

State of Alaska FY2009 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Health and Social Services Rural Services and Suicide Prevention Component Budget Summary

Component: Rural Services and Suicide Prevention

Contribution to Department's Mission

The mission of this component is to encourage and support regional and community-based efforts to address the problems of suicide, self-destructive behavior and substance abuse.

Core Services

Programs funded through this component include the Community-Based Suicide Prevention Program (CBSPP), which provides small grants directly to communities; and the Rural Human Services System Project (RHSSP), which provides funds to regional agencies to hire, train and supervise village-based counselors. These counselors provide integrated substance abuse and mental health outpatient, aftercare and support services as well as prevention and education activities. The RHSSP training program is administered by the University of Alaska Fairbanks, College of Rural Alaska. The Rural Human Services (RHS) certificate is the first step in developing local talent that is eager to remain in their home community and to enter the social services fields. Upon completing their RHS certification, students are encouraged to continue their education with an AA degree in human services, a Bachelor's in social work and a Master's degree if desired.

Both the Community-Based Suicide Prevention Program and the Rural Human Services System Project focus on ensuring that needed services are both available in, and culturally appropriate to, the villages and towns of rural Alaska. CBSPP coordinators provide a wide range of prevention and intervention services. Rural human service trained village-based counselors provide a full range of paraprofessional services from screening to aftercare under the supervision of more advanced practitioners. They also provide prevention and education programs in their communities.

FY2009 Resources Allocated to Achieve Results

FY2009 Component Budget: \$2,401,100	Personnel:	
	Full time	0
	Part time	0
	Total	0

Key Component Challenges

The Rural Human Services System Project does not yet serve every region of the state and many villages do not have trained counselors. Part of this challenge is the high turn-over in Rural Human Service (RHS) students who start, but do not complete their educational training. In discussions with both the recipients of the RHSS grants (agencies who receive funding to train and hire community-based counselors) and the university manager who directs the RHS university program, the problem stems from grantees needing staff at the community level for duties that are too complex. In FY09 we anticipate redesigning the Request for Proposals for the RHSS grant dollars to put more focus on the importance of training and education, with the community level work characterized as an "internship" or "fellowship" rather than a full-fledged human service employee. Trained staff will allow grant recipients a stronger role in providing mentoring, training and opportunities to use the skills learned through the RHS training.

Another major challenge is coordinating with the new Behavioral Health Aide program to eliminate duplication and enhance the efforts of each group. We are working closely with the University of Alaska Fairbanks to identify ways to increase our partnership, better utilize these limited funds, and maximize and sustain the outcomes of the Rural Human Service training program.

The Community-Based Suicide Prevention Project (CBSPP) must develop new ways to enhance training for project coordinators, and establish or broaden links among projects. The division's Prevention staff is working with CBSPP grantees to develop better strategies, outcome measures and community planning and readiness to deal with issues related to suicide. We are also helping our smallest and most remote grantees develop broader community ownership of the behavioral health issues within their communities and address the issue of community readiness before trying to implement prevention and intervention programming. Too many communities, especially those hard hit by suicide, are not ready to address mental health issues and find healthy ways to intervene. We are working in close partnership with the Suicide Prevention Council on its statewide suicide prevention plan and media campaign to increase awareness and education about suicide and its impact on individuals, families and communities. We will offer Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper training to all suicide prevention grantees in FY08.

In an effort to broaden the scope of knowledge as to who the appropriate partners might be to work with the Division of Behavioral Health and its grantees to improve suicide prevention outcomes, we will explore better utilization of our state's telemedicine capabilities. Many of the Alaska Native Health Corporations are entering into telemedicine agreements that will provide increased early intervention, screening and treatment capacity in rural areas. We also plan to link with the developing rural health clinics to improve service delivery, provide gatekeeper training and analyze recommendations from the Alaska Follow-back Study to identify new strategies for earlier intervention with identified high-risk individuals.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2009

There will be no significant changes in results to be delivered.

Major Component Accomplishments in 2007

During FY07, 18 communities received community suicide grant funds. Other programs began integrating suicide prevention activities into their more general program. Grant awards ranged in value from \$10,000 to \$30,000, with the average award approximately \$15,000. The division Prevention staff continued to provide one-on-one technical assistance with these programs to develop ways to better identify and document the outcomes of their program activities.

The development of the Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper training curriculum was completed in early FY07, when a cadre of trainers were certified as Gatekeeper Trainers. We are now developing a comprehensive plan for implementing the training across the state and across disciplines. Additional certified Gatekeeper Trainers will be trained in FY08.

In FY07 new general fund dollars expanded the number of villages able to fund a Rural Human Service (RHS) student. The division added two new agencies to the RHS grantee list—Copper River Native Association and Cook Inlet Tribal Council - and expanded services at two existing programs, Kodiak and Chugachmiut. They helped support over 100 village-based counselors working in 95 different rural communities. Each program is designed slightly differently, but all focus on developing local paraprofessional providers through UAF Rural Human Services Program training and certification and funding or partially funding counselors in the villages. These programs assist in supplementing larger urban and hub community treatment and recovery programs by providing qualified local providers to act as “first responders” and “gatekeepers.”

The 30-credit RHS training program is now offered at four rural campuses: Interior/Aleutian Campus at University of Alaska Fairbanks; Kuskokwim Campus in Bethel; Northwest Community Campus in Nome; and Chukchi Campus in Kotzebue. The University of Alaska Anchorage was recently added to the campuses, where it focuses on students who work or plan to work providing services to individuals who have relocated to the City of Anchorage from rural communities. In addition, the UAF RHS program has developed a new 16-hour pre-certification for individuals who already have a BA but need the rural certification, or for individuals who are not yet ready to commit to the 30-hour program, but want to begin the process of getting RHS certification. We are continuing our partnership with the University of Alaska Fairbanks to increase the number of qualified rural providers able to provide direct behavioral health prevention, early intervention and crisis services. The RHSS program is an exemplary model for addressing the ongoing behavioral health workforce dilemma—helping to “grow” our workforce in their home communities.

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

AS 47.30.470-500 Mental Health
7 AAC 78 Grant Programs

Contact Information

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**Rural Services and Suicide Prevention
Component Financial Summary**

All dollars shown in thousands

	FY2007 Actuals	FY2008 Management Plan	FY2009 Governor
Non-Formula Program:			
Component Expenditures:			
71000 Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
72000 Travel	8.2	0.0	0.0
73000 Services	254.8	300.0	300.0
74000 Commodities	0.0	0.0	0.0
75000 Capital Outlay	0.0	0.0	0.0
77000 Grants, Benefits	1,919.0	2,101.1	2,101.1
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
Expenditure Totals	2,182.0	2,401.1	2,401.1
Funding Sources:			
1002 Federal Receipts	145.0	0.0	0.0
1004 General Fund Receipts	0.0	285.9	285.9
1037 General Fund / Mental Health	76.3	128.4	128.4
1180 Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse Treatment & Prevention Fund	1,960.7	1,986.8	1,986.8
Funding Totals	2,182.0	2,401.1	2,401.1

Estimated Revenue Collections

Description	Master Revenue Account	FY2007 Actuals	FY2008 Management Plan	FY2009 Governor
Unrestricted Revenues				
None.		0.0	0.0	0.0
Unrestricted Total		0.0	0.0	0.0
Restricted Revenues				
Federal Receipts	51010	145.0	0.0	0.0
Restricted Total		145.0	0.0	0.0
Total Estimated Revenues		145.0	0.0	0.0

**Summary of Component Budget Changes
From FY2008 Management Plan to FY2009 Governor**

All dollars shown in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2008 Management Plan	414.3	0.0	1,986.8	2,401.1
FY2009 Governor	414.3	0.0	1,986.8	2,401.1