

# **Summary of Long Term Care Services For Seniors in Rural Alaska**

Rural Long-Term Care Development Program  
State of Alaska, Division of Senior And Disabilities Services

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## **Introduction**

This document is a description of the long-term care services that are currently available for seniors in rural Alaska. It excludes the metropolitan centers of Anchorage and Fairbanks where systems of service delivery may be more developed. In rural areas impediments to service delivery such as increased cost and distance between communities can make providing these needed services more challenging. Services are also limited by the availability of workers in a community where a client resides. Over the past five years, the Rural Long-Term Care Development Program has provided community/regional/agency specific technical support in all areas of the state. The home and community based services listed here have been growing in use and availability around the state as agencies seek to meet the needs of the seniors and disabled individuals in their service area.

## **Definitions**

*Nursing Home:* Skilled care facilities operated as independent facilities or collocated with a hospital. Homes are licensed by the State of Alaska following national certification and licensing standards developed by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Nursing homes are a regular Medicaid Program.

*Assisted Living Homes:* Licensed residential setting that provides for personal and health care needs. Homes must provide three meals per day plus snacks, 24-hour supervision of residents, and assistance with activities of daily living. Cost may be covered by the Medicaid Waiver.

*Independent Senior Housing:* Apartments for seniors and adults with disabilities. May have common space for activities, but usually other services are not provided.

*Personal Care Attendants (PCA):* Assistance with the activities of daily living in a client's home. Services are reimbursed through the regular Medicaid Program. There are two types of personal care programs in Alaska. In agency based PCA programs a registered nurse oversees the services and the personal care assistants. In consumer directed agencies the consumer takes a more direct role in training and supervising their assistant, with an agency acting as a fiscal agent to bill for services and issue payroll.

*Home and Community Based Services (HCB):* Services provided in a person's home or in a community facility; may be paid for by the Medicaid Waiver Program or Older Americans Act funds administered by the State of Alaska. May include respite care, environmental modifications, adult day care, transportation, specialized medical equipment, chore services, assisted living, private duty nursing, senior center, and congregate or home-delivered meals.

*Medicaid Waivers:* Instituted in Alaska in 1995, Medicaid Waivers provide people who are eligible for Medicaid nursing home admission to receive similar services in their home or another, less restrictive, community setting such as an assisted living home. To be eligible a person must meet the financial eligibility guidelines from the State Division of Public Assistance and be determined, through a detailed assessment of health and personal care needs, to meet nursing facility level of care.

*Older Americans Act:* The federal act regulating funding for nutrition, transportation and supportive services to seniors. Funds from Title III of the OAA pass through the Alaska Commission on Aging to non-profit agencies and governments around the state to provide these services. Title VI is grants to Indian Tribes. Funding flows from the federal government directly to tribal entities for similar services.

## **Services Currently Available By Region**

### **Arctic Slope**

*Nursing Home:* No nursing home beds, no swing beds.

*Assisted Living:* The North Slope Borough owns and operates a licensed ALH with eleven assisted living beds. This home is subsidized by the Borough, billing to Medicaid has not occurred. Residents pay approximately \$800/month for their services. Due to flooding and now asbestos in the permanent facility, seven residents are housed in a temporary location and additional residents cannot be admitted until a more permanent location is found. Currently, the Borough is interested in divesting themselves of this home, and is encouraging the development of private homes in Barrow. DSDS is providing technical assistance to interested parties.

*Independent Senior Housing:* 37 units of independent senior housing are operated by the North Slope Borough. NSB Housing and Property Management Department received funding from the HUD 202 program for five units of senior housing in five villages (Point Home, Anaktuvik Pass, Kaktovik, Wainwright and Nuiqsut). They are seeking additional funding for construction and looking at ways to integrate other services. DSDS is providing information about funding streams for different services (e.g. ACoA and Older Americans Act funds).

*PCA:* The NSB funded and operated a homemaker program in all villages up until a few years ago. Through this program they provided an array of services to elders that

included assistance with the activities of daily living. They had not been interested in developing a reimbursable PCA program until recently. DSIDS is currently working with NSB, Arctic Slope Native Association and the Native Village of Barrow on a plan for PCA services that will initially be under the consumer directed model. They will apply to provide agency based services once the new regulations are in place (2004).

*HCB:* Barrow has a senior center and senior transportation services, operated by the North Slope Borough and housed at the senior apartment complex. They provide congregate and home delivered meals to Barrow seniors. The NSB, ASNA and the Native Village of Barrow receive Title VI grants and collaborate to provide meals and other supportive services to elders in Barrow and surrounding villages.

DSIDS is working with ASNA and NSB Health Department to develop additional HCB services in Barrow and the surrounding villages. These services will include waiver services such as respite, chore, environmental modifications, and care coordination.

### **Maniilaq**

*Nursing Home:* Currently no nursing home beds, no swing beds. Maniilaq is completing a feasibility study to add a nursing home onto the hospital. The plans include assisted living on the second floor. They would move the assisted living residence to the new facility and utilize the old structure for something else.

*Assisted Living:* Maniilaq owns and operates a licensed home with twenty assisted living beds. This home is subsidized by a yearly state Senior Residential Services (SRS) grant of \$850,000, and various other grants. Residents pay approximately \$600/month for their services. DSIDS has been working with Maniilaq to increase their Medicaid billing for services at the ALH, and to increase efficiencies in operation. Other operational, licensing, and management concerns are being addressed. Occupancy of the home is rarely above ten units.

*Independent Senior Housing:* There is one 15-unit independent senior apartment complex in Kotzebue, none in the regional villages.

*PCA:* Maniilaq used to receive funding for personal care services under their Budget Reserve Unit (BRU) funding from the state. Service provision fluctuated over the years in both personal care and waiver services. In FY02 the personal care component was pulled from their grant. They continued to provide some in-home services with other Maniilaq funds in communities where workers were available. Since May 2003 DSIDS has been working with new staff at Maniilaq on revamping their personal care program. In the past six months they have completely revitalized their personal care program and have added care coordination and other waiver services. They are doing assessments on the needs of elders in Kotzebue and all regional villages and are training new personal care attendants to work in village homes.

*HCB:* Kotzebue has a senior center and senior transportation services, operated by the Maniilaq. Maniilaq operates a traditional foods program in all regional villages with Title VI funding. In this program hunters are provided with supplies to obtain and distribute subsistence foods to the elders. They operate a senior meal program with Title III and Title VI funds, providing approximately 50 meals daily to Kotzebue elders. Point Hope Native Village receives Title VI funding for meals and supportive services.

### **Norton Sound**

*Nursing Home:* Fifteen nursing home beds at Quyana Care Center, operated by the Norton Sound Health Corporation. No swing beds.

*Assisted Living:* There is currently no assisted living home in the Norton Sound Region. Current plans to convert five units of the Munaqsri Senior Housing to assisted living are proceeding slowly.

*Independent Senior Housing:* The Bering Straits Regional Housing Authority operates 19 units of independent senior housing in Nome. The 17-unit Munaqsri Senior Apartments are operated by Nome Community Center, as is a five unit elderly apartment complex in Stebbins.

*PCA:* NSHC has operated a PCA program in Nome and the regional villages for several years. Like Maniilaq, their PCA and waiver services have fluctuated, and they also lost the PCA portion of their BRU in June 2002. In November 2002 a new staff person was hired to oversee the PCA program and they are working to expand services in Nome and the regional villages. DSDS continues to support their efforts and provide technical assistance in the form of budgeting and Medicaid billing. Consumer Direct, a private PCA company, is also providing services in the region.

*HCB:* Medicaid waivers have been less available in the Norton Sound area due to the lack of care coordination services. DSDS has approached the different agencies and private individuals about providing this service, and currently NSHC is offering waiver services through their PCA program and are building their client base.

DSDS participated in the Bering Straits Regional Elders and Youth Conference in February 2002 in a workshop entitled "Home and Community Based Services for Elders." Comments and discussion during the workshop revolved around services elders want such as an increased availability of PCA services, case management (and information and referral), and a regular forum to discuss their needs. A final report of the workshop was distributed to all regional service providers. DSDS continues to follow up on a periodic basis with all service providers through the Elder Resources Team that meets monthly and is facilitated by Sue Todd, NSHC.

Nome Community Services operates the XYZ senior center providing congregate and home delivered meals and transportation to Nome elders. They also run an adult day center on the second floor.

### **Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta**

*Nursing Home:* No nursing home beds, three swing beds at the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Hospital, operated by Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC).

*Assisted Living:* There is no assisted living home in the Y-K Delta. Plans for an 18-unit home in Bethel, operated by YKHC, are finalized and funding is currently being sought. Long-range plans call for development of smaller homes in the subregional centers (Aniak, St. Mary's, Emmonak, and eventually Toksook Bay).

*Independent Senior Housing:* The Ayalpik Apartments (23 units) and the Lulu Heron Center (16 units) are operated by the AVCP Housing Authority.

*PCA:* YKHC has a well-developed personal care program offering both consumer directed and agency based services in all villages. Additionally, there are two private consumer directed service providers in the YK region.

*HCB:* Care Coordination and other Medicaid Waiver services are available throughout the region, provided through YKHC and the City of Bethel. The City of Bethel operates a senior center with daily congregate and home delivered meals, senior transportation, and an adult day center. The Association of Village Council Presidents has Title VI funding to provide meals and supportive services to regional villages. The Kuskokwim Native Association and the Lower Kuskokwim School District collaborate to provide those services in the Kuskokwim subregion.

### **Bristol Bay**

*Nursing Home:* No nursing home beds, four swing beds at Kanakanak Hospital in Dillingham.

*Assisted Living:* Marrulut Eniit Assisted Living in Dillingham is licensed for 15 residents and serves the Bristol Bay Region. It also has residents from the YK Region. It is owned and operated by a non-profit association, with board members representing all regional entities. Payroll and billing is run through the Bristol Bay Housing Authority. MEAL opened in 2000. Occupancy has averaged around ten, sometimes dipping to seven. When occupancy is low, operations must be subsidized by the Housing Authority.

*Independent Senior Housing:* The Bristol Bay Elderly Apartments in Dillingham have 15 apartments. Eleven units of independent apartments are under construction in Naknek.

*PCA:* The Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) provided agency based personal care services from 1997 – 2003. They have recently discontinued this service and have transferred all clients to three consumer directed agencies providing services in the area.

*HCB:* BBNA provides care coordination and other Medicaid waiver services to all regional villages, as well as grant funded care coordination. BBNA provides meals and supportive services to village elders through Title III and Title VI funds. The Dillingham Senior Center operates a congregate and home delivered meal program and transportation services in Dillingham. The village of Aleknagik receives Title III funding for transportation. The Bristol Bay Elders Council operates a transportation program in Naknek/King Salmon with some assistance from Title III funds.

### **Aleutians/Pribilof Islands**

*Nursing Home:* No nursing home beds, no swing beds.

*Assisted Living:* There are no assisted living homes in the Aleutians or Pribilofs.

*Independent Senior Housing:* There are 14 independent senior apartments at the Senior Center in St. Paul. The Senior Center in Unalaska has 15 independent apartments.

*PCA:* DSDS worked with Eastern Aleutian Tribes on developing their new consumer directed personal care program that became operational in July 2003, and is currently working with Aleutian Pribilof Island Association to begin offering consumer directed personal care services in their service area.

*HCB:* There is a senior center in Unalaska receiving Title III funding and providing meals and transportation for elders. APIA receives Title VI funding to provide monthly food boxes to elders in the region. APIA recently received a grant from IHS to assist with the development of reimbursable long-term care services. DSDS is collaborating with APIA on this project, which will include a needs assessment by village and the development of services according to individual community need. The program will include applicable Medicaid waiver services.

### **Kodiak**

*Nursing Home:* 19 nursing home beds, 6 swing beds in Kodiak.

*Assisted Living:* In 2002, Bayview Terrace Independent Apartments converted twenty apartments to assisted living by adding services. Their occupancy averages six or seven. Congregate meals are not provided; many residents prepare their own meals in their apartments, and the rest get home-delivered meals from the senior center.

*Independent Senior Housing:* There are twenty units of independent senior housing at Bayview Terrace. In addition, Kodiak Island Housing Authority (KIHA) has a 15 unit independent senior apartment building (Heritage Heights).

*PCA:* Providence Kodiak Island Medical Center provides agency based personal care services to seniors in Kodiak. KIHA is working on developing a consumer directed

personal care program that will serve Kodiak *and* the surrounding villages. Until they are up and running, they are collaborating with Access Alaska to provide this service.

*HCB:* The Senior Citizens of Kodiak, Inc. (SCOK) provide comprehensive HCB services including adult day care, respite, congregate and home delivered meals, and caregiver support. Medicaid Waiver care coordination is offered by both SCOK and KIHA. Kodiak Area Native Association receives Title VI funding and collaborates with SCOK to provide meals in the villages.

### **Interior Region (excluding Fairbanks North Star Borough)**

*Nursing Home:* No nursing home beds, no swing beds.

*Assisted Living:* The Tanana Regional Elders' Residence is licensed to serve 14 residents, and receives an annual \$150,000 senior residential services grant from the state to subsidize operations. The use of Medicaid waivers as payment for assisted living has fluctuated over the last seven years. Average occupancy is around 6-8 residents.

*Independent Senior Housing:* Nulato has four units of independent senior housing. The Ruby Senior Log Cabins have two units. Tanana Elders Cabins have two units. Fort Yukon has four units.

*PCA:* The Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) has a well developed personal care program and provide services to all regional villages through biyearly visits to assess clients, identify workers, and provide other services. TCC works closely with Tribal governments to identify potential workers and for program support.

*HCB:* TCC offers all Medicaid waiver services including care coordination through their personal care program. They also receive a grant for respite and caregiver services. Meal and support services are provided through TCC on a subregional level through Title VI funding. There are senior centers in Tanana, Fort Yukon, and Tok that receive Title III and some Title VI funding.

### **Copper River/AHTNA Region**

*Nursing Home:* No nursing home beds, no swing beds.

*Assisted Living:* There is no assisted living in this region.

*Independent Senior Housing:* There are 12 units of independent apartments in Copper Center (Wrangell View Manor). Stanford View Manor in Gulkana has eight independent units.

*PCA:* Connecting Ties out of Valdez began providing consumer directed personal care services in early 2002. Job Ready began offering the CDPCA in September 2003.

*HCB:* Connecting Ties has an office in Glennallen providing care coordination and Medicaid waiver services including respite, chore, and environmental modifications. Job Ready recently opened an office in Glennallen and began providing similar services. The Alzheimer's Disease Resource Agency funds a caregiver support program for the region. Copper River Native Association has a Title VI grant to provide meals and transportation to eligible Native elders. Upper Tanana Development Corporation out of Tok provides meals and transportation with funding from Title III. Congregate meals are served at the Caribou restaurant.

### **Valdez/Cordova**

*Nursing Home:* Cordova Hospital has ten nursing home beds and four swing beds. Valdez Hospital has ten nursing home beds under construction, and currently has 15 swing beds.

*Assisted Living:* There is no senior assisted living in Valdez or Cordova.

*Independent Senior Housing:* There are 15 units of independent apartments at the Valdez Senior Center. 22 units of independent housing are at Sunset View in Cordova.

*PCA:* Connecting Ties, Frontier Community Services and Valdez Senior Center provide consumer directed personal care services in Valdez. Job Ready provides consumer directed services in Cordova.

*HCB:* Medicaid waiver services including care coordination are available through the above agencies and independent providers in both Valdez and Cordova. The senior center in Valdez operates a congregate and home delivered meal and transportation program under Title III. The Cordova Community Medical Center uses Title III funds to provide meals and transportation in Cordova. The Native Village of Eyak receives Title VI funding for additional meal and supportive services for Native elders.

### **Southeast**

*Nursing Home:* Juneau has 44 nursing home beds at Wildflower Court. Ketchikan General Hospital has 46 NH beds. Petersburg Medical Center has 15 NH beds. Sitka Community Hospital has 15 NH beds. Wrangell Medical Center has 14 NH beds.

*Assisted Living:* Juneau has a 48-bed Pioneer Home, Sitka has 102-bed Pioneer Home, and Ketchikan has a 47-bed Pioneer Home. There are two private licensed home in Juneau (Shattuck Manor and Salmonberry Village) for a total of 11 units. One home in Ketchikan is licensed for 11, and one is awaiting licensure for eight units. There is a small private home in Wrangell, licensed for five. The homes in Juneau are full. The one in Ketchikan usually has around six to ten residents. Wrangell has two or three residents. The City of Petersburg opened an assisted living home in March 2004, licensed for 15 units.

*Independent Senior Housing:* Angoon has 6 units. Craig has nine units. Haines has three senior complexes with 38 units. Hoonah has 12 units. Hydaburg has 12 units. Juneau has 128 units in three developments. Kake has 11 units. Ketchikan has 49 units. Klawock has 12 units. Metlakatla has 25 units. Petersburg has 24 units, with eight more in development. Saxman has 12 units. Sitka has 44 units in two developments. Wrangell has 24 units. Yakutat has 6 units.

*PCA:* Agency based personal care services are available throughout Southeast by Center for Community and additionally in Juneau by Cornerstone Home Health. Both agencies also offer consumer directed services, as does Priority Home Healthcare.

*HCB:* Medicaid waiver services including care coordination are offered by the above agencies and Southeast Senior Services (SESS). SESS operates an adult day center, transportation and congregate and home delivered meals in Juneau, as well as similar services in 11 other communities. They receive funding from Title III and Title VI for meals, transportation and supportive services. Center for Community has offices in Sitka, Juneau and Ketchikan and travels to other communities to provide respite, chore and other waiver services.

There are senior centers in the following Southeast Communities: Yakutat, Skagway, Haines, Hoonah, Juneau, Angoon, Sitka, Kake, Wrangell, Hydaburg, Ketchikan, Petersburg, and Metlakatla.

### **Kenai Peninsula**

*Nursing Home:* Heritage Place in Soldotna has 60 beds. Wesley Rehabilitation Center in Seward has 66 beds. South Peninsula Hospital in Homer has 25 beds.

*Assisted Living:* Homer has 40 units of assisted living attached to the Senior Center. They usually have 20 – 25 occupied. There are 15 small private homes scattered throughout the Peninsula in Homer, Kenai, Soldotna, Kasilof, Sterling, and Seward.

*Independent Senior Housing:* There are 24 units in Homer, 88 units in Kenai in three developments, 10 units in Ninilchik, 18 units in Seldovia, 30 units in Seward, 23 in Soldotna.

*Multi-Use Supportive Housing (MUSH):* The North Pacific Rim Housing Authority designation for triplexes in four communities that were built to provide care for elders when they could no longer remain at home. Port Graham is the first community to begin utilizing the buildings as office space for their Community Health Representative and a gathering place for elders.

*PCA:* South Peninsula Hospital and Providence Seward Home Health operate agency based personal care programs in Homer and Seward. Consumer directed services are offered throughout the region including the outlying villages by Job Ready, Access Alaska, Cookies Tender Care and Frontier Community Services.

*HCB:* Care coordination and other waiver services are available throughout the region from a variety of agencies, including all agencies mentioned above. There are adult day programs in Homer and Kenai. Transportation is available through a coordinated system in the Kenai-Soldotna area, and through the senior centers in Homer, Kenai, Seward, Soldotna, and Seward with trips to the smaller communities a number of times per week. Congregate and home delivered meals are provided through Title III at the above centers and in senior centers in Nikiski, Ninilchik, Seldovia, and Sterling. Title VI funds meals at the Kenaitze senior center and food boxes to elders in the Chugachmiut region.

### **Matanuska-Susitna Borough**

*Nursing Home:* No nursing home beds, no swing beds.

*Assisted Living:* The Pioneer Home in Palmer has 82 beds. There are 21 small homes in Wasilla and Palmer with 113 beds. Ten new units of assisted living and ten of independent are under construction at Wasilla Area Seniors, Inc.

*Independent Senior Housing:* Wasilla has 58 units. Sutton is developing five units. Palmer has 48 units. Houston has 10 units.

*PCA:* Agency based personal care services are available through Valley Health Services, based in Wasilla. Consumer direct services are offered by Center for Community, Alaska Home Care, Inc., and Job Ready.

*HCB:* Care coordination and other waiver services are offered by most of the above agencies, as well as the Palmer Senior Center, most have clients throughout the Mat-Su region as far as Sutton and Talkeetna. Palmer Senior Center also operates an adult day program. Congregate and home delivered meals are available in senior centers in Palmer, Wasilla, and Houston. The senior centers in Palmer and Wasilla are part of a Mat-Su area coordinated transportation system. There are no Title VI grantees in the Mat-su region.

### **Statewide projects to enhance the availability of HCB Services**

*Alaska Alliance for Direct Service Careers:* A multi-year project funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to increase recruitment and retention of direct service workers (DSW) in positions serving all four Trust beneficiary groups. Outcomes of this project are as follows: an annual conference for DSWs that attracts people from around the state; a leadership institute training and mentoring program for front-line supervisors; a statewide health care and human services job fair; and toolkits for recruitment and retention of workers.

*Rural Tribal PCA Workgroup:* A project through the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium to promote and ensure the quality of PCA programs in rural areas. This initiative brings together the directors of all tribally focused PCA programs to work towards providing services consistently in all rural areas of the state, and to raise awareness in communities about the importance of personal care services and employees of PCA programs.

*Functional Assessment Course:* DSDS is working with the University of Alaska, Center for Human Development on a functional assessment course that will be distance delivered to care coordinators, assisted living home operators, and direct care staff throughout Alaska.