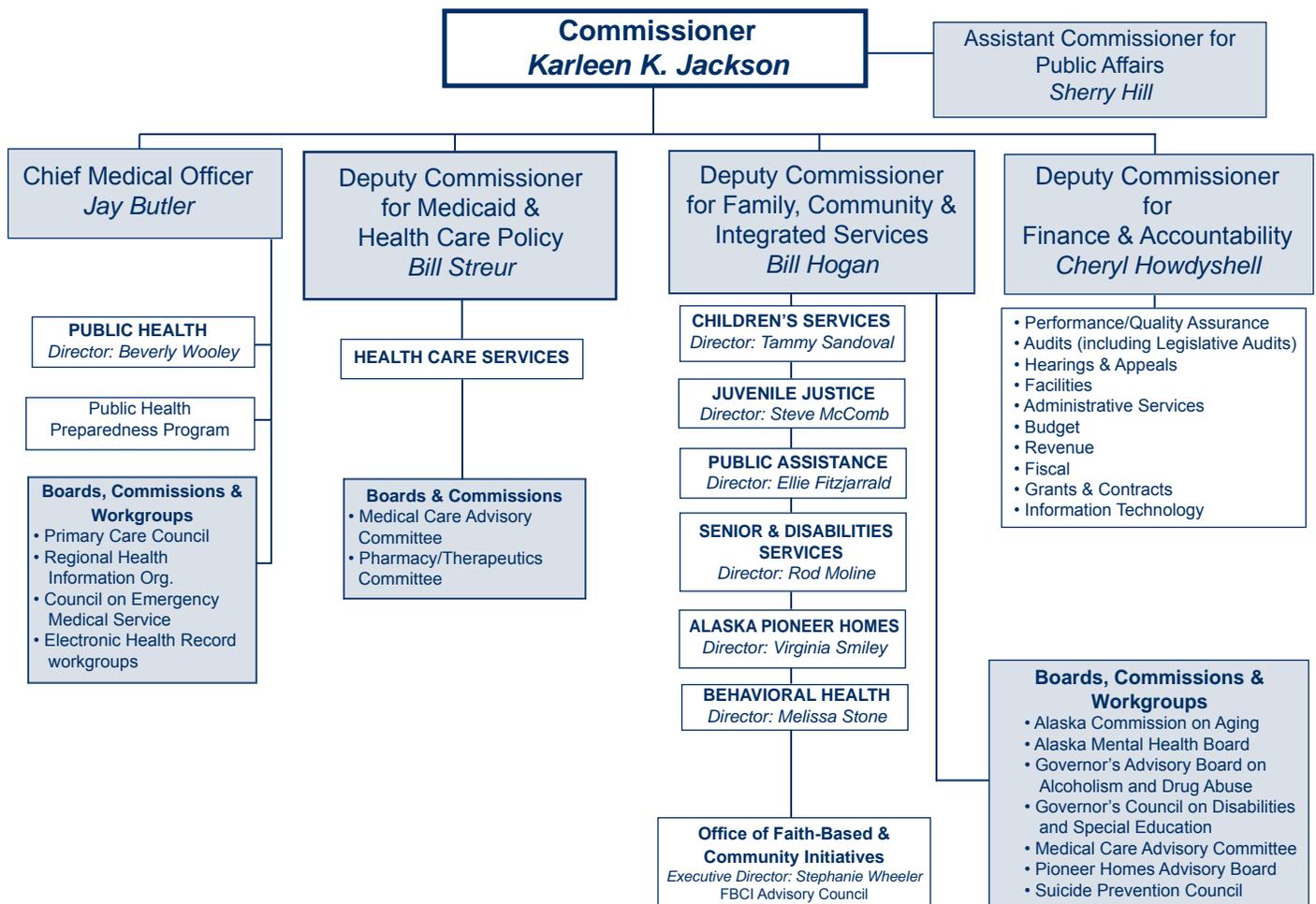
**Human Services Community Matching Grant in Finance & Management Services (Department Support)

Alaska Department of Health and Social Services

Organization as of June 30, 2007



Realignment as of September 2007



Alaska Department of Health and Social Services

Leadership Team

October 2007



Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Leadership Team as of October 2007: Back row, Dr. Jay Butler, Chief Medical Officer; Melissa Stone, Behavioral Health Director; Tammy Sandoval, Children's Services Director; Beverly Wooley, Public Health Director; Bill Streur, Deputy Commissioner; Rod Moline, Senior and Disabilities Services Director; Cheryl Howdyshell, Deputy Commissioner; Steve McComb, Juvenile Justice Director; Jerry Fuller, Medicaid Director. Front row, Virginia Smiley, Alaska Pioneer Homes Director; Wilda Laughlin, Special Assistant to the Commissioner; Janet Clarke*, Assistant Commissioner; Sherry Hill, Assistant Commissioner for Public Affairs; Gov. Sarah Palin; Karleen K. Jackson, DHSS Commissioner; Ellie Fitzjarrald, Public Assistance Director; Stephanie Wheeler, Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Executive Director; Bill Hogan, Deputy Commissioner; and Tara Horton, Special Assistant to the Commissioner.

* Retiring January 2008

State of Alaska • Department of Health & Social Services

Annual Report Fiscal Year 2007

Sarah Palin, Governor
Karleen K. Jackson, Commissioner

Office of the Commissioner
P.O. Box 110601
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0601

Phone: (907) 465-3030
Fax: (907) 465-3068
TDD/TTY: (907) 586-4265

<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/>

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Alaska Department of Health
and Social Services
P.O. Box 110601
Juneau, AK 99811-0601
<http://www.hss.state.ak.us>

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