



Alaska's Healthcare Workforce Needs

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April 21, 2009

Industry Issues:

- Projected Average Industry Growth from 2006 to 2016 in AK: 14%
 - Healthcare and Social Assistance Fields: 24%
 - (# 2 below scientific and technical arena's)

 - Estimates are that this Field will add 9 thousand jobs during this time, out performing the average by 25% in total new jobs.

 - Practitioners and Technical support jobs are projected to increase by almost 6 thousand jobs and Healthcare Support workers by 3 thousand.

 - Source: Alaska Economic Trends, January, 2009
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Fastest Growing Occupations in the Field (related to behavioral health as well):

- | ■ <u>Openings</u> | <u>Percent</u> | <u>Projected</u> |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| □ Data Communications | 46.1% | 140 |
| □ Substance/ Mental Health Social Workers | 36.2% | 210 |
| □ Aides and Orderlies | 35.5% | 860 |
| □ Pharmacists | 33.7% | 150 |
| □ Mental Health Counselors | 32.0% | 140 |
| □ Registered nurses | 31.4% | 2,310 |
| □ Recreational Therapists | 30.5% | 60 |
| □ Substance Abuse Counselors | 23.5% | 180 |
| □ Occupational Therapists | 19.1% | 70 |
- Mr. Parrish pointed out; current Vacancy Rates in Behavioral Health are at 8% in the Anchorage/Mat-Su area and in double digits in the rest of the state. Hospital employees make up 40% of all health care employment in Alaska.
 - Source: Alaska Economic Trends, January, 2009; February, 2008

Continued Evidence of Behavioral Health Need

- -Alaska will face a 47.3% increase in the need for behavioral health professionals by 2010.
- -While UA enrollment in behavioral health field is trending back to over 15.5% between 2001-2003, it will not meet demand with graduates averaging 300 a year since 1998.
- -The good news is that enrollment trends in behavioral health tend to mirror overall admission trends, thus the more students enter college, the more students will likely enter the field.
- Source: University of Alaska Behavioral Health Programs, Behavioral Health Alliance, UA Statewide Health Programs, August, 2007

NAMI Report Card on Adult Mental Health: 2009

- -Alaska received a grade of “D” from the National Alliance on Mental Illness related to Adult Mental Health
- - Health promotion and Measurement (D) {Prevention & Outcome}
- - Financing core Treatment/ Recovery Services (C) {Reimbursement / Parity}
- - Consumer and Social Inclusion (F) {Community Programs / Diversion, Reentry}
- * The National average was a grade of “D.”
- Source: Grading the States 2009: A Report Card of America’s Healthcare System for Adults with Serious Mental Health Issues

Primary Community Concerns:

- -Healthcare related jobs are essential to Community Health. One in four Americans experience mental illness at some point in their lives.
- -ER's and Specialty Services are essential for Alaska's Health Status. Twice as many individuals are diagnosed with schizophrenia than with HIV/AIDS.
- -Prevention efforts continue to grow. This would allow a continued increase in wellness areas versus an illness focus, which is directly related to recruitment.
- -Healthcare is not only necessary, but is a large economic engine in the community (with a payroll of over a billion dollars.) Further, it is also a large federal tax base and creates ancillary occupations (transportation, educators, building projects, etc...).

Benefits of Behavioral Health Employment:

- -Healthcare is an altruistic service, driven with a clear purpose.
 - -In general, Healthcare fields are relatively more stable than general occupations. Healthcare in Alaska has grown at 45% from 2000 to 2007 vs. the US at 19% (Alaska Economic Trends, February 2008).
 - -In general, Healthcare fields allow a great deal of mobility with a growing population (state to state, etc...).
 - -A great deal of variety exists: populations (youth and aging), settings (inpatient/ outpatient, government, advocacy, leadership, etc...), specialties (geriatric psychology, neuropsychology, sociology, school psychologists, developmental psychology, etc...).
 - -Many people enter the field to expand their knowledge of personal health/ growth.
 - -Employment options: self employment, employee status, contract arrangements.
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- **Hope for the Future: Additional Reasons for Expanding into Healthcare**
 - 4.) The Anchorage School District has a proven history of success. The Alaska Construction Academy has grown exponentially and provides a model of proven success.
 - 3.) The need has been clearly defined. The UA has noted that while enrollment in Behavioral Health fields is up 8.2% since 1998, at 300 graduates a year, this falls well short of demand. Since 1998, degrees awarded have dropped 16.1%.
 - 2.) Mr. Parrish, Mr. Lamb and myself are moving closer to retirement each day.
 - 1.) I need someone competent to take care of me and feed me Jell-O.
 - Source: University of Alaska Behavioral Health Programs, Behavioral Health Alliance, UA Statewide Health Programs, August, 2007
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