



Growing Our Own:

A Grassroots Approach to Increasing Behavioral Health Access for American Indian and Alaska Native People

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TRIBAL HEALTH
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Objectives

- Describe the historical and current context that informs the Health Aide model.
- Describe the Behavioral Health Aide scope of practice
- Identify lessons learned in the development and sustainability of the BHA workforce in Alaska



Alaskan Context

- Rural and Remote
- Cost of living
- Weather & weather dependence
 - Climate change
- Seasons & hrs. of daylight
 - Subsistence
- Community connectedness
- Culture heals



Alaska's area: 570,641 miles²

Total Alaska population: 732,673

Alaska Native/American Indian population: 114,785



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Medical Service Levels and Referral Network

Alaska Tribal Health System Regional Health Consortia

1. Arctic Slope Native Association
2. Maniilaq Association
3. Norton Sound Health Corporation
4. Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation
5. Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation
6. Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association
7. Eastern Aleutian Tribes
8. Kodiak Area Native Association
9. Southcentral Foundation (service area in blue)
10. Chugachmiut
11. Copper River Native Association
12. Mt. Sanford Tribal Consortium
13. SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium
14. Ketchikan Indian Corporation
15. Metlakatla Indian Community
16. Tanana Chiefs Conference
17. Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments

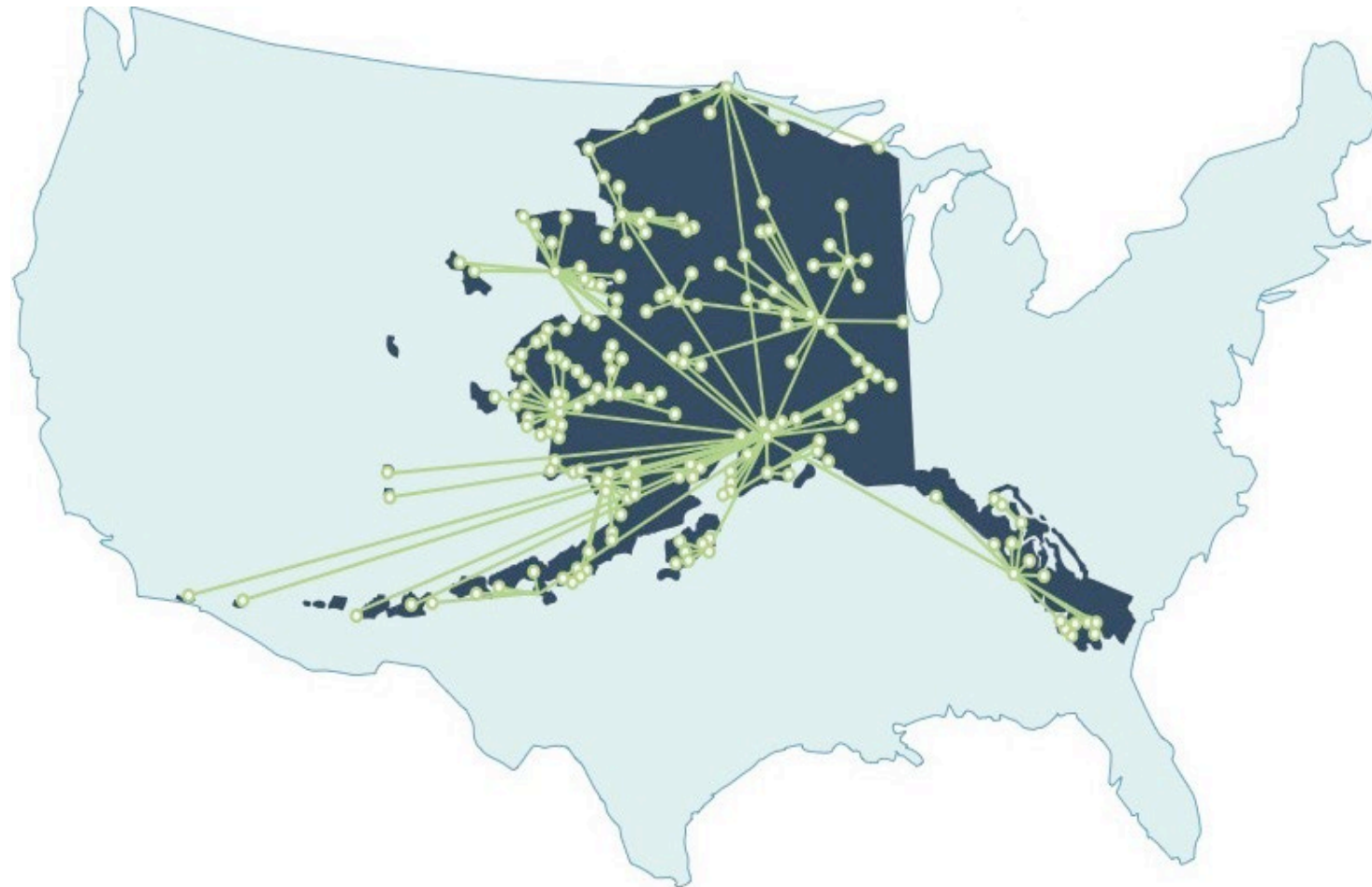


Medical Care Services Levels

- Community health clinics
- Subregional clinics
- Regional hospitals
- Alaska Native Medical Center

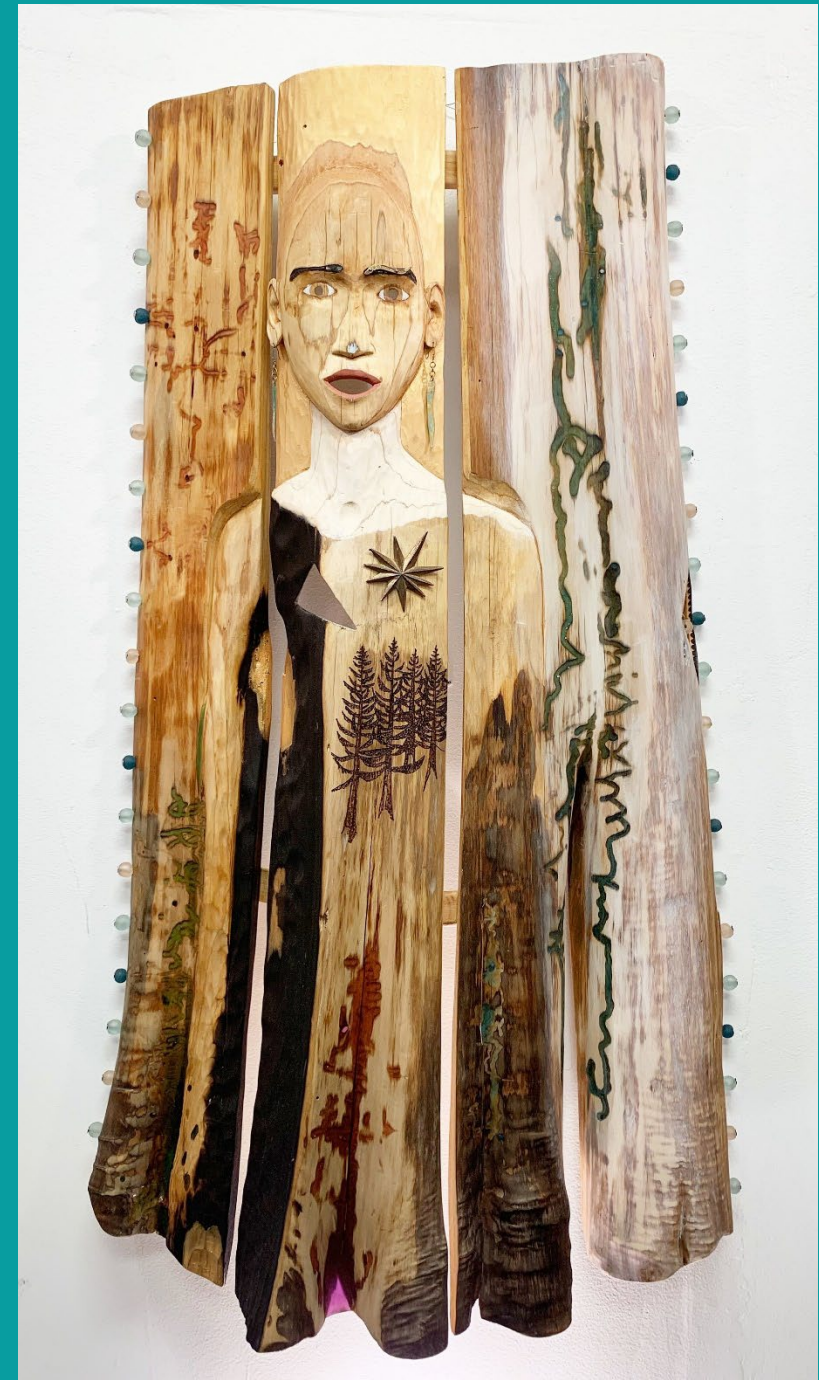
Alaska Native Health Care System Referral Pattern

(Same scale comparison – Alaska vs continental United States)



Behavioral Health in Alaska

- Adverse Childhood Events
 - Historical trauma
- Unintentional injury
- Suicide
- Substance abuse
 - Binge drinking
 - Alcohol abuse mortality
- Domestic violence



Highlights of CHAP History

- 1950s Chemotherapy Aides (Volunteers) Direct Observed Therapy for TB patients
- 1976 Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA)
- 1992 IHCIA amended to add statutes that provided for the Alaska Community Health Aide Program and required a Certification Board
-CHAPCB Standards and Procedures
- 2008 Standards amended to include Behavioral Health Aides and Practitioners (BHA/P)
- 2009 First BHA/Ps Certified
- 2019 First BHA Training Center

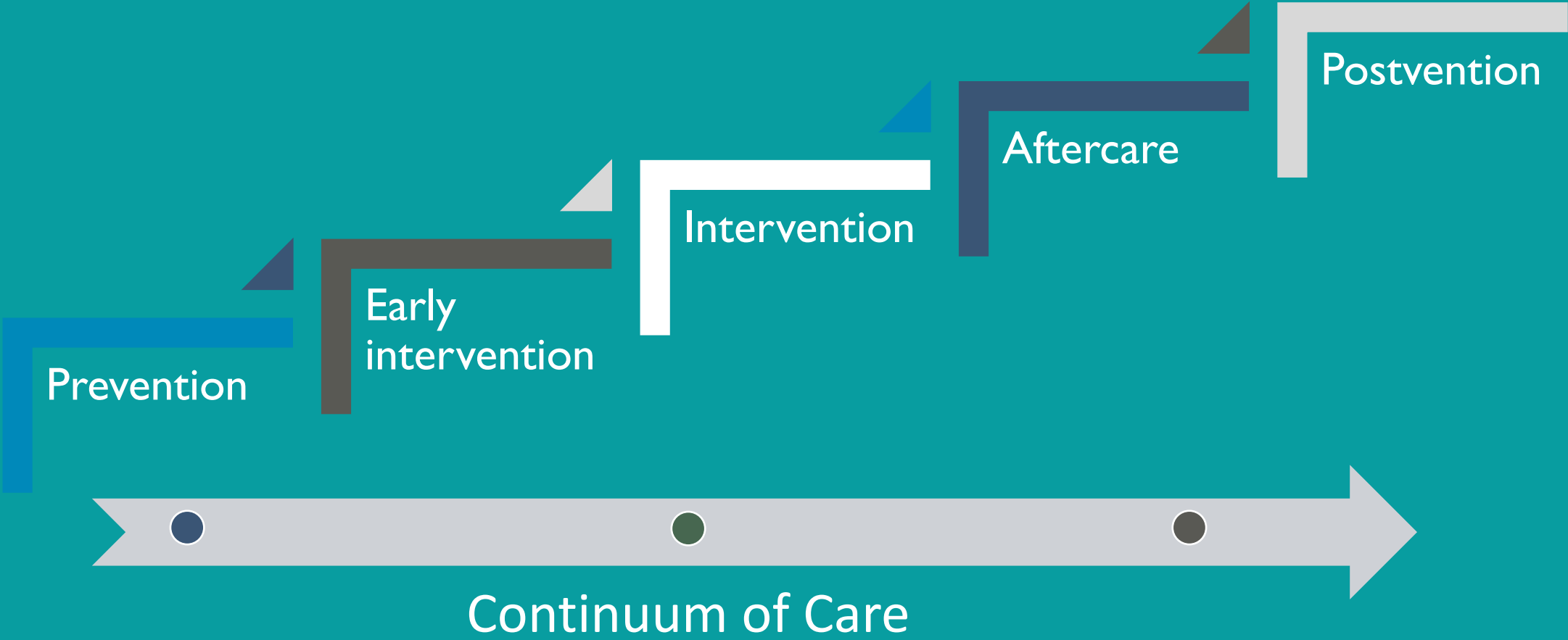




Behavioral Health Aides

Village-based counselors who provide culturally-informed, community-based, clinical services.

BHA Scope of Practice



Who Do BHAs Serve?



BHA Services

- Community prevention, education, and wellness activities
- Behavioral health screening
- Integrated healthcare services
- Screening and brief intervention
- Short-term crisis stabilization
- Individual, group, and family therapy
- Substance abuse assessment and tx
- Case management and referrals
- Peer support services



Based on level of certification



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Lessons Learned: Workforce

- What are your BH concerns/ needs?
- Who are you serving?
- What qualities are most needed in this provider type?
 - *Natural helpers*
- How do they fit into your current system of care?
- What is their scope of practice
- What competencies are needed?
- Employee salary
- Sustainability





Lessons Learned: Certification

- Board, processes, requirements, scope, competencies
- Adequate SME representation on Board
- Administrative & clinical supervision
- Tribal vs non-tribal
 - *Registered Apprenticeship*
- How does certification relate to reimbursement

Lessons Learned: Training

- Adult learners
- On-the-job training
- Specialized or Degree-based
- Training modality (in-person, virtual, blended)
- Skills-based & culturally-informed
- Tuition/training expenses
- Elder co-instructors
- Supervisors
- Training resources (*eBHAM*)
- Career pathway opportunities





Lessons Learned: Partnerships

- Identify stakeholders
- Tribal & non-tribal
- State & Federal
- Training partners
- Integrated collaborative practices
 - Integrate into BH system
 - Include in treatment plan
 - Train other providers how to work with BHAs

Lessons Learned

Patience

&

Persistence



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