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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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State takes opportunity to tailor detox services

Cook Inlet Tribal Council adding six beds at the Ernie Turner Center

(Anchorage, AK) — The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services announced today that an Anchorage provider will soon offer individualized, cost-effective substance abuse treatment services to replace a recently closed detoxification treatment program in Anchorage.

Behavioral Health partner Cook Inlet Tribal Council will add six beds at the Ernie Turner Center. The Ernie Turner Center will provide two medically-monitored beds beginning in November, which will provide a high level of care and supervision; and four clinically-managed beds beginning in January, which will offer services for individuals whose alcohol withdrawal symptoms need 24-hour care but do not rise to the higher level of medical monitoring. The clinically-managed beds will be an addition to services recently offered by Behavioral Health grantees in Southcentral.

Until the detoxification services open at Ernie Turner Center, voluntary treatment needs are being met by qualified staff at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute.

With the new CITC beds being added at the Ernie Turner Center, the center will offer a total of 34 beds. The center serves adults 18 and older, including elders, in a therapeutic model based on an Alaska Native village community. Up to six places serve patients with mental health and substance abuse challenges.

The state partnered with CITC to expand its detoxification services in response to the Salvation Army's Clitheroe Center closing eight detoxification beds before its state grant ended, citing nursing shortages and high costs. Clitheroe still offers other state-funded substance-abuse rehabilitation services.

The new beds at CITC will provide detoxification service in Anchorage and enhance the spectrum of detoxification services funded through Behavioral Health in Southcentral.

Behavioral Health and its partners continually seek ways to expand and improve service delivery in the face of increasing demand and tight funding.

- All grantees must treat clients holistically, linking them to on-going treatment and recovery services, including temporary housing if necessary.

- A recent \$5 million, three-year federal grant to CITC to combat methamphetamine abuse is one example of new treatment options in the recovery system in Alaska.
- The department has worked diligently with grantees, the Mental Health Trust Authority and other partners since 2004 to significantly reduce the number of children being placed with out-of-state behavioral health providers – by bringing them home and keeping them home. As of October 2007, only 257 children were in out-of-state psychiatric centers, down from 429 in April 2006.
- A training last week in Anchorage prepared providers for a Medicaid pilot project that allows children with severe Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) to remain in their communities.
- To increase transparency for public funding and accountability from providers, Behavioral Health is beginning “performance-based funding” in fiscal year 2008. The national model will help Behavioral Health measure results, evaluate effectiveness and allocate funding for grantees.

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