

Access to Behavioral Health

SB 169 version U

Senator Cathy Giessel, MS, RN, APRN, FAANP

Defining Behavioral Health

- ▶ Mental and emotional well-being, and actions that affect wellness – US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- ▶ Includes substance use disorders, alcohol and drug addition, serious psychological distress, suicide, mental disorders.
- ▶ Appropriate clinical and support services: individual and group counseling, psychotherapy, medication and case management
- ▶ Encompasses emotional health promotion, prevention and recovery support

The URGENT Problem

Alaska leads the nation in Suicide, Domestic Violence, Child Abuse, Substance Abuse and Misuse

- ✓ Suicide more than TWICE national average
- ✓ 66% of adults in AK have TWO or more ACES (Adverse Childhood Events)
- ✓ 20% of adults in AK diagnosed with behavioral health disorder

The URGENT Problem

Lack sufficient BH (behavioral health) clinicians and services

SB 74 (Medicaid Reform) 2015

- ✓ Expand BH services through expanded clinician base
- ✓ Remove administrative rule and licensing restrictions that limit

Division of BH assurances to remove AAC 135.030 (d),(e) limits who can provide Medicaid-reimbursed BH services

Division of BH came back in 2017 = statute change needed

AAC 135.030 (d), (e)

Rule says:

Services provided by a MH (mental health) physician clinic only, if

- ✓ Services provided by psychiatrist or under direct supervision of psychiatrist
- ✓ “Direct supervision” means that psychiatrist is on the premises of the MH physician clinic at least 30% of the time the clinic is open

Resulting BH Access Crisis

Very few clinics can accept clients for Medicaid-billed BH services

Waiting lists of 2-2 ½ years

Alaskans can't access outpatient services needed

RESULT - Emergency Rooms (ERs) are seeing them

- ✓ Holding patients for days in ER beds (one report - 13-14 days)
- ✓ Patient meal trays to ER - automatically “safe trays”

MOST EXPENSIVE services

INAPPROPRIATE USE

NOT EFFECTIVE CARE

Efforts by Division of BH

Since passage of SB 74 (Medicaid Reform) - no improvement in access

- ✓ Application to CMS for 1115 BH Waiver Demonstration
- ✓ Completed February 15
- ✓ Public comment through April 15
- ✓ Best case scenario: 2 more years to final approval, implement

Efforts by Division of BH

1115 Waiver goals

- ✓ Rebalance current BH system of care to reduce over-reliance on acute care and shift to community or regionally-based care
- ✓ Intervene as early as possible, before symptoms cascade into functional impairment
- ✓ Improve overall BH system accountability by reforming system

Great goals but...

ALASKANS WITH Behavioral Health NEEDS CAN'T
WAIT 2 MORE YEARS!

Alaska NEEDS

Division of BH reports FY 17:

- ✓ Total treatment and recovery service population = 28,000
- ✓ Total Prevention and early intervention population = 388,000
- ✓ Medicaid Expansion increase = 5,000 (adults)

Alaska NEEDS

SB 91 (2016)

- ✓ Parolee rehabilitation (BH or substance use disorder (SUD))
- ✓ Vivitrol trial for seriously addicted parolees
- ✓ Must be paired with BH services

Juvenile Justice

- ✓ 4 Division of Juvenile Justice detention facilities
- ✓ Houses most serious and chronic offenders
- ✓ Delivery of treatment to address behavioral health needs

Office of Children's Services

Calendar year 2017

- ✓ More than 20,000 protective services reports
- ✓ More than 10,000 reports screened
- ✓ 1,303 children removed from home
- ✓ 4,214 total children in “out of home” care

Each of these children represent **Adverse Childhood Experiences**

As they accumulate, ACES leads to behavioral health and physical health issues that **impact for lifetime**.

Prevention saves money and suffering. Means having Behavioral Health services available for these kids.

What's happening?

The few clinics that have Medicaid approved providers or have received waivers/grants to bill Medicaid...

They must limit their clientele to the most severe cases or those leaving the correctional system

Alaska psychiatrists

**Only 85 psychiatrists in the entire State
of AK** (2015-16 Primary Care Needs
Assessment, Alaska Division of Public Health)

Alaska has variety of Clinicians

Other Alaska BH therapists:

Clinical psychologists - 321

Clinical social workers - 921

Marital & Family Therapists - 117

Licensed Professional Counselors - 758

SB 169 (version U) does...

- ✓ BH clinic services - supervision by physicians
- ✓ Either in person or by communication device
- ✓ Direct supervision required for MFT, LCSW, counselors, psychologists

SB 169 does...

- ✓ “Direct supervision” definition updated to include either in person or by a communication device
- ✓ Criteria for supervision are listed
- ✓ Effective Date - 90 days after Governor signs

SB 169 Opens Doors

Address Behavioral Health Access
Crisis NOW

Expand telehealth to effectively **serve**
rural areas

ALASKANS CAN'T WAIT 2 MORE YEARS
TO ACCESS BH Services

Support

- ✓ MatSu Health Foundation
- ✓ Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education
- ✓ Alaska Behavioral Health Association
- ✓ Alaska Primary Care Association
- ✓ Alaska Council of School Administrators
- ✓ AARP

We can increase Access to Behavioral Health Now!

SB 169

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