

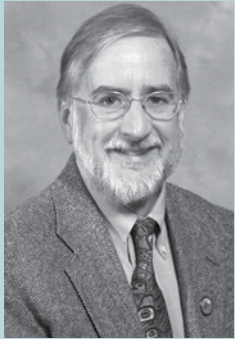


Improving Health, Protecting Alaskans Annual Report 2009



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

Commissioner's Message



Bill Hogan, Commissioner

In last year's annual publication, I discussed our priorities: substance abuse; health and wellness; health-care reform; long-term care; and vulnerable Alaskans, and what we could do to make a difference in each area.

One year later, I am pleased to report that concrete action has been taken on a number of these priorities. Among them, the state extended the Medicaid Adult Preventative and Restorative dental care program; the Legislature and the Governor supported increased funding for emergency psychiatric services, infant learning, mental health and substance abuse programs; support was extended for the Suicide Prevention Council; and we have the opportunity to create a secure statewide electronic health information exchange system.

Additionally, our budget for the next fiscal year includes increased funding to help seniors live at home for as long as possible; mental health services for rural Alaskans; programs for early childhood development, and services for those with autism and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

We've been busy, and we're proud of what we have accomplished with the help of the Legislature and the Governor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "William H. Hogan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "William" and last name "Hogan" clearly legible.

William H. Hogan,
Commissioner

Experience

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Alaska Pioneer Homes



David Cote, Director

In fiscal year 2009, the Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes served approximately 567 Alaska Seniors and Veterans.

Recertifications

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs recertified the Veterans and Pioneers Home in Palmer as a state veteran's home, and the Sitka Pioneer Home and Ketchikan Pioneer Home became recertified as Eden Alternative homes. The Juneau Pioneer Home was recertified as an OSHA SHARP site.

Partnership

The Ketchikan Pioneer Home has entered into a pilot project with the Gerontology Institute through Sacred Heart Medical Center in Eugene, Ore., which is now a resource to the Ketchikan Pioneer Home residents.

Providing assistance to other divisions

The Pioneer Homes also assisted with the operation of the Mary Conrad Center in Anchorage by providing direct care and administrative staff during the interim after it changed hands.

Investing in maintenance

The remodel of the Sitka Pioneer Home kitchen was completed,

and the Anchorage Pioneer Home replaced all its old tile with vinyl wood-grain flooring. The division also replaced old databases for the Wait List and Occupancy Report with a cutting-edge, Web-based application.

Investing in safety

Security cameras were installed at the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home and the Fairbanks Pioneer Home.

Goals

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

It is anticipated that the system's actual occupancy will exceed 90 percent, and that the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home will have 75 percent of the beds occupied by veterans.

The division knows it needs to be poised in the next 25 years to best serve the aging baby boomer population, and its contract with Info Insights — an Alaska-based public policy and management consultant — will help Pioneer Homes plan for that inevitability.

Other goals include the reduction of workers' compensation claims and completing the Sitka Pioneer Home's roof renovation.

Respect

Behavioral Health



Melissa Stone,
Director

Enhancing the Service Delivery System

The Division of Behavioral Health, in the management of the behavioral health service delivery system, has successfully enhanced the existing service array with three major initiatives.

The first is the “Intensive SMI Outreach Initiative,” which provides assertive outreach, case management, and support services to mitigate the homeless Severely Mentally Ill population in the Anchorage community.

The second initiative is “Detox and Substance Abuse Treatment Enhancements,” involving The Salvation Army Clitheroe Center in Anchorage (an eight-bed facility) “Specialized Treatment Unit” for detox and/or substance abuse treatment); Cook Inlet Tribal Council (an 11-bed detox facility); and Fairbanks Native Association (an enhanced 16-bed detox facility).

The third initiative is “Enhanced Technical Assistance,” involving a coordinated division response to offer targeted resources to providers challenged with service delivery or administrative barriers.

Performance Management

A core function of the division monitors the service delivery system’s performance, specifically in terms of “Quantity” (How much did

we do?), “Quality” (How well did we do it?), and “Outcomes” (Did anyone benefit?).

For “Quantity of Services,” during fiscal year 2009, 4,096 severely emotionally disturbed children and youth, 8,443 severely mentally ill adults, and 6,605 child and adult clients with substance use disorders received community treatment services.

For “Quality of Services,” the division utilizes the Behavioral Health Consumer Survey. The survey assesses four areas of consumer perceptions: overall satisfaction; access to services; quality and appropriateness of services; and consumer-reported outcomes. More than 75 percent of adult and teen respondents reported a positive evaluation of services; and 74 percent of parents/caregivers of children reported a positive evaluation.

For “Outcomes of Services,” the “Client Status Review” measures change over time in 11 life domains. A summary measure indicates that 69 percent of clients reported improvement in multiple life domains, or maintained previously achieved improvements.

Goals

Freeing all Alaska communities, families and individuals from harmful effects of substance use and abuse; assuring Alaska children, youth and adults are mentally healthy and living successfully; and helping all community members be connected and resilient, with basic life skills.

Hope



Office of Children's Services



Tammy Sandoval,
Director

Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan Update

The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) began in early 2008, culminating with on-site reviews in September 2008. The federal review assesses the performance of state child welfare agencies in achieving positive outcomes for children and families. The review is designed to ensure that

Alaska's child protective services system is providing quality services to children and families. The state is required to submit a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address each area found needing improvement. The PIP was approved on Dec. 1, 2009, and Alaska will have two years to complete the identified strategies and goals.

Family Contact policy and procedures in effect

The Court Improvement Project, which included OCS, worked in collaboration to develop a Family Contact policy and implementation. Statewide training was completed in late spring 2009 with policy and procedures going into effect July 1, 2009. Family Contact is based on research showing that families with children in out-of-home care who had frequent contact with each other were more successful in reunification.

Foster Wear program

The Foster Wear program began in fiscal year 2009 to help Alaska

foster youth obtain quality clothing at a discount. The effort draws on retailers to offer clothing discounts to foster families statewide. REI helped design the plan, and was the first store to sign on. At press time, participating businesses included: Army Navy Surplus; REI; The Prospector; Nugget Outfitter; Homer's Jeans; Omni Enterprises; Alaska Commercial Company; and JC Penney.

Goals

Ongoing efforts will continue in several areas, including:

- focusing on maintaining children safely in their own homes whenever possible;
- improving front-line worker retention to reduce worker turnover;
- expanding the Family to Family initiative statewide;
- embedding parental protective factors within early care and learning programs, training opportunities and family support agencies;
- increasing referrals to Early Intervention/Infant Learning Programs;
- recruiting Alaska Native Resource Families; and
- partnering with other divisions to enhance preventative and inter-departmental service delivery to families.

Achievement

Health Care Services



William Streur,
Director

The Division of Health Care Services provides fiscal agent oversight and payment of almost 6 million medical claims annually to 12,000 enrolled health-care and support providers who care for the most medically and financially vulnerable Alaskans. The division ensures functionality of the current Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS), while managing the ongoing MMIS replacement efforts. Additionally, it provides regulatory oversight and direct support to hospitals, physicians, pharmacies, therapists, clinics, and numerous other health care providers. The division maintains and leads efforts in rate review and rate setting, health planning and systems development, certificate of need and health facility survey.

Accomplishments

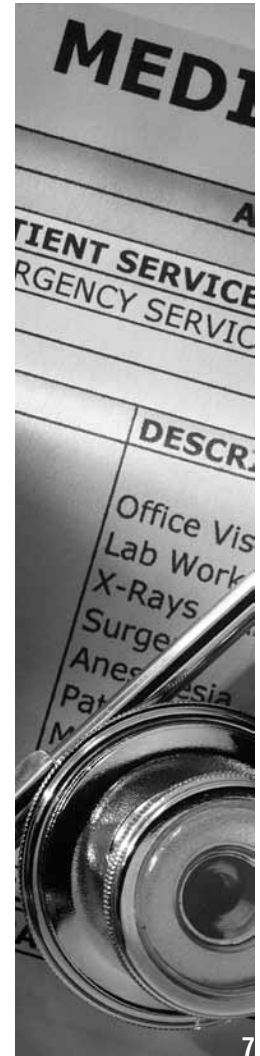
The division implemented emergency regulations expanding life-saving heart and lung transplant coverage to adults, previously available only to those under age 21; increased reimbursement for dental services as part of ongoing efforts to encourage enrollment of new dental providers; and successfully transitioned the state Medicaid fiscal agent services to a new contractor, Dallas-based Affiliated Computer Services (ACS) Inc., which is also currently developing Alaska Medicaid's new MMIS.

The division reduced by more than 12 percent the average number of days required to adjudicate claims; recovered \$75 million from third-party insurance companies and other responsible payers; and adjudicated and paid 5.8 million medical claims totaling almost \$1.1 billion for services provided to more than 127,000 eligible children, pregnant women, families, disabled individuals and seniors.

Goals

The division remains committed to the timely and appropriate access to health-care services for eligible recipients. Some current and upcoming endeavors include the review, analysis and potential regulatory revision of payment methodologies and rates for dialysis/end stage renal disease services, durable medical equipment, pharmacy dispensing fees, emergency transportation rates, tribal dental providers, and other vital health-care services.

The division will continue efforts to replace the current MMIS, which processes more than 112,600 claims (\$20.7 million) weekly, while maintaining accurate and timely payment of claims by the current system; and will continue efforts related to the 2012 and 2013 compliance deadlines for HIPAA 5010 and ICD-10 code set, respectively.





Juvenile Justice



Steve McComb,
Director

The Division of Juvenile Justice had many accomplishments in fiscal year 2009. Among the highlights were:

Step Up Program: A collaboration among the Anchorage School District, Nine Star Education and Employment Services, and DJJ was developed over the course of fiscal year 2009, providing educational services for youth who have been expelled from school or have otherwise exhausted all their educational options.

Technical Assistance: Received three awards of financial support from the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to examine critical areas of agency operations: workloads of juvenile probation staff; training of all division staff; and quality assurance.

Interstate Compact for Juveniles: Assisted the Legislature and Governor's office in passing HB 141 into law in 2009. The bill adopts a new agreement that guides and facilitates the movement of adjudicated juveniles across state lines.

Culinary Arts Program: Partnering with the Department of Labor's Workforce Investment Act program, and local cooking school and catering business Chez Alaska, the Johnson Youth Center in Juneau launched a culinary arts program. In fiscal year 2009, 13 youth received a certificate of completion from the culinary program.

Teamwork

Aggression Replacement Training: Continued to successfully implement this nationally recognized program that has been proven effective in helping youth overcome aggressive behavior.

Performance-based Standards: The Fairbanks Youth Facility Detention program was one of only four detention centers in the nation to reach Level 4 status in the Performance-based Standards quality assurance program. Level 4 is the highest level.

Goals

Recidivism: DJJ will seek to understand the reasons why youth, particularly Alaska Native, released from secure treatment programs, continue to have high recidivism rates. In fiscal year 2010, the goal is to have examined data on these youth and to have engaged in dialogue with members of the Alaska Native community on DJJ's concerns.

Role of Family in Delinquency: Difficulties and inconsistencies in parents' ability to supervise youth, discipline them, and overcome relationship challenges are known risk factors for juvenile delinquency. DJJ's goal is to provide effective treatment services in the coming year to families with delinquent youth through counseling, coaching and other services.

Public Assistance



Ellie Fitzjarrald,
Director

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)

The Division of Public Assistance received a U.S. Department of Agriculture performance bonus award for having the most improved program access for its Food Stamp program in federal fiscal year 2008 (federal fiscal year 2008 overlaps the state fiscal year 2009).

The Food Stamp program has been renamed SNAP, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The bonus of \$273,584 will be put back into the program to make it even more effective. The program provides food benefits to low-income households, and serves roughly 27,000 Alaskans per month.

Alaska's Women, Infants and Children Nutrition (WIC)

Alaska's WIC program changed to provide more variety, healthier foods, and healthier choices for infants, including fresh fruits and vegetables, low-fat milk and a variety of whole grain foods. The WIC program also increases the amount of food provided to mothers who breast-feed their babies full time to better promote and support breast-feeding. Each month, more than 26,000 Alaska women, infants and children participate in the federally funded WIC program for lower-income and nutritionally-at-risk pregnant and breast-feeding women, their infants and young children.

Heating Assistance

Fiscal year 2009 marked the first year for the Alaska Heating Assistance Program (AKHAP), a new state program that provides assistance to households with income between 150 percent and 225 percent of the federal poverty limit for Alaska. During the 2008–09 winter, 13,030 low-income Alaskans received heating assistance from the state, an increase of 38 percent over the prior year. AKHAP served 2,047 of the 13,030. The remainder were served by the Heating Assistance Program, which is 100 percent federally funded by the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) block grant. The Heating Assistance Program accepts applications from October 1 through April 30. Applications for the program can be found on the department's Web site.

Goals

Due to high fuel costs, many households in remote areas of Alaska struggle with food and heating bills. Public Assistance seeks to increase rural outreach so that eligible families and individuals can receive food, cash and heating assistance.



Public Health



Dr. Ward Hurlburt,
Director

H1N1 pandemic

Following the April 2009 declaration of a national public health emergency, the division activated the Emergency Operations Center to support surveillance, manage communications, and stockpile medications and supplies statewide.

New Fairbanks Public Health Laboratory

The new facility, completed within budget, a year ahead of schedule, was instrumental in the division's response to the H1N1 outbreak. The state-of-the-art lab is responsible for conducting approximately 50,000 tests annually to diagnose and prevent diseases such as influenza, hepatitis, rubella and rabies.

Trauma System Assessment

The division supported an American College of Surgeons assessment which helped a statewide trauma system improvement effort planned for the coming year. A strong trauma system is essential in preventing injuries and reducing death and disability.

Autism Screening Expansion

Approximately 60 Alaska babies are born each year with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Autism screening works to identify children with autism before age 3 and enroll them in early intervention services. In fiscal year 2009 the division expanded screening clinics to three additional Alaska rural communities.

Alaska Cancer Registry Success

The division enabled electronic reporting of cancer cases from Alaska's smaller hospitals and clinics and increased the number of tumor registrars in Alaska.

Goals

H1N1 Mass Vaccination: The division launched a campaign to immunize every Alaskan wishing to receive the H1N1 vaccine. Alaska received vaccine in incremental amounts starting in October and distributed it to providers and public health centers statewide.

Expansion of Medical Death Investigations: In fiscal year 2010 the State Medical Examiner's office will hire a third full-time forensic pathologist. More than 1,500 sudden, violent, unexpected, or suspicious deaths are reported to the Medical Examiner's office each year.

Domestic Violence Prevention: The division will enhance and expand public health's role in domestic violence prevention through client screening by public health nurses. The Family Violence Prevention Project provides training and technical assistance on family violence to health and social service providers, and the Adolescent Health Program supports a media campaign to prevent dating violence.

Senior & Disabilities Services



Rebecca Hilgendorf,
Director

Home and Community Based Services

Senior and Disabilities Services is researching options to develop a telemedicine program to link assessors and waiver applicants living in remote or inaccessible regions of the state.

Provider Relations: Staff made site visits to the Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center and the PCA provider network on the Kenai Peninsula to both educate on the PCA assessment process and take stakeholder input on improving SDS/provider relations.

Services for People with Developmental Disabilities

A collaborative effort is underway by the Department of Health and Social Services and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to keep people with disabilities — developmental disability, mental illness, Alzheimer's and other cognitive impairments or chronic alcoholics with psychosis — from moving to levels of care that are more restrictive.

Aging and Disability Resource Center

The Senior Health Information Office and Aging and Disability Resource Centers received a \$53,000 Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act grant award to provide outreach to Medicare beneficiaries eligible for Part D and low-income prescription assistance.

Developmental Disabilities Waiver Prior Authorizations

Ongoing agency complaints regarding slow Developmental Disabilities waiver prior authorizations prompted a process analysis. A review of all waivers processed in the first six months of calendar year 2008 was initiated Dec. 16, 2008. The results illustrated that efficiencies would be gained by cross-training staff and consolidating prior authorization activities in the Anchorage-based Operation Integrity Unit.

Personal Care Services

The Personal Care Assistant unit has established a Policy and Procedure workgroup, in collaboration with providers, designed to gather input to ensure rational and timely policy development.

Senior Information Office

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) awarded \$157,211 for fiscal year 2009 to the Senior Health Insurance Assistance program to continue one-on-one counseling and outreach to people age 64 and older who need authoritative information on Medicare.

Goals

- Implement and complete activities identified in the CMS corrective action plan in order to develop and maintain a comprehensive array of home and community-based services.
- Expand Aging and Disability Resource Centers to more regions.





Public Health Preparedness

Editor's note: Public Health Preparedness is part of the Division of Public Health, and is overseen by Chief Medical Officer and Public Health Director Dr. Ward Hurlburt. See page 10 in this report for details on Public Health's other activities in fiscal year 2009.

H1N1 Response and Working Groups

In spring 2009, Health and Social Services opened its Emergency Operation Center (EOC) to respond to the novel H1N1 influenza pandemic. EOC staff coordinated information-sharing with local, tribal, state, federal and private industry partner agencies. Response focused on surveillance, lab testing and shipping antiviral medications and personal protective equipment to 39 locations throughout the state. Multiple working groups made up of DHSS staff and representatives from partner agencies formed in June 2009 to plan H1N1 vaccine distribution and administration, a public information campaign and community containment strategies. Community workshops were conducted in 18 communities to assist in local planning for H1N1.

Pediatric Rural Medical Surge Exercise

The Pediatric Rural Medical Surge full-scale exercise was developed to test the ability of DHSS to identify, organize and send health-care resources, including physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists and pediatric medical equipment to a rural community

to support pediatric medical care. The exercise planning team was composed of partner agencies and included DHSS; Samuel Simmonds Memorial Hospital, in Barrow; Alaska Native Medical Center; Providence Hospital; Fairbanks Memorial Hospital; and the All Alaska Pediatric Partnership.

Emergency Preparedness Summits — September 2008 and January 2009

DHSS partnered with the Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management to hold Emergency Preparedness Summits for local emergency management and health-care representatives in September (Fairbanks) and January (Juneau). These training summits were held in conjunction with the State Emergency Response Commission and Local Emergency Planning Committee Association meetings, and included training in sheltering for special needs populations, medical logistics, and community containment strategies.

Medical Logistics Working Group

In a disaster or emergency, the supply chain for medical supplies, pharmaceuticals, and equipment could be in jeopardy. DHSS formed a Logistics Workgroup to develop a work plan for medical logistics in Anchorage, which serves as a resource for the entire state.

Strength

Mass Vaccination Clinic Exercises

DHSS supported 27 Mass or Targeted Vaccination Clinic Exercises around the state in large urban areas and small rural villages. They were designed to test community plans to dispense vaccine to their citizens in a relatively short period of time. The exercises were designed to be relevant in the event of a real pandemic flu epidemic or other large-scale public health emergency. The events tested the communities' ability to plan, coordinate and administer a program in an emergency situation using health-care staff of partner agencies as well as volunteers.

Healthcare Preparedness Conference

Preparedness conducted the 8th annual Healthcare Facilities Preparedness Conference at Providence Alaska Medical Center in January 2009. More than 50 attendees heard information on emergency and health-care preparedness issues with local, state and federal agencies; Healthcare Preparedness Grant requirements for 2009; resources available for planning, coordinating and conducting exercises; and real-life hospital responses to California wildfires.

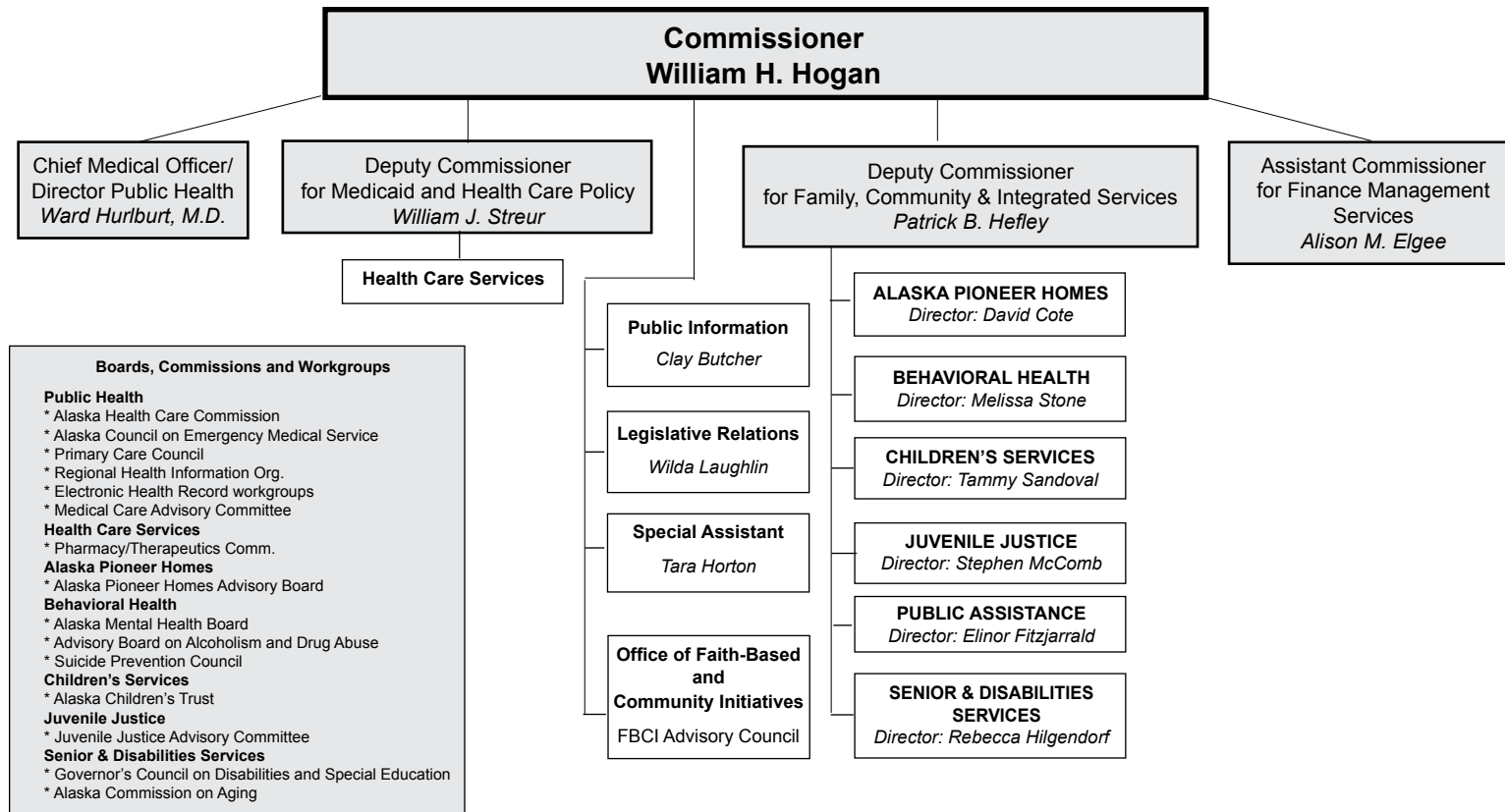
Special Needs Planning

The Preparedness Program began working on Special Needs Sheltering plans and tools to assist local communities in planning for and operating a special needs shelter in times of disaster or emergency situation. These shelters are designed for patients who, in addition to needing shelter, also require care for medical conditions that do not require hospitalization. DHSS participated in the April 2009 Ketchikan Cruise Ship Exercise that tested the community's ability to open and staff a special needs shelter and triage cruise ship passengers to a facility that could provide appropriate care.





Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Organization Chart

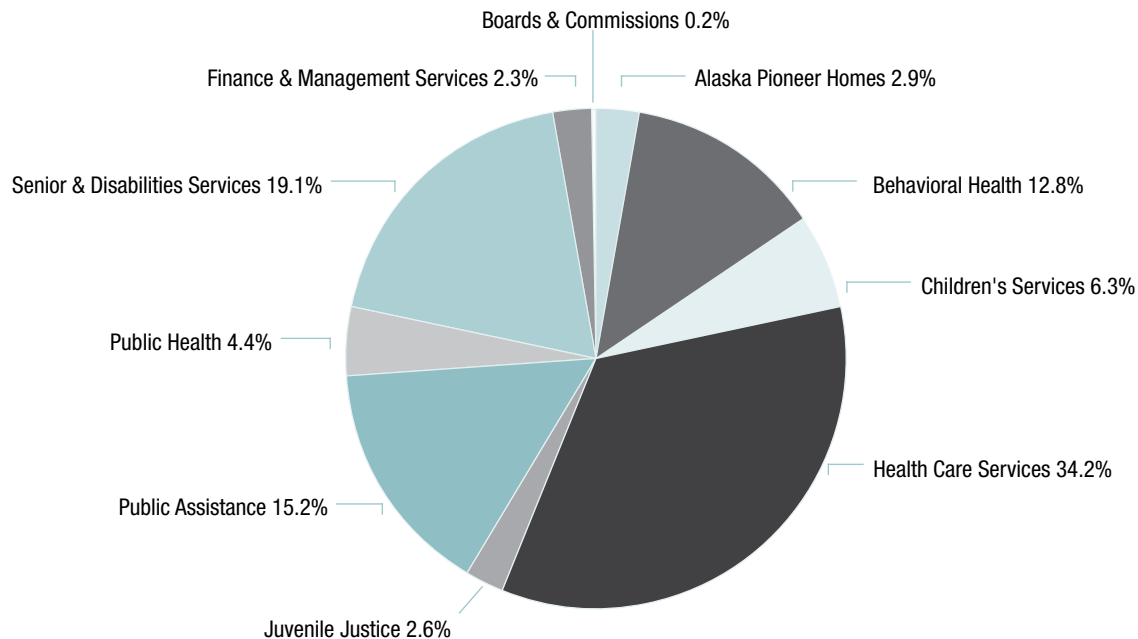


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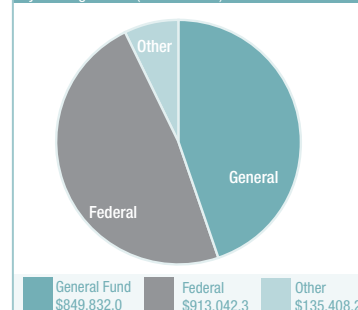
Financial Report

fiscal year 2009

Actual Expenditures by Division (total funds)



FY09 actual expenditures
by funding source (in thousands)



Division	FY08	FY09
Alaska Pioneer Homes	\$51,975.6	\$54,405.6
Behavioral Health	220,214.8	242,288.9
Children's Services	113,845.3	118,969.3
Health Care Services*	625,325.7	650,057.2
Juvenile Justice	45,862.1	48,737.1
Public Assistance	249,264.0	289,282.1
Public Health	80,334.7	84,323.9
Senior & Disabilities	330,142.8	362,624.4
Finance & Management**	51,732.6	44,111.4
Boards & Commissions	3,418.5	3,472.6
* Includes Adult Dental		
* Includes Human Services Community Matching Grant		
TOTAL	\$1,772,116.1	\$1,898,272.5



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