



# DBH Grantee Newsletter

The Latest News, Updates, and Information for Grantee Agencies!



**Announcements**



**Upcoming Events and Trainings**



**Grant News**



## Announcements

### Introducing Our New FAQ page for Behavioral Health Medicaid Claims Transition!

We're excited to announce the launch of our dedicated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) webpage to guide you through the Behavioral Health Medicaid Claims transition. The Division has designed to keep you informed and support you through every step of the transition process.

The Division will regularly update the FAQ page with the latest information and answers to your most pressing questions. We encourage you to check back often to stay up to date. If you have a question that isn't covered, don't hesitate to reach out to us at [mpassunit@alaska.gov](mailto:mpassunit@alaska.gov) with the subject line "BH MCD Claims Transition 2024."

Thank you for your attention and cooperation as we navigate this important change together!

### The Behavioral Health Consumer Survey (BHCS) is transitioning to an Electronic Format

In the upcoming BHCS cycle, DBH is migrating from a paper-based survey distribution process to an electronic format through the SurveyMonkey platform. This migration is intended to reduce Agency administrative burden in fulfilling BHCS grantee reporting obligations, reduce overall cost and paper waste, and encourage more robust client survey responses.

**BHCS Agency Contacts should monitor their email** the week of August 19, 2024, for a BHCS Electronic Conversion email with a survey link and explanation of requirements. Please note **Questions 1-4 are required** and replace the previously used "Agency Provider Contact and BHCS Order" forms.

### DBH Staff update

We would like to announce the retirement of DBH team member, Bunti Reed. She has worked with many organizations in the various capacities she has served within the behavioral health field in Alaska. Bunti has been a long-standing family and child advocate. We honor her and thank her for her decades of public service. Bunti's last day of state service is August 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## SAMSHA Block Grant Site Visit June 26<sup>th</sup> – June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

DBH had the pleasure of hosting our Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) project officer for an in-person 3-day visit to meet Division staff, learn about Alaska's behavioral health system and to visit behavioral health programs supported by SAMHSA block grants. Discussion topics with the SAMHSA staff included the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment system of care in Alaska; integration and continuity of care for vulnerable populations; behavioral health and primary care integration; expanding funding and creating sustainability; preparing Alaska's Workforce; harm reduction and reducing substance misuse; enhancing recovery; and data collection. SAMHSA and DBH staff members had the opportunity to tour two agencies doing exemplary work in the community. DBH would like to extend a special thank you to Alaska Behavioral Health and True North Recovery for welcoming us to your agencies and showing SAMHSA your programs and services for Alaskans. Thank you for your feedback and recommendations to the State and thank you for taking the time to meet with us.

## 988 Create – Alaska Young Artist Contest: Promoting Mental Health

The Youth Alliance for a Healthier Alaska (YAHA), supported by the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), Alaska Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health, and Spirit of Youth, hosted the 988 Create art campaign. Focused on "healing and support," it aimed to raise awareness about youth mental health and promote the 988-crisis line for suicide prevention, connecting directly to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

In 2024, the campaign attracted 59 young artists from across Alaska, with winners selected from Skagway to Anchorage, showcasing Alaska's youth creativity. Participants and winners were invited to the inaugural Alaska Suicide Prevention Youth Summit and the 2024 Alaska Suicide Prevention Conference. At the Youth Summit, National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI) New Hampshire's Elaine de Mello led a comprehensive Youth Leader Training session on suicide prevention, empowering young leaders with skills in peer helping and identifying risk factors.

A highlight of the conference was the 988 Create Keynote, where youth presented their artwork and discussed their messages, underscoring the role of youth in mental health advocacy and suicide prevention. The campaign not only highlighted Alaska's youth talents but also strengthened community commitment to mental health awareness and suicide prevention.

## Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR)

Did you know the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) Learning Center offers online courses like Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR)?

“PFA and SPR are promising practices for disaster behavioral health response and recovery. Both PFA and SPR were developed by the National Center for PTSD and the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, as well as other individuals involved in coordinating and participating in disaster response and recovery.

PFA and SPR intervention strategies are intended for use with children, adolescents, parents and caretakers, families, and adults who are survivors or witnesses exposed to disaster or terrorism. PFA and SPR can also be provided to first responders and other disaster relief workers.”

[NCTSN PFA and SPR](#)

To learn more, you can visit their website at: [www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)



## Grant News

### Important Notifications:

**[Behavioral Health Medicaid Claims Transition Updates](#)**: Behavioral Health Medicaid claims processing transition activities are ahead of schedule! Please read for updates on the transition timeline and for information on provider resources to support connecting with the upcoming vendor systems.

**[Minimal Dataset Entry into AKAIMS Temporary Reduction; Effective July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025](#)** MDS-obligated providers are allowed to continue using a single encounter note per-client-per-program-per-month for data entry. For more details, providers are encouraged to refer to the notice or contact the Division of Behavioral Health for further clarification.

### Infant, Child, and Youth (ICY) Conference

For the past 17 years a spring conference to bring together Infant, Early Childhood, Youth, and Family Behavioral Health providers and stakeholders has been held: Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Conference (IECMHC) and the Child Adolescent and Family Behavioral Health Conference (CAFBHC). After much deliberation and collaboration, the conference rolled out with a new name: Infant, Child and Youth Conference (ICY) and a new host: the Family Services Training Center, Center for Human Development (CHD).

Recently hosted by the Family Services Training Center (FSTC), with 193 attendees, the 2024 ICY Conference was lauded as an overall success. Participants from Utqiagvik to Ketchikan, Nome to Tok gathered at the Marriott Hotel in Downtown Anchorage on April 29th – May 1st to hear from national and local speakers and to network, collaborate, and learn together. A multitude of agencies serving different populations were represented including tribal health, community non-profit behavioral health, infant learning programs, Head Start, school districts, residential treatment centers, private practice, etc. With three plenary speakers and six breakout sessions in the afternoons, participants attended nine sessions covering topics from Adventure Therapy to the Alaska Blanket Exercise to Reflective Supervision. Participants said that ICY was a “...very impressive and valuable conference...” and “...[it] boosted my confidence and gave me a new passion and fire for my job...” The FSTC looks forward to continuing to host the ICY conference in the future.



## Upcoming Events and Trainings

**Stay informed about the latest Division of Behavioral Health developments and opportunities.**

Be on the lookout for more information on these trainings and other announcements coming from DBH via your **GovDelivery** subscription. Not a subscriber? Click on this link to subscribe: [DOH DBH information subscription](#).

You can also find additional information on the [DBH Treatment and Recovery Grantee Communications](#) webpage.

### State Events and Training

**[Eighth Annual Medication Assisted Treatment \(MAT\) Conference](#)**: September 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
(Virtual)

The State of Alaska is pleased to announce the Eighth Annual Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Conference, which will be held virtually from September 10-12, 2024. This year's theme, "Weaving Support: Elevating MAT through Community Collaboration," highlights the important role of community partnerships to increase access and enhance the effectiveness of MAT.

Our conference aims to unite professionals from diverse sectors to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and build robust networks that support and enhance MAT services in Alaska. Whether you are a person with lived experience, peer support specialist, policymaker, community leader, or healthcare provider, this event offers invaluable opportunities to deepen your understanding and improve implementation of MAT through collaborative efforts, ultimately creating a comprehensive continuum of care for Alaskans.

Join us for an enriching and empowering experience as we collaborate to weave a stronger support network for individuals on their path to recovery. Register today to be part of this vital conversation and contribute to making a difference in the lives of Alaskans.

CEU's will be available for this event.

**Optional:** In-Person networking event in Anchorage, Alaska September 11th, 2024, from 4-6:30pm  
**Location:** (TBD)

**[Improving Lives Conference](#)** – (September 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Improving Lives Conference will meaningfully address behavioral health systems across Trust beneficiary groups, data-driven innovative and promising practices, and strengthening Alaska's continuum of care.

### [Alaska School Safety & Well-Being Summit 2024](#) (September 25<sup>th</sup>- 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

Education leaders, key staff, and strategic stakeholders will meet to improve school safety and well-being in Alaska. Key topics include educator wellness, culturally responsive practices, restorative practices, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), suicide prevention, mental health in schools, social emotional learning, trauma-engaged practices, school health, school safety, emergency operation planning, health & safety related policies, equity, the Alaska Safe Children's Act, belonging, and resilience and recovery.

### **2024 Peer Conference: October 22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 (in person)**

The 2024 Peer Conference will be held Tuesday, October 22, 2024, and Wednesday, October 23, 2024, at the Captain Cook Hotel. Information on speakers, scholarships, vendor tables and parking will be forthcoming.

### [Care Transitions Podcast Series](#)

The Care Transitions Podcast series highlight brief conversations with health care and lived experience experts across the United States. Each podcast focuses on a single facet of quality care transitions. Care Transitions is a rich and varied area of suicide prevention. Podcast topics cover a broad range of best practices, evidence-based strategies, innovations, practical examples, and the personal impact of care transitions.

### [New Video in the 988 Partner Toolkit](#)

The 988 Partner Toolkit is a resource center for social media, video, print, radio, FAQs, messaging, and other marketing material that can be used to promote the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. This video showcases 988 including what 988 is, who it is for, and people around the country who are involved with this valuable resource in suicide prevention.