

Community Implementation Updates

Communities and organizations across the state continue to explore internally and with partners how best to meet the behavioral health crisis and continuing care needs of their regions. Partnership, communication and shared learning are essential elements of developing robust systems for crisis and post-crisis care around the state. This Crisis Now Implementation Update highlights how each community works collaboratively to develop that robust system, as well as some opportunities for shared learning and workforce development across providers and communities.



Anchorage

In October, the **Anchorage Crisis and Connectors Workgroup** convened for the first time. This group is comprised of Anchorage Crisis Collaborative members (the core providers of behavioral health crisis services in Anchorage) plus other behavioral health providers and community stakeholders. This Workgroup brings together a wide net of providers across

the behavioral health and support services continuum to share program updates and facilitate connections between crisis service providers and providers that offer services and supports following a crisis. Many of these stakeholders came together during the initial community planning meetings in 2019 and 2020 but had not been engaged as a group again since that time. The group discussed gaps in continuing care resources as identified by the Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) and existing crisis providers. Key gaps were discussed in the following areas: residential and inpatient withdrawal management, Assertive Community Treatment and Intensive Case Management teams, ongoing outpatient appointments and care coordinators or navigators to help individuals access needed services. Twenty-six individuals representing 17 organizations participated in the first convening. The Workgroup will meet on a quarterly basis, with the next meeting to be held in mid-January. To learn more or get involved, contact Becky Bitzer at becky@agnewbeck.com.

Juneau






In early October, members of the Juneau community participated in a two-day site visit to Phoenix, AZ to see components of the Crisis Now framework in action. Participants included 16 people representing the City and Borough of Juneau, the Police Department, Dispatch, Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc. (JAMHI), Bartlett Regional Hospital, SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC), Capital City Fire and Rescue, the State of Alaska, and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority. Day one began at RI International with a presentation on Crisis Now and the positive outcomes of the framework in Arizona. After touring RI International's 23-hour stabilization and short-term stabilization facilities, the team traveled to Solari to learn more about the region's call center. The second day began with a presentation from La Frontera EMPACT about MCTs. In-depth round-robin discussions followed the presentation, with Juneau team members sharing impressions from the site visit, including inspirations and concerns, lessons learned, current community gaps, and visions for meeting Juneau's behavioral health crisis needs. This team and other community partners in Juneau will convene in December to kick off a Crisis Now Workgroup.



Juneau Site Visit to Arizona: Trip debrief



True North Recovery, Inc.

Crisis and Pre-Treatment Programs	
	Lazarus Collaborative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffed by Collaborative Care Coordinators who support navigation to needed services • Connections to network of participating providers • Financial and navigation support for basic needs such as medication copays, food and identification
	Mobile Crisis Response ★ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/7 clinician and peer team • Boundary: City of Wasilla, possibly extending to greater Wasilla area and Palmer • All ages
	The Launchpad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer based crisis services and navigation • 9AM – 9PM, 7 days/week • 18+
	Assessment Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated assessments • Virtual and in person • 9AM – 5PM, Monday – Friday with walk-in appointments available from 9AM – 11AM
Treatment and Recovery Programs	
	Withdrawal Management ★ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinically Managed Residential, ASAM 3.2 • Medically Monitored Inpatient, ASAM 3.7

Mat-Su

True North Recovery’s Day One Center answers the question “what does someone need right now?” by providing a variety of low barrier pre-treatment services in a central location. Assessment services and Lazarus Collaborative care coordinators are currently accessible within the Day One Center. A peer-based crisis program and residential withdrawal management expected to open in 2022, followed by mobile crisis and medically monitored withdrawal management in 2023.



True North Recovery’s Day One Center Program Launch

In November, the Trust Board of Trustees approved funding to support the launch of two new programs to be operated out of True North’s Day One Center. Funds will help support operational start-up for a new withdrawal management program called Dylan’s Place (\$255,000) and implement Mat-Su’s first 24/7 MCT (\$499,591).

Ketchikan

Building the peer-support workforce: The Ketchikan Wellness Coalition sponsored a week-long peer-support specialist training in Ketchikan. Jenifer Galvan, Lead Peer Support Professional and Trainer with Alaska Behavioral Health also spoke at the Ketchikan Crisis Now kick-off event and shared how to incorporate and maximize the use of peers into service provision.

Making the case: The Ketchikan Crisis Now Community Coordinator presented on the Crisis Now framework and Ketchikan’s movement towards new behavioral health services to the City Council and Borough Assembly. Both bodies acknowledged the need for additional services and supports to address behavioral health crisis.

Kicking off community planning: The Ketchikan Crisis Now Community Workgroup kicked off with an in-person event in mid-November. At the kick-off, community stakeholders learned about the challenges and successes of other Alaska communities that have implemented parts of the Crisis Now framework and heard from the Ketchikan Fire Department regarding their plans to develop a Mobile Integrated Health Team which will incorporate a behavioral health response.

Fairbanks

The Fairbanks MCT completed a full year of 24/7 operations at the end of October. During the first year of operations, 283 Alaska Mental Health Trust beneficiaries received services from the hard work and collaboration of MCT staff from The Bridge, True North Recovery, and Alaska Behavioral Health. Alaska Behavioral Health began full operation of MCT in October 2022, employing both the mental health clinicians and peer support specialists. The Fairbanks Emergency Communications Center received 708 MCT calls during the first year and the MCT was able to divert 78% of the calls from further involvement of law enforcement, other first responders, and the hospital. After a successful partnership with the Fairbanks Police Department for over a year, the MCT is ready to expand beyond the Fairbanks city limits and is collaborating with the Alaska State Troopers to reach a wider circle of people in need. In November, the Trust Board of Trustees approved \$800,000 to support continued operation of the MCT.

The Refine Stabilization Center operated by Restore, Inc. is seeing multiple clients in distress daily. They are filling the gap Fairbanks is experiencing in the lack of shelter options and warming centers by offering stabilization and detox services in downtown Fairbanks.

To learn more about community implementation efforts or to get involved, contact:

Anchorage, Juneau + Statewide Coordination: Becky Bitzer | becky@agnewbeck.com

Fairbanks Coordination: Brenda McFarlane | BMcfarlane@fairbanks.us | www.fairbanksalaska.us/crisis

Mat-Su Coordination: Melissa Toffolon | mt@actionabledataconsulting.com

Ketchikan Coordination: Lisa DeLaet | lisa@ktnkwc.org

Training and Workforce Development

University of Alaska Anchorage Simulation Center Launch

The Peer-Centered Crisis Response Workforce training is ready to launch! The College of Health and Simulation Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage have come together to create simulation training to provide Peer Support Specialists (PSS) an opportunity to experience working in a call center, on a mobile crisis team, and in a living room model 23-hour stabilization center. Using the Simulation Lab, PSSs can receive safe practice opportunities paired with clinicians and other responders in various crisis scenarios. A successful pilot of the training occurred in June. Since then, stakeholder feedback and edits were made to the training. The training is ready, and outreach is underway to determine interest in participating in the first session. An announcement will be generated in December regarding spring training dates and opportunities for Peer-Centered Crisis Response training. For more information, contact Jill Ramsey, jdramsey2@alaska.edu.

In case you missed it...

Presentations from the Trust's Improving Lives Conference are available on the conference [website](#). Thea Agnew Bemben with Agnew::Beck Consulting facilitated a plenary panel on Transforming Behavioral Health Crisis Response in Alaska. Panelists included: Karl Soderstrom, True North Recovery; Jacob Butcher, Mat-Com; Renee Rafferty, Providence Alaska; and Michelle Baker, Southcentral Foundation.

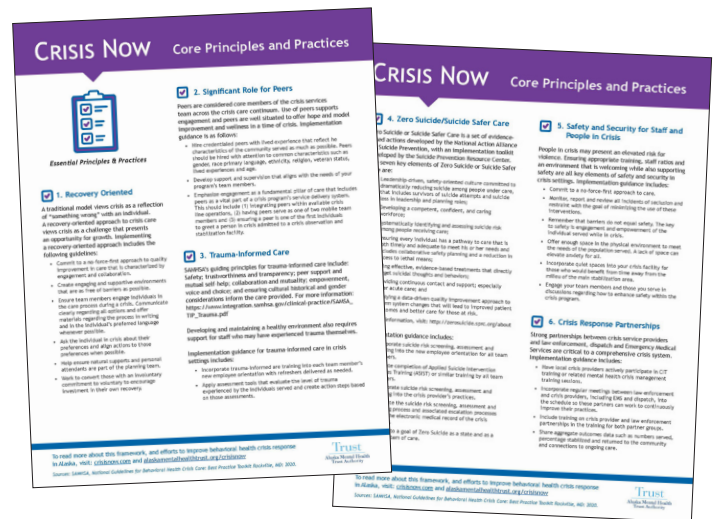
Behavioral health crisis related presentations included:

- Expanding Alaska's Mental Health Crisis and Suicide Care Practices
- Addressing the Continuum of Adolescent Behavioral Health Care in Alaska
- Improving Behavioral Health and Crisis Response via Community Care Coordination

Crisis Now Core Principles and Practices Webinars

In November, RI International provided first in a series of webinars dedicated to implementation of the Crisis Now Core Principles and Practices as documented in SAMHSA's National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care. The first addressed Core Principle 2 – Significant Role for Peers. Lisa St. George, Vice President of Peer Support and Empowerment for RI International provided an overview of RI's "peer powered" crisis services and share how peer integration is foundational to the "RI Way". The webinar recording can be accessed [here](#).

The next webinar will be held on January 19th on the topic of creating recovery-oriented environments. To be added to the invitation for this or future webinars, please contact Megan Carlson at megan@agnewbeck.com.



To read more about the framework and efforts to improve behavioral health crisis response in Alaska, visit: alaskamentalhealthtrust.org/crisisnow or contact Eric Boyer, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, (907) 269-7912 or eric.boyer@alaska.gov.

Core Principles & Practices

1. Recovery Oriented
2. Significant Role for Peers
3. Trauma-Informed Care
4. Zero Suicide/Suicide Safer Care
5. Safety and Security for Staff and People in Crisis
6. Crisis Response Partnerships