

# Department of Health Overview

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Heidi Hedberg, Commissioner  
Emily Ricci, Deputy Commissioner  
Robert Lawrence, Chief Medical Officer



Thursday, January 23, 2025



## MISSION

*Promoting the health, well-being & self-sufficiency of Alaskans*

## Divisions

Division of  
Behavioral  
Health

Division of  
Health  
Care  
Services

Division of  
Public  
Assistance

Division of  
Senior  
&  
Disabilities  
Services

Division of  
Public  
Health

## Strategic Approach

Modernize Systems

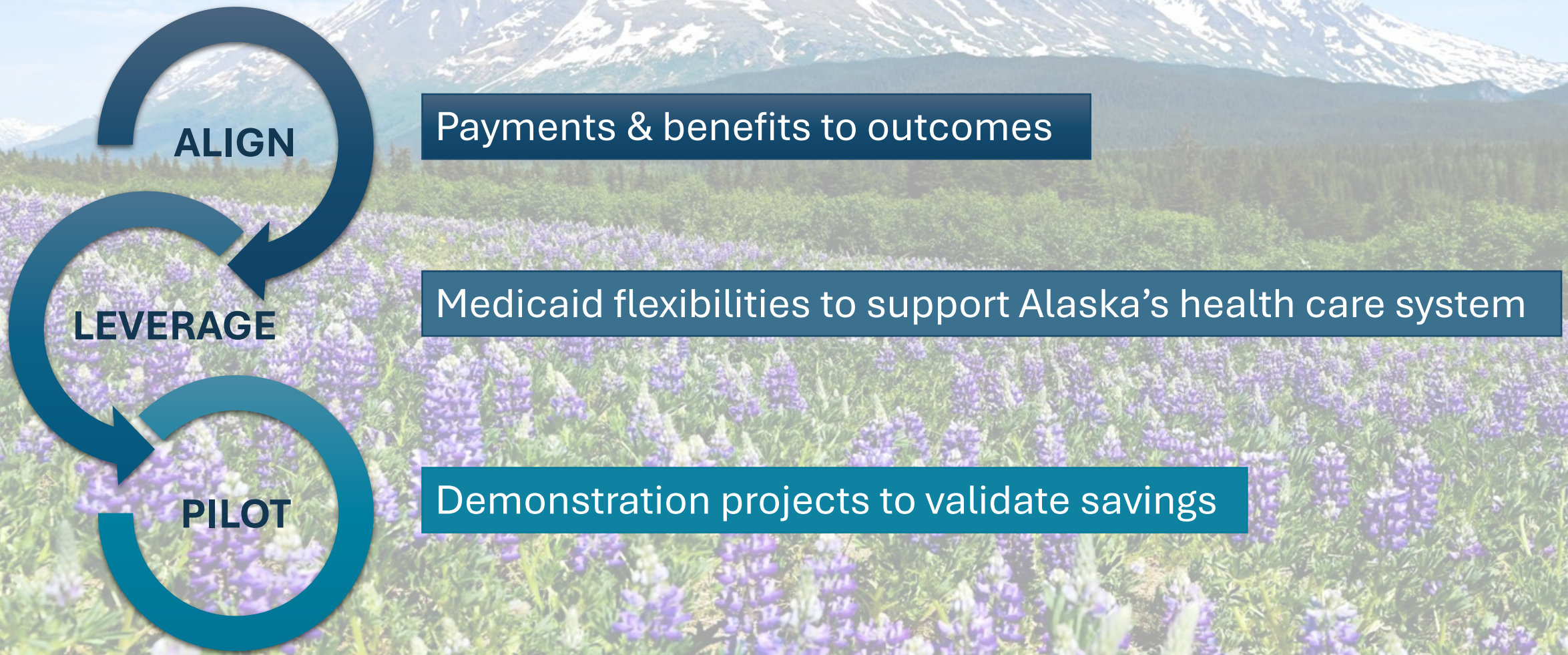
Increase Capacity

Stabilize Workforce

# Arcs of Effort



## INNOVATIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE SYSTEMS



# Transformation of Care



**Medicaid Rate Review**

**Medicaid Demonstration Projects**

**School-Based Services**

**Justice Involved Youth**

**Re-Entry Supports**



**Innovations  
to improve  
health  
outcomes &  
reduce costs**



# Child Care



Access  
to safe,  
affordable, &  
high-quality  
child care for  
families



**Streamlining processes**

**Expanding licensing options**

**Stabilizing the workforce**

**Ensuring quality care**

**Improving accessibility & affordability**



# Overdose & Suicide Prevention



Preventing  
deaths due to  
overdose,  
suicide &  
other injuries



**Establish Medical  
Review Organizations**

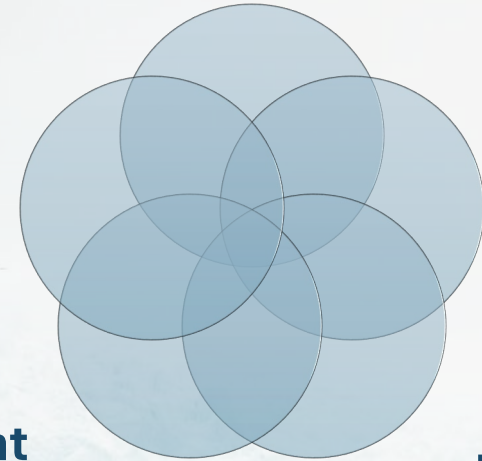
**Implement Alaska's  
Response to Opioids**

**Opioid settlement  
funding**

**Interdiction**

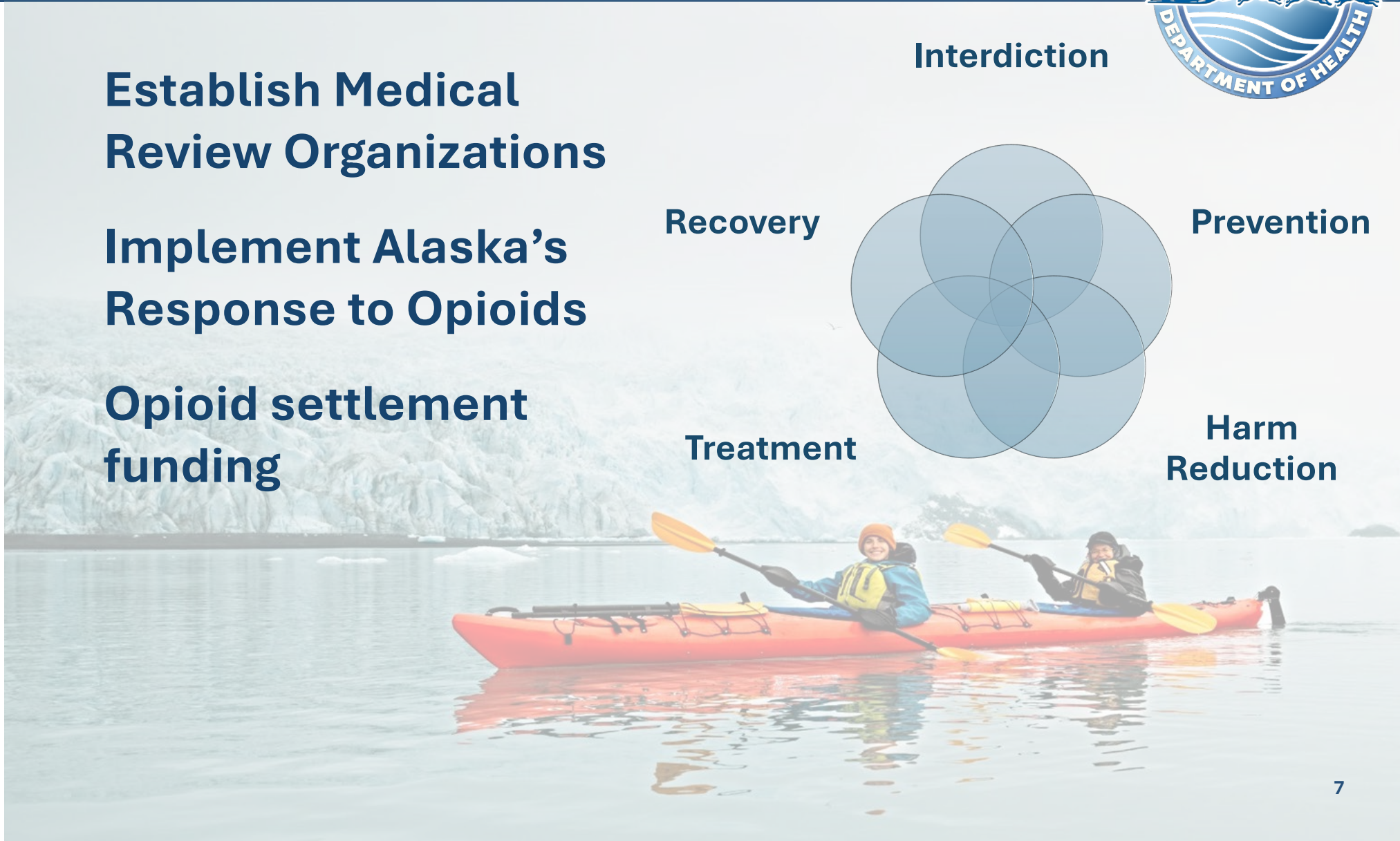
**Recovery**

**Prevention**



**Treatment**

**Harm  
Reduction**



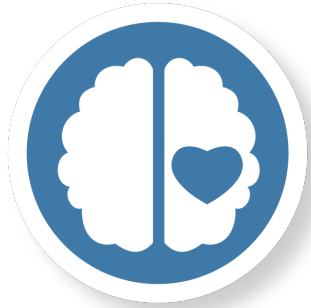
# Strengthening the Behavioral Health System



## Implement Youth Behavioral Health Roadmap

- **Prevention & Early Intervention**
- **Outpatient Services**
- **Crisis & Subacute Care**
- **Residential Services**
- **Step-Down Services**
- **Cross Cutting**
  - **Data integrations**
  - **Provider supports**
  - **Care coordination**

## Complex Care



System  
improvements  
to enhance  
access to  
services



# Division Overviews



Division of  
Behavioral  
Health

Division of  
Health  
Care  
Services

Division of  
Public  
Assistance

Division of  
Senior  
&  
Disabilities  
Services

Division of  
Public  
Health

# Division of Behavioral Health



## OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Renewed 1115 demonstration waiver

→ Behavioral Health Reform

Completed crisis services assessment

Implemented claims payment transition

→ Medicaid Management Information System



## 2025 Focus

Continue stabilizing claims payment

Build out provider supports

Develop sustainable crisis services

Certified Community Behavioral  
Health Clinics

# Division Health Care Services



## OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Increased operational capacity

Identified solutions to improve operations

Created Medicaid systems modernization plan

Streamlined background check process



## 2025 Focus

Initiate Medicaid systems modernization

- Provider enrollment
- Patient-facing mobile app
- Service authorizations

Improve quality assurance framework

Continue to develop workforce capacity

# Medicaid Modernization

## HCS

is the pathway  
that allows  
providers  
to be  
licensed, enrolled &  
paid for services



## DPA

is the pathway  
that allows  
eligible Alaskans  
to access  
services & benefits

Provider  
Enrollment

Service  
Authorizations

Patient  
Mobile App

Smart  
Forms

Self-Service  
Portals

# Division of Public Assistance



## Simplified Engagement

- ✓ Launched online client portal & client upload portal
- ✓ Launched interim report & change report forms
- ✓ Simplified applications for elderly populations
- ✓ Began text messaging for SNAP & Medicaid recipients

## Improved Operations

- ✓ SNAP application process completion rates improved from 28% in March 2023 to an average of 71% by January 2025
- ✓ Achieved federal compliance with SNAP interview requirements
- ✓ Reopened all offices to offer same-day, direct client services

# Division of Public Assistance: 2025 FOCUS



**Overarching customer service & employee engagement**

**Continuous quality improvement**

**Finalize Medicaid redeterminations**

**Implement Child Care Task Force recommendations**

**Continue IT modernization**

# Division of Public Assistance: IT Modernization



## Integrated Eligibility Enrollment System ●

- ✓ Migrate non-MAGI categories off mainframe
- ✓ Migrate SNAP off mainframe
- ✓ Migrate TANF & Cash Programs off mainframe

## Enhance Client Engagement ●

- ✓ Text messaging
- ✓ Secure document upload
- ✓ eForms & multi-program application
- ✓ Client portal

## Operational Efficiency ●

- ✓ Automated ex-parte process
- ✓ Automated email search process
- ✓ Data integrations between platforms
- ✓ Automated asset verification
- ✓ Return mail solution

## Family Nutrition ●

- ✓ WIC Sprint

## Child Care ●

- ✓ AK Child Care Information System

## ARIES Maintenance & Operations ●

- ✓ Shifted to secure, cloud-based system

2028



# Division of Senior & Disabilities Services



## OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Established Direct Support Professionals certification program

Changes to residential services to better serve individuals needing specialized care

Initiated InterRAI development (self-directed assessment tool)



## 2025 Focus

Continue InterRAI design & development

Critical incident detection & trending system

Updates to environmental modification services

# Division of Public Health



## OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Achieved National Public Health Accreditation

\$11M to support communities for opioid response

Leveraged community partnerships to maximize TB & Syphilis testing capacity



## 2025 Focus

Execute data integration & modernization

Initiate Community Health Roadmap

Increase access to vital records & public assistance directly in communities

Electronic Direct Observed Therapy

# Thank you



# Questions?

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