



Connections: Families First Annual Report 2010



Alaska Department of Health & Social Services • Sean Parnell, Governor • Bill Hogan, Commissioner

Commissioner's Message



Bill Hogan, Commissioner

nationally and statewide, few things are more central to the foundation of our society than strong families.

As a young social worker many years ago, I remember visiting with clients and their families in their own homes. Observing a home environment revealed family dynamics much faster than dozens of telephone calls or office visits. Understanding that dynamic went a long way toward effectively helping the family, whatever their issues.

Today, the profession has moved increasingly toward what we call “evidence-based” practices in social services lingo. Using these practices, we understand better and better the complexities of families — their relationships, weaknesses, what works and what doesn't work — and the best way to address their particular problems.

This year's Annual Report describes our department's “Families First” initiative (pages 12-13). This initiative, which involves cooperative work among four divisions — Juvenile Justice, Children's Services, Public Assistance, Behavioral Health — is yet another positive step in serving people efficiently and holistically, looking at all their needs.

While the social services profession may have become more sophisticated in some of its methods over the years, everything we do should be focused on strengthening the family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William H. Hogan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William H. Hogan,
Commissioner

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Alaska Pioneer Homes



David Cote,
Director

As of June 30, 2010, the Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes was serving approximately 464 Alaska seniors and veterans.

Recertifications

The Palmer Veterans and Pioneers Home received a perfect review for its annual U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs inspection/recertification by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Partnerships

The Ketchikan Pioneer Home continued its partnership with the Gerontology Institute through Sacred Heart Medical Center in Eugene, Ore., through a telemedicine link to the Ketchikan home.

In partnership with University of Alaska Anchorage, the Juneau home sponsored a distance-delivery Eden Alternative training.

Currently, the division is exploring a telemedicine and a geriatric psychiatry partnership with the Alaska Psychiatric Institute.

Investing in maintenance

The Sitka Pioneer Home completed replacement of its roof, and renovations for two dining areas and a medication room.

The Ketchikan Pioneer Home completed exterior painting, window and sky bridge replacement, renovations to several common areas and exterior lighting upgrades.

Respect

The Anchorage Pioneer Home remodeled bathrooms and upgraded ceiling tiles and lighting.

Investing in safety

Palmer achieved a zero “sentinel event rate,” which indicates enhanced resident safety, and participated in fire and disaster response plan exercises.

Security cameras were installed in the Fairbanks, Sitka and Ketchikan Pioneer Homes.

Goals

The division’s goals for the next fiscal year include providing the highest quality of life in a safe home environment for older Alaskans and veterans, and continuing to operate within budget.

The Alaska Pioneer Homes expansion cost-benefit analysis — the division’s proactive plan to understand the need and develop a course of action to respond to a projected threefold increase in Alaska’s aging population — was completed in fall of 2010.

For fiscal year 2011, it is anticipated that resident occupancy will exceed 90 percent, and that the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home will have 75 percent of its beds occupied by veterans.

Behavioral Health



*Melissa Stone,
Director*

Enhancing the service delivery system

The Division of Behavioral Health is enhancing its array of services with several major initiatives.

The first aligns with the Alaska Domestic Violence/ Sexual Assault initiative to develop partnerships between the DV/SA provider network and the behavioral health system.

The second expands opioid addiction treatment services through primary care physicians and health clinics.

The third expands treatment services for fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

The fourth strengthens suicide prevention through:

- partnerships with rural Alaska villages;
- improved access to behavioral health support for communities;
- increased suicide prevention training and technical support; and
- promotion of Alaska Native values, customs and traditions that support healing and wellness.

Performance management

The division monitors the performance of the service delivery system: “Quantity” (How much did we do?), “Quality” (How well did we do it?), and “Outcomes” (Did anyone benefit?).

For “Quantity,” during fiscal year 2010, we served 3,750 severely emotionally disturbed children and youth (4.3-percent increase over fiscal year 2009); 6,785 severely mentally ill adults (0.68-percent increase over fiscal year 2009), 788 youth (6.52-percent decrease from fiscal year 2009) and 6,117 adults (0.56-percent increase over fiscal year 2009) with substance use disorders who received community treatment services.

For “Quality,” the Behavioral Health Consumer Survey assesses for consumer perceptions of treatment access, quality and outcomes. For fiscal year 2010, 76 percent of adults, 75 percent of parents/caregivers of youth, and 74 percent of teens reported a positive overall evaluation of services.

For “Outcomes,” the Client Status Review instrument measures change over time in 11 life domains. A summary measure indicates that 69 percent of all clients reported improvement in multiple life domains, or maintained previously achieved improvements. These results are consistent over time when compared to fiscal year 2008 and 2009.

Goal

Improved quality of life through the right service to the right person at the right time.



Office of Children's Services



*Christy Lawton,
Acting Director*

Out-of-Home Placements

The Office of Children's Services has seen a decrease in the number of out-of-home placements. As of June 2010, 1,937 children had been removed from their homes and placed out-of-home; in 2006, that number was 2,090, showing a decrease of 7 percent over a four-year period. During the same time period, the number of Protective Services Reports received increased by 34.3 percent. This success is attributed to increased efforts to maintain children safely in their homes and to safely reunify children already in care with their families.

5th Region

A 5th Region was added to the Office's statewide structure, which has been a longstanding goal. The new Western Regional Office includes Bethel, St. Mary's and Aniak. The regional office helps the division provide better services, increased management and focused support for families in this culturally distinctive area.

Improved Network Speed for Rural Areas

An ongoing issue facing Children's Services workers is the lack of adequate Internet connectivity speed in rural offices. Starting in early 2010, the division partnered with the state's Network Services, Enterprise Technology Services, and the Department of Health and Social Services Information Technologies to improve connectivity speeds for rural areas, beginning in Bethel. Replacement of low-performing computers, increased bandwidth and a database accelerator improved performance in

Bethel and several other rural offices. This improvement will be applied to 20 more offices before the end of fiscal year 2011.

Goals

Continue efforts to decrease the number of children in out-of-home placements and keep them safely in their homes whenever possible.

- Improve worker retention, reducing vacancies and turnover.
- Increase referrals to Early Intervention/Infant Learning programs.
- Recruit and train resource families.
- Partner with other agencies to enhance preventative and interdepartmental service delivery to families.
- Continue successful compliance within the Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan.

Safety

Health Care Services



William Streur,
Director

The Division of Health Care Services administers the core functions of the Alaska Medicaid, Denali KidCare, and Chronic and Acute Medical Assistance (CAMA) programs, ensuring access to quality and appropriate health care for more than 19 percent of Alaska's population.

The division oversees fiscal agent operations, ensures functionality of the current Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS), while managing the MMIS replacement efforts currently under way, and provides regulatory oversight and direct support to over 12,000 providers.

Accomplishments

- Adjudicated 6.7 million claims (13-percent increase over state fiscal year 2009) totaling almost \$1.2 billion (15-percent increase over state fiscal year 2009), for services provided to more than 134,500 Alaskans (5-percent increase over state fiscal year 2009).
- Adopted the Omnibus Medicaid Coverage and Payment Regulations, a multiyear, interdivisional regulations rewrite project.
- Expanded regulations to pay for provision and administration of adult vaccines including pneumococcal, meningococcal, and H1N1.
- Revised prior-authorization requirements for a medication that may prevent a viral infection in premature infants, reducing expenditures by more than \$2 million.

- Fully transitioned to processing claims with National Provider Identifiers only, in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Adopted regulations allowing reimbursement to pharmacists for tobacco cessation counseling.
- Upgraded editing software to ClaimCheck 8.5® to ensure claims processing accuracy.
- Expanded availability of fluoride varnish treatment for children allowing physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants to be paid for provision of this preventive service.

Goals

- Incorporation and application of National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) edits.
- Adopt regulations allowing recipients to access two years of adult dental benefits for complete dentures coverage in a single year.
- Begin regulatory revision of payment methodologies for dialysis services and durable medical equipment.
- Continue efforts related to 2012 and 2013 compliance deadlines for HIPAA 5010 and ICD-10 code set, respectively.





Juvenile Justice



Barbara Henjum,
Director

Fiscal year 2010 was a time of transition for the Division of Juvenile Justice. Director Barbara Henjum assumed leadership of the division in May. In June, Rob Wood was named new Deputy Director of Operations. The division has remained steady on its course of continual self-improvement. Among the highlights:

Alaska Native Youth: The division increased its efforts to address the rate of recidivism among Alaska Native youth, including creation of an Alaska Native Recidivism workgroup; increased collaboration with rural communities; improved transitional services for youth leaving division facilities; cross-cultural training for staff; and other efforts.

Behavioral Health Services: The division enhanced behavioral health services provided to juveniles within detention and treatment facilities. A thorough, statewide suicide prevention policy and procedure was integrated into facility operations. Clinical services such as crisis intervention, assessment, and treatment consultation were better integrated into operations.

Protecting Youth in Custody: With new policy, procedures, and a statewide training effort, the division will better prevent youth in custody from being sexually abused by other residents and staff.

Teamwork

Juvenile Offender Management Information System: We have successfully upgraded our electronic records and case management system to a secure, Web-based application that can more readily meet the division's evolving needs.

Goals

Rural Alaska: The division will seek to improve services for youth in rural Alaska through continued development of transitional services and improved collaboration with Alaska Native communities. The division is working to establish video-conferencing capabilities to enhance connections with families, youth, schools, and other community members in rural Alaska.

Improved Assessment of Juveniles: Working with the Alaska Institute for Social and Economic Research, the division is closely evaluating its use of the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory. Improved use of this assessment tool will result in improved case management and understanding of the reasons some juveniles reoffend.

Public Assistance



Ellie Fitzjarrald,
Director

Participation in food and nutrition programs — including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, also known as the Food Stamp Program) and Heating Assistance — is at an all-time high.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)

The Division of Public Assistance received a second U.S. Department of Agriculture performance bonus award for having the Best Program Access and for its leadership in service to communities and success in breaking down program-access barriers. The bonus of \$295,630 for federal fiscal year 2009 (federal fiscal year 2009 overlaps the state fiscal year 2010) will be put back into the program to make it more effective. Over 32,000 low-income Alaska households rely on the Food Stamp Program to help meet their monthly nutritional needs.

Alaska Women, Infants and Children Nutrition (WIC)

The division received a U.S. Department of Agriculture performance award for an exceptional job promoting and supporting breast-feeding among mothers participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). WIC serves more than 28,000 Alaska women, infants and children each month. The program provides supplemental foods, health care and social services referrals, and nutrition education for

low-income pregnant, breast-feeding and non-breast-feeding postpartum women, as well as infants and children up to age 5. The \$75,515 bonus award is being used to boost Alaska's breast-feeding program.

Heating Assistance

The Alaska Heating Assistance Program helps low-income households pay for home heating expenses. Grants are issued once a year and are paid to home energy suppliers and vendors. During the 2009–2010 heating season, the division helped over 14,200 low-income households with heating assistance grants.

Goals

An increasing number of families and individuals are struggling to make ends meet, and many are turning to Public Assistance for help, including more people applying for the first time. Using LEAN business process improvement practice, the division is working to improve customer service, reduce wait times, and respond more timely to the increased need for services by eliminating inefficiencies.





Public Health



*Dr. Ward Hurlburt,
Director*

Immunization

The Division of Public Health instituted a Hepatitis A immunization program in Southwest Alaska in collaboration with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation and the Centers for Disease Control.

The immunization program successfully reduced the rate of Hepatitis A among the targeted population from one of the highest in the world to one of the lowest.

Alaska Infant Safe Sleep Initiative

The division launched a multidisciplinary statewide effort to reduce Alaska's high rate of postneonatal mortality. A comprehensive look at data from Alaska's Maternal and Infant Mortality Review revealed many deaths of infants, age 1 month to 1 year, are preventable, sleep-related deaths. Future efforts will focus on development and distribution of social marketing materials for parents/caregivers and providers of health and child care.

Electronic Information

The Bureau of Vital Statistics finished a five-year project to enter information from all death records into its electronic information system. An electronic search for a death record saves five or more minutes of staff time per request, allowing staff to process requests more efficiently.

H1N1 response

The division coordinated a response involving public health, public information office, and tribal, public and private health care providers. As of March 31, 2010, 20 percent of Alaskans had received the H1N1 vaccine (142,266 documented on VacTrAK).

Goals

- Increasing overweight and obesity rates represent one of the greatest public health threats in our state and in our nation. The division is leading a statewide educational focus called ATCO (Alaskans Taking on Childhood Obesity) targeting children and young people from preschool through high school.
- In 2011 the division will evaluate which of the State Public Health Accreditation Standards and Measures it is able to meet, develop, and carry out to make Alaska ready to successfully apply for national accreditation.

Coordination

Senior & Disabilities Services



Kimberli Poppe-Smart,
Acting Director

The Division of Senior and Disabilities Services accomplished many goals in fiscal year 2010.

Aging and Disability Resource Centers

With the addition of an Aging and Disability Resource Center in Dillingham, there are now four centers in Alaska. The others are in Soldotna, Juneau and Anchorage.

Statewide grant programs

The division's grant programs provided services to over 20,000 individuals.

Home- and Community-Based Services

The division continues to implement its corrective action plan for home- and community-based services waiver programs. Implementation includes cross-training staff, consolidating prior authorization, automating more data collection, and increasing provider trainings. One key training is the Critical Incident Reporting class. The division is analyzing data through its new systems, and can quickly identify providers who need additional training and clients who need attention.

Medicare Information Office

The Medicare Information Office counsels approximately 500 people monthly through the 800 number call center. Hard-working office staff and volunteers put Alaska's Medicare office in the top 10 of 54 states and territories.

Streamlining

The division has substantially improved internal business processes via streamlining activities to maximize limited resources.

Goals

- Strengthen quality assurance activities in home- and community-based services. This will include establishing, with provider input, performance standards and also implementing an on-site provider-review process.
- Promote activities to prevent and address elder and vulnerable adult abuse, neglect and exploitation through Critical Incident Reporting training for providers of home- and community-based services, and send mandatory reporters a video on recognizing and reporting abuse and neglect.
- Develop and integrate provider standards, and collaborate with the Division of Public Health's Section of Certification and Licensing and the Department of Revenue's Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman.
- Continue implementing the Medicaid waiver corrective action plan, improving waiver service data collection and analysis, and preparing for the waiver renewal application.
- Work with stakeholders to develop a long-term plan and strategies.





Families First

Promoting self-sufficiency

Families First is the Department of Health and Social Services' strategy to promote self-sufficiency for clients participating in Alaska's Temporary Assistance Program. It is a uniquely personalized, collaborative approach that considers the "big picture" of the client's family circumstances.

The goal is twofold: providing responsive services and creating customized employment that is a good fit between the client and an employer.

Many families reliant on public assistance and other services are overwhelmed, juggling day-to-day expectations. Collaboration between service providers is essential to help families make progress and become self-sufficient.

Isabel's story: A case in point

The story of Isabel exemplifies how Families First works. Initially, little was known about Isabel. A single mother of four with limited education, Isabel struggled with demands at home and obtaining a job.

Through a process called Discovery, the first step was forming a Family Support Team, including family, friends and service providers. While Isabel tends to be timid, her team members put her at ease in order to learn about her family circumstances, starting with struggles. She exposed generational victimization, including substance abuse, sexual assault and domestic violence. Her children exhibited varying degrees of behavioral and learning disabilities. Poverty compounded her struggles, and she

was challenged by unreliable transportation and childcare, juggling appointments and basic survival.

Finding the 'big picture'

Families First allowed Isabel's team to glimpse the "big picture," and identify ways to put her on a path to success. The team streamlined services to make life manageable, made referrals to address victimization issues, and created responsive service plans matching the family's unique circumstances.

Through the Families First collaborative approach, service providers had a clearer picture of their client. One provider acknowledged learning "more about Isabel in a single Families First visit, than I did in six months — it is a powerful process." Isabel herself noted that the team "now knows my family better and what I'm dealing with."

The 'new' Isabel emerges

A new picture of Isabel emerged. As a student, she excelled in math and science. She was a noted chess champion. She had studied engineering — but her education was derailed by an incident of violence. Isabel's previous skills were still present, concealed in family activities. She learned tasks quickly.

Isabel's written profile, which she approved, allowed her team to understand her needs both at home and at work, recognizing the strong link between family life and employment. She needed predictable services

Strength

to ensure family stability — a job, any job was a “no go” if services failed to address her family situation.

Working toward a common goal

Her team worked with her toward a common goal: customizing a job that “works with” her family circumstances. Isabel transformed alongside her fellow team members. Previously timid, she took the lead in determining her employment options. Her tenacity to become self-sufficient became clear.

Through the collaborative effort of Isabel’s team members, a new view of Isabel emerged, shifting from a person of limited skill to a person with broad skills and knowledge.

The next step

Isabel was then ready for the next step: negotiating a job that matched her skills and interests, and was compatible with her family circumstances. Continued collaboration is critical to support her employment, and to ensure consistent service supports to meet her family’s needs. Isabel not

only realized what she can contribute to a job; she realized a childhood dream. Aviation is Isabel’s primary career interest.

The sky’s the limit for Isabel

Through Families First, Isabel’s outlook goes beyond basic self-sufficiency: The sky’s the limit.



Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Organization Chart



Acting Commissioner William J. Streur — *(effective Dec. 7, 2010)*
Commissioner William H. Hogan — *(through Dec. 6, 2010)*

**Chief Medical Officer/
Director Public Health**
Ward B. Hurlburt, M.D.

**(Acting Commissioner)
for Medicaid & Health Care Policy**
William J. Streur

**Deputy Commissioner
for Family, Community &
Integrated Services**
Patrick B. Hefley

**Assistant Commissioner
for Finance Management
Services**
Alison M. Elgee

- Public Health Nursing
- Epidemiology
- Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion
- Emergency Programs
- Women's Children's & Family Health
- Bureau of Vital Statistics
- State Laboratory
- State Medical Examiner's Office
- Certification & Licensing

- Boards, Commissions and Workgroups**
- Alaska Council on Emergency Medical Service
 - Regional Health Information Org.
 - Electronic Health Record workgroups

HEALTH CARE SERVICES
Director: Kimberli Poppe-Smart

- Medicaid Director
- Medicaid Policy & Planning
- Medicaid financing
- Medicaid reform
- Medicaid Management Information System
- Rate Review
- Tribal Health
- Health Facility Survey
- Health Planning & Systems Development

- Boards & Commissions**
- Medical Care Advisory Committee
 - Pharmacy/Therapeutics Committee

Public Information
Clay Butcher
Communications Manager

Legislative Relations
Wilda Laughlin

Special Assistant
Tara Horton

Alaska Health Care Commission
Deborah Erickson,
Exec. Dir.

- Boards & Commissions**
(Behavioral Health)
- Alaska Mental Health Board
 - Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
- (Senior & Disabilities Services)***
- Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education
 - Alaska Commission on Aging

ALASKA PIONEER HOMES
Director: David Cote

- Boards & Commissions**
- Alaska Pioneer Homes Advisory Board

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
Director: Melissa Stone

- Boards & Commissions**
- Suicide Prevention Council

CHILDREN'S SERVICES
Acting Director: Christy Lawton

- Boards & Commissions**
- Alaska Children's Trust

JUVENILE JUSTICE
Director: Barbara Henjum

- Boards & Commissions**
- Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE
Director: Elinor Fitzjarrald

SENIOR & DISABILITIES SERVICES
Director: Duane Mayes

- Performance/Quality Assurance
- Audits (including Legislative Audits)
- Hearings & Appeals
- Facilities
- Administrative Services
- Budget
- Revenue
- Fiscal
- Grants & Contracts
- Information Technology
- Regulations
- Legal Services Coordination

Financial Report

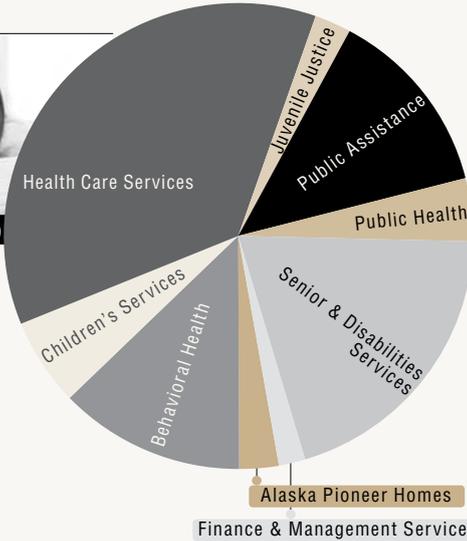
fiscal year 2010



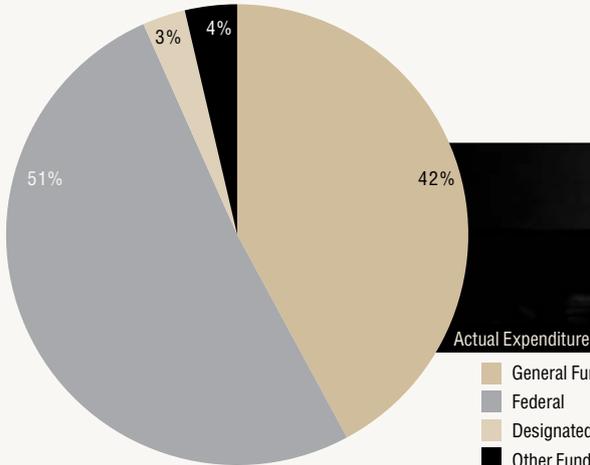
by Division

Actual Expenditures (total funds)

- 2.7% Alaska Pioneer Homes
- 12.8% Behavioral Health
- 6.1% Children's Services
- 1.8% Finance & Management Services
- 36.6% Health Care
- 2.5% Juvenile Justice
- 13.1% Public Assistance
- 4.3% Public Health
- 20.1% Senior & Disabilities Services



Alaska Pioneer Homes
Finance & Management Services



Actual Expenditure

- General Funds
- Federal
- Designated General Funds
- Other Funds



by Funding Source



| Division | FY09 | FY10 |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Alaska Pioneer Homes | \$54,405.6 | \$56,170.4 |
| Behavioral Health*** | 242,288.9 | 265,505.8 |
| Children's Services | 118,969.3 | 125,537.1 |
| Health Care Services* | 650,057.2 | 753,748.9 |
| Juvenile Justice | 48,737.1 | 51,758.5 |
| Public Assistance | 289,282.1 | 271,562.6 |
| Public Health | 84,323.9 | 89,869.2 |
| Senior & Disabilities Svcs*** | 362,624.4 | 414,655.3 |
| Finance & Management** | 44,111.4 | 37,419.0 |
| Boards & Commissions (09) | 3,472.6 | See *** below |

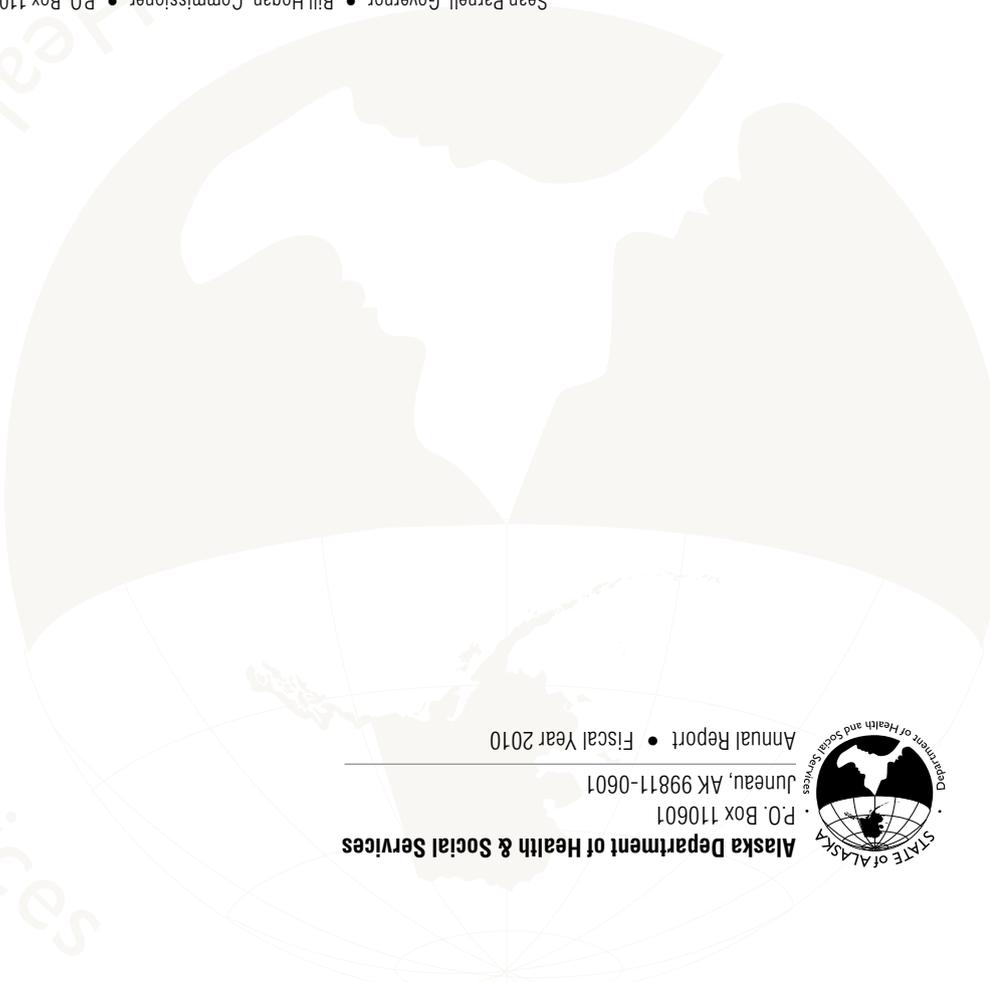
* Includes Adult Dental
 ** Includes Human Services Community Matching Grant & Community initiative matching grants
 *** Boards & Commissions added to DBH & SDS

| | | |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| TOTAL | \$1,898,272.5 | \$2,066,226.8 |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|

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

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Alaska Department of Health and Social Services



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