

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Strengthening the System II: Alaska’s Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Program Plan 2025-2029” is the combined work of the Alaska Department of Health (DOH), Alaska Department of Family and Community Services (DFCS), the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (the Trust), the Alaska Mental Health Board, Governor’s Council on Disabilities and Special Education, Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Statewide Suicide Prevention Council, and the Alaska Commission on Aging, along with other partner agencies.

The Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Program Plan shows an evolution in focus and approach over the years. Earlier plans emphasized assessing the service system’s impact on health, safety, economic security, and quality of life, with a strong focus on prevention and early intervention for conditions like fetal alcohol syndrome, mental illness, and substance use.

The 2020-2024 plan¹ focused on strengthening the system, with an emphasis on integration, infrastructure development, workforce development, and public awareness. It aimed to enhance service delivery, fill service gaps, and address emerging issues and trends in mental health² care.

The plan for 2025-2029 continues this trajectory, further evolving and adapting to the changing needs and understanding of mental health care.

This plan is a response to a statutory requirement, [Alaska Statute 47.30.660³](#), which requires DOH and DFCS, in conjunction with the Trust, to prepare, revise, and amend a plan for Alaska’s Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Program. Under the statute, the preparation of this plan is to be coordinated with federal, state, regional, tribal, local, and private entities involved in mental health services.

The plan specifically is designed to meet the service needs of Trust beneficiaries – Alaskans impacted by mental illnesses, intellectual and developmental disabilities, substance use disorders, Alzheimer’s and related dementias, and traumatic brain injuries. This plan includes a preventive approach that assists with measures for identifying those at risk of developing these conditions.

“Strengthening the System II” serves to assist with guiding resource allocation decisions in the development of services, workforce, and facilities to meet the needs of Trust beneficiaries and Alaskans. A core principle of the plan is collaboration. By working together, state, federal, tribal, private agencies, and community groups, can ensure resource allocation decisions address the critical needs of Trust beneficiaries and Alaskans. This collaborative approach guides the development of services, workforce, and facilities required for a truly comprehensive mental health system. The plan prioritizes reducing the incidence of disabling mental health conditions. This will be achieved through innovative, culturally informed, and practice-informed strategies, services, and supports offered throughout a person’s lifespan. By focusing on prevention and early intervention, the plan aims to lessen the long-term impact of mental health challenges on individuals and the healthcare system.

A key feature of this plan is the detailed structuring of service delivery, segmented into ten areas of focus. Each Area of Focus has specific objectives and strategies, providing a framework for State agencies and local communities to enhance services and outcomes for Trust beneficiaries.

First introduced in 2008, the Alaska Scorecard plays a pivotal role in evaluating the plan’s effectiveness. This tool tracks progress across all the areas of focus, utilizing updated state and national data. The data collected through the Scorecard allows for ongoing adjustments to the plan’s strategies and tactics, ensures that the plan remains relevant and impactful. You can review the current [Alaska Scorecard here⁴](#). In addition to being available as a comprehensive document, the plan is also accessible through the [“Strengthening the System II” website⁵](#). This online resource offers the current plan and the Alaska Scorecard.

Several critical areas within the state’s behavioral health service system require attention and enhancement. These include the development of community-based crisis services, the augmentation of both residential and outpatient behavioral health services with case management, the improvement of medication-assisted treatment for substance