



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES
YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION

JOINT NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: June 17, 2008

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YKHC and State collaborate to transition emergency youth services

Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services have agreed that YKHC will keep its youth emergency shelter and short-term treatment services open until September 30, 2008.

The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services and YKHC are working together to establish a new provider for youth emergency shelter in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta area. YKHC announced May 30 that it would close its Kuskokwim Emergency Youth Services (KEYS) facility.

The KEYS facility manages two separate emergency shelter programs: the Receiving Home and the Residential Diagnostic Treatment Center.

Health and Social Services is seeking a new provider for the Receiving Home, which provides shelter and care for children placed in the custody of the state Office of Children's Services.

After September, the need for short-term residential treatment for children and teens that is currently provided by the Residential Diagnostic Treatment Center will be met through the local outpatient clinic and North Star Hospital in Anchorage.

Both Health and Social Services and YKHC are committed to serving youth as close to their home community as possible.

"Our interest is to ensure the protection of children in need of emergency shelter options during this transition," said Jack Robert Crow, Vice President for YKHC Health Services.

The partners are taking a series of steps to smooth the transition:

- The organizations have agreed that YKHC will continue to offer services through September.
- Health and Social Services is soliciting a new provider for the emergency youth shelter.
- YKHC has committed to offering training and technical assistance to the new provider, once one has been solicited and approved.

"We at the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services thank YKHC staff for all they've done for kids in their community, and for all they are doing to help us keep these crucial services available in the Y-K Delta," said Jerry Fuller, state Medicaid director. "We will do all we can to offer youth emergency shelter and short-term treatment in the area."

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