



# AADD ALASKA

## February 2021

### Amanda Faulkner, AADD President

March will be here shortly and is Disability Awareness Month. Here is the history of disability services in Alaska.

- Prior to statehood in 1959, there were few services available for individuals who experienced mental illness or developmental disabilities. At the time mental illness was considered a **crime** and those unable to care for themselves (or by a family member or guardian) were charged and convicted as “an insane person at large.” Those convicted of this crime were sent to live in Morningside Hospital in Oregon. By 1942, more than 2,000 people from Alaska, including very young children, lived there. To learn more about this visit [Morningsidehospital.com](http://Morningsidehospital.com).
- During Alaska’s transition to a state, Congress passed the [Alaska Mental Health Enabling Act of 1956](#) to bring these individuals home, transferring the responsibility to the state by creating the Alaska Mental Health Trust. The state selected one million prime acres of land to generate income to help pay for a comprehensive and integrated mental health program in Alaska.
- In the 1960s, Geraldo Rivera and Dr. Burton Blatt brought national attention to a growing epidemic of abuse and neglect inherent in many U.S. institutions. The federal government responded by offering states a calculated federal percentage/share of funding (FMAP) for participating in the ICF/MR Medicaid program.
- In 1961 the State of Alaska opened Harborview Developmental Center in Valdez with 50 beds for people then labelled “mentally retarded and ambulatory.” It was rebuilt after the 1964 earthquake for an average maximum capacity of 120. It was the only public residential facility in the State of Alaska.
- In 1987 President Ronald Reagan proclaimed March “Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.” The deinstitutionalization movement of the seventies and early eighties had laid the foundation for significant social change, and the presidential proclamation called upon Americans to provide the “encouragement and opportunities” necessary for people with developmental disabilities to reach their potential.
- Prior to 1991, the federal government only paid for services if an eligible individual lived in an institution. With the creation of the Home and Community Based (HCB) Waiver program, states were now allowed to “waive” institutional funding in favor of community services.
- This milestone was followed by the state’s closure of Harborview Developmental Center in 1996.

A quarter century after the establishment of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, the world has changed in important ways. In the coming years, we’ll need to advocate not only for more advances but to retain the accomplishments of past decades.

### SDS UPDATE

Heather Chord, IDD Unit Manager, shared the numbers:

- ⇒ 820 on the DRR (waitlist)
- ⇒ 325 need re-applications
- ⇒ 20 IDD waivers drawn
- ⇒ 472 ISW’s actualized or in process
- ⇒ 76 ISW waivers draw
- ⇒ 2060 IDD waivers total
- ⇒ 214 CCMC waivers total

Alaska’s Public Health Emergency has expired. Michigan is the only other state without one.

Appendix K—The flexibilities of Appendix K remain in place as the Department of Law has determined that Appendix K is dependent on the Federal Public Health Emergency that has been extended to the end of the calendar year. Alaska has applied for a 6-month extension after the Health Emergency is ended.

Vaccines— Post vaccination visitation guidelines rest on providers shoulders. State guidelines support visitation once 80% of residents and staff are vaccinated.

EVV for IDD providers not on SDS’s radar for foreseeable future.

Family Habilitation alignment with CMS requirements is being worked on with HCBS strategies in weekly meetings. HCBS is working on a white paper to clarify next steps that will hopefully be released in the next month.

Companion Services—SDS agrees they would be beneficial but are currently on the backburner with the pandemic.

## LEADERSHIP CONSORTIUM

Congratulation to the 37 successful applicants to the Leadership Consortium Training. It will take place between April 14th and May 7th.

## AADD's 2021 strategic priorities include Shared Vision

The AADD board of directors met in January to identify AADD's 2021 priorities. AADD's plan has three goals, the first being "Implementation Strategies for the Shared Vision." This year's strategies include:

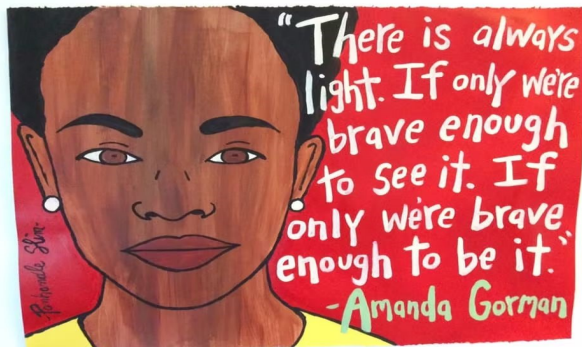
- Advocate for flexibility and simplicity in the service system.
- Educate members and partners about the Shared Vision.
- Promote recipient advocacy.

The plan's two additional goals: 1) Develop a professional workforce and 2) Enhance members' readiness for system changes. The plan is available on AADD's website.

## DSPHire App and Marketing Campaign

DSPHire continues its development toward a mobile app. Jake Carpenter, now working full-time on the app has also hired a full time programmer. The DSPHire app is now featured on the ANCOR website for Alaska.

Marketing of the two ads developed by Northwest Strategies continues thanks to a Trust grant for marketing and the DSP Hire App development also containing marketing funds. If you have suggestions about how to make DSP Hire better, send your input to [jake@appcare.ai](mailto:jake@appcare.ai).



### CALENDAR

March 1—5, 2021	Key Campaign
March 11, 2021	AADD monthly meeting
March 18, 2021	CFO at 8:30 Compliance at 10:00
March 25, 2021	Hot Topics—to be determined
April 12—14, 2021	Full Lives Conference

## Public Comment on Waiver Renewal Application

A small AADD taskforce worked on the 200-page waiver renewal application and developed significant comments including disappointment with the lack of stronger alignment with the Shared Vision. Multiple wording recommendations were made. An executive summary included 10 recommendations including:

- ⇒ Significant concern with 4% reduction of Alaskans served by IDD waivers from 2017 –2021 and increased waitlist numbers
- ⇒ Need for group semi-independent Living billing code ( not just single individuals)
- ⇒ Maintain remote visits for Care Coordination
- ⇒ Continue to allow technology to decrease staffing levels
- ⇒ Daily respite available outside of licensed homes
- ⇒ Add Companion Services
- ⇒ Flexibility on Day Habilitation utilization
- ⇒ Environmental Mods don't cover costs
- ⇒ In home supports for under age 18 in rural areas needs to include family member providers

For a copy of the entire document email: [director@aaddalaska.org](mailto:director@aaddalaska.org)

## TECHNOLOGY CAPACITY BUILDING

Deadline for applying for devices related to remote supports through the Technology Capacity Building grant is March 15, 2021. Caryn Brunello, with the Arc of Anchorage is hosting the following:

*February 5th –Impact of Remote Supports from Guardian/Care Coordinator View*

*February 19—A day in the life of a DSP*

Applications for devices are available on the AADD website or by request: [kim@champneyconsulting.com](mailto:kim@champneyconsulting.com)

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