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THE Mukluk Telegraph



THE QUARTERLY NEWSPAPER OF THE ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM

JANUARY - MARCH 2020

Alaska Native Medical Center hospital wayfinding puts patients on the right path



The Alaska Native Medical Center is now divided into two regions, Water and Mountain. New signage and paint colors will help patients easily find their way around our hospital. The Water and Mountain regions correspond to where the water and mountains are in Anchorage.

You may have noticed some new signs or directions at the hospital recently as new signs, graphics and maps throughout the hospital were installed.

In an effort to ensure easier navigation, color graphic zones were installed to help patients and visitors locate where they need to go while visiting ANMC. The hospital is now divided by color and graphic zones Water and Mountain, in order to help patients and visitors easily find places such as the cafeteria, imaging, patient housing, and most importantly their medical appointments.

Funded by the ANTHC Board of Directors Strategic Initiative, the new signage and naming conventions take into account patient feedback, research, focus groups and best practices from other health care wayfinding systems.

Staff and patients can now see blue-colored signs indicating the water region and purple-colored signs indicating the mountain region. The regions are also aligned with the physical directions that the water and mountains are in Anchorage.

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**ALASKA NATIVE
TRIBAL HEALTH
CONSORTIUM**

HEALTHY PEOPLE AND PREVENTION

Reduce risk of a slip and fall this winter, both in and outdoors

As the winter months set in and walkways become slick with snow and ice, the risk of falling increases. Anyone can experience a slip and fall, leading to injuries ranging from a minor scrape to a traumatic brain injury, or worse, a fatality.

From 2014 to 2017, the rate of Alaska Native fatalities from fall injuries was 12.4% higher than that of Alaska non-Natives and 29.5% higher than that of all races in the U.S. according to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Centers for Disease Control.

To help prevent a slip and fall when there is ice out, clear off snow and ice on entry and walkways, wear appropriate shoes with good traction,

and take extra time and small careful steps. Keep a mat near the doorway for wiping shoes or a broom handy for knocking off snow.

For Alaska Native Elders, the threat of severe injury or fatality from a fall increases and often happens indoors. For those age 60 and older:

- Four out of every five hospitalizations for injuries were caused by a fall;
- Two out of three due to falls in the home.

The CDC provided safety tips on how to help prevent Elders from suffering an injury due to a trip and fall:

TALK TO YOUR PROVIDER

Ask your doctor or health care

provider to evaluate your risk for falling and talk with them about specific things you can do. Ask your provider to review medications to see if any might make you dizzy or sleepy. Ask your doctor or health care provider about taking vitamin D supplements and eat foods rich in calcium.

DO STRENGTH AND BALANCE EXERCISES

Do exercises that make your legs stronger and improve your balance.

HAVE YOUR EYES CHECKED

Have your eyes checked at least once a year and be sure to update your eyeglasses if needed. If you have bifocal or progressive lenses, you may

want to get a pair of glasses with only your distance prescription for outdoor activities, such as walking. Sometimes these types of lenses can make things seem closer or farther away than they really are.

MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER

Tidy up to prevent leaving anything you could trip over. Add grab bars inside and outside your tub or shower and next to the toilet. Put railings on both sides of stairs. Make sure your home has lots of light by adding more or brighter light bulbs.

For more tips and information, visit cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/falls/adultfalls.html.

HEALTHY PEOPLE AND PREVENTION

March is Sobriety Awareness Month

People can and do recover—every day.

This March Alaska will celebrate Sobriety Awareness Month and the success of those in recovery. The statewide observance educates Alaskans that substance use treatment and mental health services can help those with mental and substance use disorders to live healthy and rewarding lives.

In Alaska, Sobriety Awareness Month is a time for us all to reflect on the importance of recovery, how it changes lives, the many pathways that people take to get there and the community it takes to sustain it. It also serves as an opportunity to help reduce the stigma and misconceptions that cloud public understanding of mental and substance use disorders, which potentially discourage others from seeking help. Together, Alaskans can continue to spread the message that treatment is effective and people can and do recover—every day.

ALASKA'S HISTORY AND THE SOBRIETY MOVEMENTS

Between 1993 and 1995, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) encouraged the celebration of people living sober lives by working with and supporting Alaskan grass-root sobriety movements.

During that time, AFN collected more than 10,000

sobriety pledge signatures from men, women and children who denounced substance use and lived lives of sobriety. These signatures were then handed off to Iditarod Musher, Mike Williams of Akiak, who carried them 1,049 miles in the March 1995 Iditarod Sled Dog Race. The transport of these signatures was a symbolic gesture to honor the commitment from Alaska Native people to help alleviate alcohol and drug abuse throughout Alaska.

Stemming from the awareness brought on by AFN, Mike Williams, along with the Iditarod, and the Alaska Legislature, recognized the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month from 1995 to 2006. In 2018, the Alaska legislature permanently reinstated and annually designated the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month.

HOW CAN YOU HELP SUPPORT?

Mental and substance use disorders affect all of us and we are all part of the solution. We all have the potential to make a difference and be visible, vocal, and valuable to help spread the message that recovery is possible. Throughout the month of March, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium encourages all Alaskans to wear white ribbons in support of Sobriety Awareness Month and to

help raise awareness of mental and substance use disorders, celebrate individuals in long-term recovery, and acknowledge the work of prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.

Statewide events are planned in partnership with ANTHC, Recover Alaska and Tribal Health Organizations throughout Alaska. You can find more information, including opportunities to pick up your own white ribbon on the Alaska Native Health Campus, on the ANTHC and Recover Alaska websites. For questions, please contact saprevention@anthc.org.

RESOURCES

If you, a family member, or a friend needs help, resources are available.

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- Recover Alaska: (907) 249-6645 or visit recovalaska.org/gethelp
- Careline - Alaska Suicide Prevention & Someone to Talk to Line: 1-877-266-HELP (4357) or visit carelinealaska.com

THE MUKLUK TELEGRAPH

The Mukluk Telegraph is the official newspaper of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.

The paper is published quarterly and distributed at no charge to patients, employees and partners of ANTHC statewide.

Have a suggestion or a compliment for the Mukluk Telegraph? We would love to hear from you. E-mail the ANTHC Marketing Department at akamarketing@anthc.org.

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Write to akamarketing@anthc.org and we'll add you to our mailing list.

The Mukluk Telegraph is available online at anthc.org/news.



MISSION

Providing the highest quality health services in partnership with our people and the Alaska Tribal Health System

VISION

Alaska Native people are the healthiest people in the world

SIGNS

Continued from page 1

We know that traveling in to Anchorage can be a daunting task and finding where you need to go is just one way to ease those worries. Up to 60% of ANMC patients are from outside of Anchorage and ANTHC and our staff want to make it easy to find your way around our campus.

Getting lost at a health care facility is ranked among the top complaints by visitors. While our staff are happy to assist patients and visitors, we realized an effective signage and wayfinding system is crucial to keeping hospital staff focused on patient care.

The interior wayfinding at the hospital also comes with some new clinic and department names. A few key differences to note:

- **Customer Experience** is now **Patient Experience**
- **Central Registration** is now **Admitting**
- **Radiology** is now **Imaging**
- Our therapy services are now **Rehabilitative Services**
- **Flex Unit** is now the **Progressive Care Unit.**



The Walk-in Clinic at ANMC

Open seven days a week!

Monday-Saturday from 9 a.m.-9 p.m.
Sunday from 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

ANMC's Walk-in Clinic is for patients of all ages who have an illness or injury that needs immediate care but are not experiencing a medical emergency. Here are some reasons to visit the Walk-in Clinic at ANMC:

- Medication refills
- Vaccinations
- Fever
- School and DOT physicals
- Sore throats and colds
- Cuts and minor skin infections
- Sinus and ear infections
- Muscle strains and sprains
- Urinary tract infections
- STI testing

Located on the third floor of the
Healthy Communities Building
3900 Ambassador Drive

Phone: (907) 729-1500



HEALTH ADVOCACY

Health Within Reach: ANTHC 2019 Annual Report

Across Alaska, ANTHC helps bring health within reach to achieve our vision that Alaska Native people are the healthiest people in the world. In 2019, we continued to build on our previous work to help improve the health of our people. If you would like learn more about our work, the ANTHC 2019 Annual Report is now available on anthc.org.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR WORK IN 2019

ALASKA NATIVE MEDICAL CENTER

Access to care: Referral wait times

Specialty clinics at ANMC increased the number of clinic appointments since 2011 and are improving the referral process for our regional Tribal health partners.

Care coordination: New regional field offices

To offer local care coordination services, ANTHC opened three regional field offices with plans to open four more in 2020.

Care from your door to ours: Travel management

This year, the Travel Management Office purchased more than 50,000

tickets for patient transportation to Anchorage.

Home away from home: Patient housing

More patients are seen at ANMC specialty clinics, which means Patient Housing at ANMC is frequently at high occupancy. Patient housing satisfaction is regularly above 90%.

Baby-friendly designation

ANMC earned international recognition as a designated Baby-Friendly birth facility.

Highest level of trauma care in Alaska

ANMC was reverified as a Level II Trauma Center. In 1999, ANMC received verification as Alaska's first Level II Trauma Center.

ANMC was also reverified as a Level II Pediatric Trauma Center; first receiving this verification in 2018.

Performance recognition

The U.S. News & World Report recognized ANMC as the only "High Performing Hospital" in Alaska, in the area of orthopedics in their 2019-20 Best Hospital rankings.

See Page 5, Report



ANTHC hired local laborers to complete community water and sanitation projects, such as connecting 100 houses to in-home water service which helped put away the honey buckets for good in Eek.



This year, 10 ADTEP graduates joined the DHAT ranks of this nationally recognized health program to bring oral health care to more than 40,000 Alaskans.



Traveling to Anchorage for care is a part of the health care journey for 60% of patients in ANTHC specialty clinics.



ANMC was recognized as a designated Baby-Friendly birth facility.



MISSED THE ANNUAL MEETING?

Learn more about ANTHC's work!

Read about and watch highlights of our latest work in our 2019 annual report and year in review video at anthc.org.



Report

Continued from page 4

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Record number of ADTEP graduates

This year, the Alaska Dental Therapy Education Program graduated 10 Dental Health Aide Therapists, its largest class of DHATs to date. More than 40,000 rural Alaskans rely on ADTEP graduates to provide oral health care closer to home. The program has also grown to include Tribal members from the Lower 48 to bring the unique ADTEP oral health solutions to their own communities.

Behavioral health workforce development

Workforce development is necessary to ensure a sustainable and successful behavioral health system. Since October 2017, ANTHC has increased the number of Behavioral Health Aides by 40%.

Behavioral health services

In partnership with the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, the Consortium is offering Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) to address substance misuse.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

New water and sanitation service in Eek

ANTHC completed a five-year construction project in Eek that brought running water and sanitation services to the entire community, including 100 homes that received first-time water service. This means Eek is no longer on the honey bucket list.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Collaborative legal program recognition

The Partnering for Native Health Program was one of five global programs awarded at the World Justice Challenge, a competition to “identify,



The U.S. News & World Report recognized ANMC as the only “High Performing Hospital” in Alaska, in the area of orthopedics in the 2019-20 Best Hospital rankings.



Since 2017, ANTHC increased the number of Behavioral Health Aides by 40 percent.

recognize and promote good practices and successful solutions to improve access to justice.” This collaborative program between ANTHC, Alaska Legal Services Corp. and Alaska Pacific University trains health providers to screen for potentially health-harming legal needs and treat those needs with

legal justice solutions.

Best-In-State Employer award

ANTHC was named by Forbes as the Best-In-State Employer for Alaska, in the first-ever ranking of America’s best employers by state.

“Every day, ANTHC staff inspire me with the work they do for our people.

This national distinction reflects the commitment and passion of our staff to achieve our vision,” said Andy Teuber, ANTHC Chairman and President. “On behalf of ANTHC’s Board of Directors, we appreciate our staff and their commitment to the health of our people.”

WHAT'S IN THE CLOUD?

E-cigarette aerosol is **not** harmless. Though E-cigarettes are marketed to be less harmful than tobacco products (like regular cigarettes), they can contain harmful ingredients.

E-cigarettes may include:

- Heavy metals such as nickel, tin and lead (Ni, Sn, Pb)
- Ultra-fine particles
- Volatile organic compounds
- Cancer-causing chemicals
- Nicotine
- Flavoring such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease

Nicotine is **highly addictive** and can harm brain development, which continues until about age 25. Many e-cigarettes contain more nicotine than regular cigarettes.

Information used is from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Center for Disease Control and Prevention For more information, visit anthc.org/vaping

HEALTH IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Layers of community breed success

Fresh off last year's Iditarod win, Pete Kaiser delivered the keynote address at the Alaska Federation of Natives convention. As the first Yup'ik musher and fifth Alaska Native entrant to win the Last Great Race, Kaiser's victory put a spotlight on the robust dog mushing community in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

In his address, the emerging leader highlighted a lifetime of support and traditional values as part of his success while he encouraged others to follow the same trail to their own successes.

"Living in a rural community can be tough at times, with many unique challenges," Kaiser said to the crowd at AFN.

Born and raised in Bethel, Kaiser is familiar with the blessings and challenges of life in rural Alaska. Immersed from birth into a dog mushing family, and well-versed in living off the land, he remains connected to mushing and rural Alaska through his work.

Around 2009, he decided where he was going.

As a high school student, he traveled to Nome for basketball and would watch the Iditarod racers as they finished. He took note of each team's demeanor and the way they looked as they crossed the finish line. Moments like these fueled an internal fire in Kaiser and he eventually pursued a dream of winning the Iditarod.

"How did he do that?" asked Lee Ryan, board member for Bering Straits Native Corporation, and longtime friend of the Kaiser family.

"He created a community," said Ryan, as he introduced Kaiser at AFN. "Pete Kaiser is a guy who is meticulous in what he does. He is disciplined beyond belief. But to get where you're going, to know where you're going, you have to know where you are from."

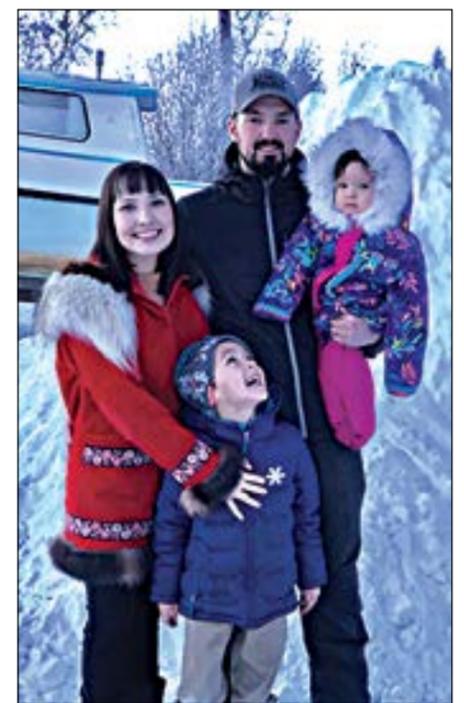
Once Kaiser set his sights to compete against the best mushers in the world, his path became clear, his intentions focused, and turned to his community for support.

Kaiser explained that he went to college only, "somewhat willingly."

Kaiser studied at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks and Anchorage, but never wanted to leave his home community. His heart remained with dog mushing.

"I went to my parents and I said, 'This is what I'm doing, I'm not going to college anymore. I want to see if I can try and start my own kennel and I want to start racing Iditarod.'"

He was unsure of what reaction to



Top: Kaiser pulls out of Willow during the official race start.

Above: Kaiser with wife Bethany and children, Ari, left, and Aylee.

Left: Morrow, left, and Lucy, right, pulled Kaiser's team to win in 9 days, 12 hours, 39 minutes and 6 seconds.

expect from them.

"They supported me 100% and were willing to support me in at least giving it a try," Kaiser said. He was lucky to be surrounded by supportive parents and other role models.

"It was a spot where they could have

easily said, 'Nah, you're on your own, this is a bad idea' and I wouldn't even have blamed them for it if they had," laughed the champion.

"For them to be supportive and say, 'Go for it, we'll be here for you if you need it,' that was a big moment."

This kind of unconditional support left a lasting impact on young Kaiser. "If you're a parent, an aunt, an uncle, raising kids with all the right things they need, so that they can be confident, so that they can have a roof over their head and clothes, it doesn't mean that you have to be the wealthiest parent," he said.

"Using your own actions to set a good example, so that young kids have a foundation, and something to follow and something to know, is so important."

See Page 7, **Success**

Success

Continued from page 6

Kaiser elaborated that childhood is an important stage where young ones are learning and experiencing everything for the first time.

“First impressions tend to last the longest and it’s hard to shake stuff like that. If you can be raised with the right role models and the right examples, I think it helps in the future for sure.” He said this is also an important stage to teach young people how to be an adult or parent when it’s their turn to raise the next generation.

Kaiser remains focused on modeling traditions and the same unconditional support for his two children every day.

“As parents, we are all learning as we go. I make the best choices that I can and hope that they reflect through my children.”

He continues to spread this message to youth across Alaska, providing guidance about how to get through difficult times, the importance of having a positive outlook, and the value of resilience.

In 2011, Kaiser’s friend, Drew O’Brien, died by suicide. Out of this tragic situation, Drew’s father started Drew’s Foundation dedicated to ending the cycle of loss caused by suicide among the youth of Alaska. Kaiser Racing Kennels and Drew’s Foundation work together out of Bethel to raise awareness about suicide prevention. Pete proudly carries a Drew’s Foundation banner in every race, in order to spread the message.

“No more giving up. Even when you think you’re all alone in this world, or you think you can’t take it anymore. You keep going,” encouraged Kaiser in a YouTube video titled “Never Give Up as part of a public service announcement in conjunction with Drew’s Foundation.



Family, friends and community members pose for photos during Kaiser’s homecoming celebration.

How do we, as an Alaskan community, begin to make a difference in the health of our people?

According to Pete Kaiser, it starts with the layers of our communities working together through common goals, teamwork and communication. “Encourage our children to develop strong bonds with adults. Provide them an environment to play in a relaxed, safe place, where they can socialize and let their minds develop. Be the positive role model they need every day and allow their minds to dream, their confidence flourish. Every child deserves love, care and a healthy living environment. When we do these, we are raising them to be resilient and to succeed.”



Family, friends and supporters celebrate with Kaiser under the Burlled Arch in Nome.



Above: Falling snow and a rousing crowd greeted Kaiser with cheers, high-fives and hugs.



Right: The champion delivers the keynote address at the 2019 AFN in Fairbanks.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Visit ANTHC's Walk-in Clinic for your non-emergent health care needs

For our patients living outside of the Anchorage Service Unit, ANTHC offers a Walk-in Clinic for non-emergent health care services for our people while visiting town. The Walk-in Clinic is for our patients of all ages who have an illness or injury that needs immediate care but are not experiencing a medical emergency.

It's also not too late to get your flu vaccine! The Walk-in Clinic provides flu vaccine to patients of all ages. Here are some other reasons to visit the Walk-in Clinic at ANMC:

- Medication refills
- Vaccinations
- Fever
- School and Dept. of Transportation physicals
- Sinus and ear infections
- Sore throats and colds
- Cuts and minor skin infections

See Page 9, **Clinic**



IMMUNIZATIONS: THE FACTS

ANTHC'S Immunization Program works to achieve high immunization coverage rates in all Alaska Native communities and eliminate vaccine-preventable diseases.



VACCINES SAVE LIVES!

Before vaccines, many children and adults died of preventable diseases.



THERE IS STRENGTH IN NUMBERS!

Vaccines work best when most people within a community get vaccinated.



VACCINES ARE SAFE & EFFECTIVE!

Alaska Native communities used to have one of the highest infection rates of Hepatitis B in the United States. Now, we have one of the lowest rates thanks to vaccine.



VACCINES ARE PART OF ALASKA'S HISTORY!

The Iditarod sled dog race was inspired by a sled dog relay carrying antitoxin serum to Nome to help control an outbreak of the vaccine-preventable disease diphtheria in 1925.



ALASKA NATIVE
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For more information, visit anthc.org/immunizations.



Clinic

Continued from page 8

- Muscle strains and sprains
- Urinary tract infections
- STI testing

The Walk-in Clinic is staffed with nurse practitioners, certified medical assistants and medical clerks. The clinic is located on the third floor of the Healthy Communities Building, 3900 Ambassador Drive. The Walk-in Clinic phone number is (907) 729-1500.

THE WALK-IN CLINIC HOURS

- Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-9 p.m.
- Sunday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

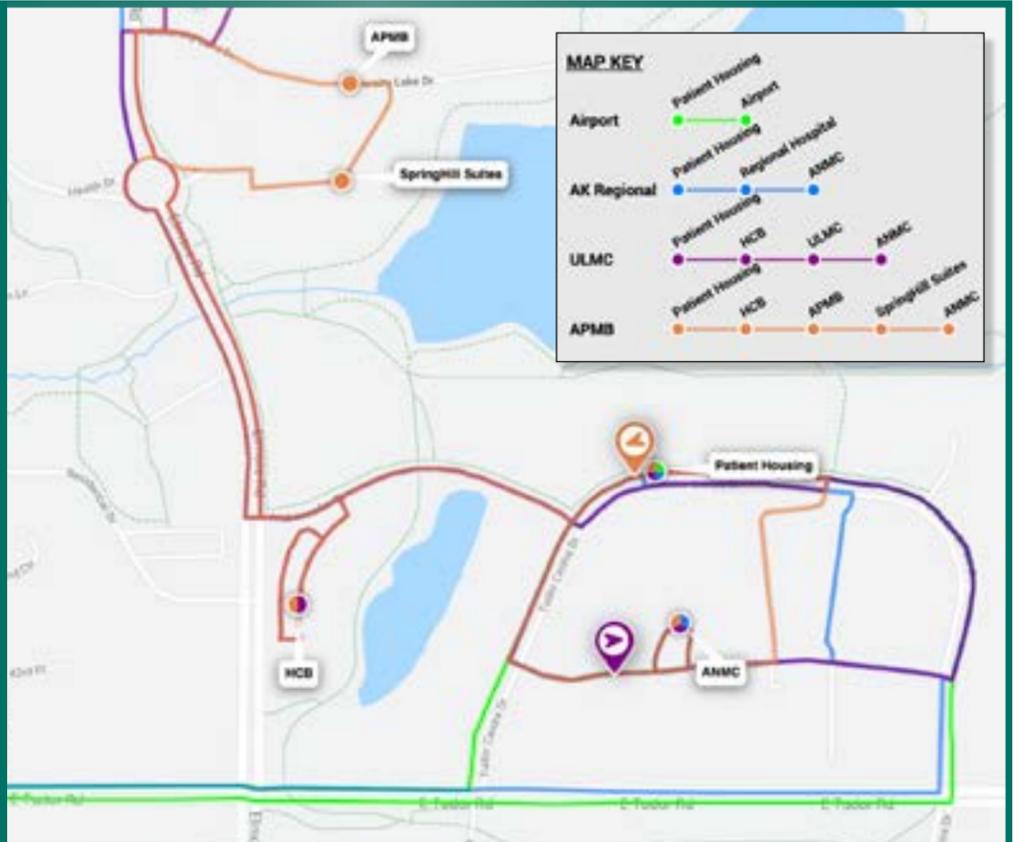
Patients are seen on a first-come, first-served basis. If you are from out of town and would like to make an appointment to be seen for same-day care, please call (907) 729-1500 and ask to make an appointment with the Internal Medicine Same Day Clinic.



**NOW LIVE:
ANMC Shuttle Map**



To track ANMC shuttle locations in real time, scan the code above with your smartphone's camera or QR code reader or visit anmcshuttles.azurewebsites.net.



PROUDLY ANNOUNCING OUR 13TH ANNUAL SIGNATURE FUNDRAISER



Raven's Ball

BLACK-TIE BENEFIT FOR ALASKA TRIBAL HEALTH
HOTEL CAPTAIN COOK • ANCHORAGE, ALASKA • MARCH 28, 2020

For information about becoming a sponsor, donor or volunteer, please contact **907-729-5652** or info@inspiringgoodhealth.org

HEALTH RESEARCH AND DATA

Healthy Alaskans 2030: Health goals for the next decade

Healthy Alaskans is the state health improvement plan that tracks data and strategies to improve health for all Alaskans. Every 10 years, the Healthy Alaskans team identifies new health and social issues to monitor across the state. These Leading Health Indicators (LHIs) are selected by teams of data, content, program, and industry experts who work with input from community members, and information from the State Health Assessment (SHA) and Community Capacity Review (CCR) public health assessments.

The Healthy Alaskans 2030 (HA2030) plan has 30 LHIs. Sixteen of the indicators are continuations from HA2020, while 14 are new or modified. In the coming months and years, the Healthy Alaskans teams will create a full plan of evidence-based strategies and actions that organizations and individuals can implement to improve health across Alaska.

To find more information about the Healthy Alaskans plan, visit anthc.org/healthy-alaskans.

HA2030 HEALTH TOPICS AND LEADING HEALTH INDICATORS

CHRONIC DISEASE

1. Reduce the cancer mortality rate per 100,000 population

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

2. Increase the percentage of rural community housing units with water and sewer services

3. Increase the percentage of the Alaskan population served by community water systems with optimally fluoridated water

HEALTH CARE ACCESS

4. Reduce the percentage of women delivering live births who have not received prenatal care beginning in first trimester of pregnancy
5. Reduce the percentage of adults (aged 18 years and older) reporting that they could not afford to see a doctor in the last 12 months
6. Reduce the rate of preventable hospitalizations per 1,000 adults (hospitalizations that could have been prevented with high quality primary and preventive care)
7. Increase the percentage of children aged 3 years who have had a well-child checkup in the last 12 months
8. Reduce the percent of the population without health insurance

HEALTHY WEIGHT

9. Increase the percentage of children (students in grades K-8) who meet criteria for healthy weight

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

10. Reduce the percentage of children who receive 0 doses of recommended vaccines by age 2
11. Reduce the incidence rate of gonorrhea per 100,000 population

INJURY

12. Reduce the unintentional injury mortality rate per 100,000 population

MENTAL HEALTH

13. Reduce the percentage of adolescents (high school students in grades 9-12) who felt so sad or hopeless every day for 2 weeks or

more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past 12 months

14. Reduce the mean number of days in the past 30 days adults aged 18 and older report being mentally unhealthy

NUTRITION

15. Reduce the percentage of 3-year olds who drink any sugary drinks on a given day.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

16. Increase the percentage of adolescents (high school students in grades 9-12) who meet the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (adolescents who do at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day, every day of the week)

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

17. Increase the percentage of adolescents (high school students in grades 9-12) with 3 or more adults (besides their parent(s)) who they feel comfortable seeking help from
18. Increase percentage of high school students who feel like they matter to people in their community.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

19. Increase the percent of Alaska high school students who graduate within 4 years of starting 9th grade
20. Decrease the percentage of AK rental occupied households that exceed 50 percent of household income dedicated to housing
21. Increase the percentage of residents (all ages) living above the federal poverty level (defined for AK)

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

22. Reduce Alcohol induced mortality rate per 100,000 population
23. Reduce the drug-induced mortality rate per 100,000 population
24. Reduce the percentage of adults needing substance use disorder treatment but are not receiving treatment

SUICIDE

25. Reduce the suicide mortality rate per 100,000 population, among population aged 15+

TOBACCO USE

26. Reduce the percentage of adolescents who have used electronic vapor products, cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, or other tobacco products in the last 30 days
27. Reduce the percentage of adults who currently smoke cigarettes or use electronic vapor products, smokeless tobacco, or other tobacco products

VIOLENCE

28. Reduce the percent of repeated substantiated child maltreatment within last 12 months
29. Reduce the rate of rape per 100,000 population
30. Reduce the percentage of adolescents (high school students in grades 9-12) who were ever hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend during the past 12 months



HEALTH ADVOCACY

ANTHC helps bring funds to crucial health projects across the state

Creating the programs and infrastructure that help improve health across the state takes a lot of resources, planning and partnerships. At ANTHC, our Grants Planning and Development department helps secure resources and connects partners to help fulfill the health improvement goals and initiatives important to the Alaska Native people we serve. The department assists with the development, writing and submission of all grant proposals for ANTHC programs and departments and offers support to our Tribal partners throughout the state. Many successful projects start as ideas. With help in developing stories for grant funders, those ideas can flourish into thriving programs that support Alaska Native people, Tribes and rural communities across Alaska.

Over the last year few years, the Grants Planning and Development team has grown, enabling the department to better serve funding needs throughout the Alaska Tribal Health System. Recently, in partnership with ANTHC Environmental Health and Engineering, they helped to secure ANTHC's first grant in several years from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to support research on the effectiveness of the Portable Alternative Sanitation System (PASS). This system drastically improves access to safe, affordable water and sanitation in rural communities for a fraction of the cost of typical "big infrastructure" or public utility approaches. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded this important work to evaluate how the innovative system affects household water consumption patterns and health over time.

Likewise, Grants Planning and Development partners with diverse programs across the Consortium to secure funding for a variety of ongoing projects across the state, including:

- The Alaska Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative, which provides a culturally appropriate and safe healing environment for Alaska Native girls impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault.
- The Food Distribution Program for Indian Reservations project whose focus is to provide vital supplemental food to some of the most vulnerable communities across the state.

- The Enhancement and Expansion of Treatment and Recovery Services for Adolescents, Transitional Aged Youth and their Families project, which provides essential behavioral health treatment and early intervention services to Alaska Native and American Indian adolescents who are struggling with substance misuse and mental health disorders.

These projects are examples of ideas from ANTHC and our partners that became full programs with the help of grant funding. From construction projects to environmental studies, food security and mental health, ANTHC helps connect the ideas that will improve Alaska Native health to resources and planning assistance.



Protect the Circle of Life

It's not too late to get your flu vaccine!

- **The flu vaccine is safe. You can't get the flu from a flu vaccine.**
- **Pneumonia and flu are a leading cause of death among Alaska Native and American Indian Elders.**
- **Please get a flu vaccine each year to protect you and your family.**
- **If you have not been vaccinated, please make an appointment today!**



ALASKA NATIVE MEDICAL CENTER



Learn more at www.cdc.gov/flu or call 1-800-CDC-INFO

HEALTH RESEARCH AND DATA

Can more fiber in our diets reduce colon cancer? ANTHC aims to find out

ANTHC is seeking volunteers to participate in research that could have a major impact on Alaska Native people. At the head of this research is Dr. Stephen O'Keefe who is director of the African Microbiome Institute at Stellenbosch University in Cape Town, South Africa. Over a year ago, in partnership with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, he embarked on a new study to learn more about the epidemic of colon cancer among Alaska Native people.

His research and message are simple: Add fiber to your diet to reduce your risk of colon cancer.

"Colon cancer is devastating in the (Alaska Native) community," O'Keefe said. "It's the highest death rate of colon cancer in the world."

He added, "It's almost totally preventable."

The Alaska study anticipates results similar to those seen in O'Keefe's prior research in South Africa: If you add more fiber to the diets of Alaska Native people, the good gut bacteria from the fiber will flourish to combat carcinogens like fat and smoke.

O'Keefe said he believes the traditional Alaska Native subsistence diet is superior in many ways, especially because of its high concentration of Omega-3 fatty acids derived from high consumption of fish and marine animals, and the high quality of meat from wild animals.

Like most Americans, Alaska Native people consume low quantities of fiber-rich foods, providing about 15 grams per day, which is much less fiber than is ideal.

The USDA currently recommends 34 grams per day for men and 28 grams per day for women -- and in fact, most Americans do not even get that much fiber in their daily diet. Based on his research, O'Keefe said he thinks even those recommendations do not go far enough.

"We feel that the fiber recommendations in the USA put forward by USDA ... are insufficient to meet colonic needs," O'Keefe said.

"If you take a fiber-rich diet ... (you reduce risk of) about nine other common cancers in westernized society, such as breast cancer, liver cancer, and lung cancer." Cancer mortality in general is lower among people who follow a plant-based diet, he added.

If necessary, a fiber supplement will



Nettles, also called stinging nettles or burning nettles, are an excellent source of fiber. One cup of nettles has 6 grams of dietary fiber.



Fiddlehead ferns are an excellent source of fiber. One cup of raw fiddleheads has 6 grams of dietary fiber.



Seaweed including kelp, black and ribbon seaweed is a very good source of fiber. A cup dried black seaweed has 5 grams of dietary fiber.



Blueberries are a good source of fiber. One cup of raw blueberries has 4 grams of dietary fiber.

get the job done, which is what they are using in the study, but O'Keefe said whole foods are the best source of fiber. Affordable high-fiber foods are available canned and frozen, but they also grow across Alaska.

According to the Alaska Native Traditional Food Guide, Alaskans living in rural areas harvest about 44 million pounds of wild food each year, an average of about 375 pounds per person. Wild foods are not just more affordable and easier to access than foods shipped from urban areas; gathering them comes with the added benefit of physical activity. Additionally, wild plants can be excellent sources of fiber.

One cup of raw blueberries, for example, has four grams of fiber, and one cup of crowberries or wild



Crowberries, also called blackberries or mossberries, are a great source of fiber. One cup of raw crowberries has 5 grams of dietary fiber.

blackberries has five grams. Wild greens such as fiddlehead, fireweed, nettle, seaweed and sourdock are also high in fiber.

Whatever the source, O'Keefe said there's no question that a high-fiber, plant-rich diet is a key to reducing colorectal cancer -- and he hopes the study, and its findings, will be the

beginning of the end of colon cancer's devastating effect on Alaska Native families.

"It's almost totally preventable by dietary means," he said.

ANTHC is still enrolling participants in the fiber study. To learn more or take part, contact a study staff member at (907) 229-0712.