

Heidi Hedberg
Commissioner

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Department of Health

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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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Alaska's Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Program Plan Finalized

October 28, 2024/ANCHORAGE – Following months of collaboration and input from stakeholders across the state, the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Family and Community Services (DFCS), and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (the Trust) are proud to announce the finalization of [*Strengthening the System II: Alaska's Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Program Plan for Fiscal Year 2025-2029*](#).

This five-year plan outlines ten focus areas, each accompanied by specific objectives and strategies aimed at addressing a broad spectrum of issues, including early childhood development and workforce expansion. Alaska Statute 47.30.660 mandates that the DOH, DFCS and the Trust, prepare, revise and amend a comprehensive plan for Alaska's Integrated Mental Health Program. Under this statute, the plan's development is coordinated to include input from a diverse array of federal, state, regional, Tribal, local and private entities involved in mental health and behavioral health services. The collaborative effort reflects a commitment by all to improve outcomes for Alaskans, ensuring that mental health services are more accessible, and effective in meeting the unique needs of our communities, particularly those individuals that are most vulnerable.

The plan is meticulously crafted to meet the service needs of Trust beneficiaries – Alaskans affected by mental illnesses, intellectual and developmental disabilities, chronic alcoholism, Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, substance use disorders, and traumatic brain injuries.

"This comprehensive mental health plan represents a significant step forward," said DOH Commissioner Heidi Hedberg. "By promoting mental health awareness, increasing access to services, and enhancing crisis support we are taking a proactive approach to ensure the well-being of all Alaskans."

"Through a comprehensive and collaborative effort, we are committed to improving outcomes for all Alaskans." DFCS Commissioner Kim Kovol added, "By focusing on all the areas that impact the mental health system, we aim to make mental health services more accessible and effective. Our systems improvement approach will benefit the most vulnerable children, adults, and families in Alaska."

“Continuing the work of the previous 5-year plan, this plan reflects the vital collaboration between DOH, DFCS, and the Trust, as well as feedback from community members from across the state, that will help guide our efforts to improve health outcomes for Trust beneficiaries over the next 5 years,” said Brent Fisher, Chair of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Board of Trustees. “This is a thoughtful and comprehensive look at the needs of Trust beneficiaries and Alaskans across the lifespan, and how we as a state can improve and strengthen the systems of care serving them.”

By fostering collaboration and leveraging resources effectively, Alaska aims to set a benchmark for mental healthcare and behavioral services nationwide.

For more information about *Strengthening the System II: Alaska’s Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Program Plan for Fiscal Year 2025-2029*, please visit our [website](#).

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