

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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