

North Slope Borough
Department of Health and Social Services
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Muriel K. Brower, MPA, MPH, Director

To: Honorable Mayor Elizabeth A. Toovak
City of Utqiagvik

From: Muriel Brower, Director
Department of Health and Social Services

Date: January 5, 2023

SUBJECT: Monthly Status Report

The Veterinarian Clinic continues to deliver services to the residents of the North Slope Borough. The office held a spay and neuter clinic with the Alaska SPCA at the end of November 2022 completing 20 different procedures. The program completed 12 rabies vaccines, responded to 12 loose dog calls, completed 55 appointments and impounded 12 animals. The VET Clinic can be contacted by calling 907-852-0277.

Children and Youth Services is an emergency shelter for children that focuses on family reunification while providing in-house visits and accommodating day passes for families to visit. CYS staff continue to accompany clients to community wide events in Utqiagvik, these events have been focused on the Inupiaq culture and the importance of contributing to a strong framework that includes identity and resilience. Staff attended two different conferences that focused on the topic of fetal alcohol spectrum; staff received training on technical assistance in providing behavioral rehabilitation services. CYS has a total of 14 beds available for the emergency placement of children from entities including Native Village of Barrow and State of Alaska OCS. CYS can be contacted by calling 907-0263.

The **Emergency Shelter** provides cots for those who do not have a place to sleep for that night. Clients must fill out an intake packet with NSB Integrated Behavioral Health program; they must also exit the shelter during the daytime working hours to look for employment, search for permanent housing, and attend appointments. The shelter has provided a place that is structured and has had many clients exit out of the shelter because they have found housing and jobs. The Emergency Shelter staff are actively building professional relationships with local and off slope entities to address case management needs and provide a safe therapeutic environment for clients. There is a total of 12 rooms of which 9 are occupied. The Emergency Shelter can be contacted by calling 907-852-0436.

Integrated Behavioral Health works with clients to receive substance and behavioral health assistance. Clients who have substance misuse disorders are eligible to receive inpatient treatment at Lakeside Milam in Seattle, Washington, or Native American Connections in Phoenix, Arizona. IBH staff process applications

for substance abuse and mental health conditions. IBH contract with two Psychiatrists to provide mental health oversight of medications and case management. Staff are developing a schedule of travel throughout the North Slope for the Spring of 2023.

The IBH program can be accessed in several ways:

- Walk in at 5200 Karluk Street, Barrow, Alaska from 8:30am-12pm and 1pm-5pm
- By Calling 907-852-0366 from 8:30am-12pm and 1pm-5pm
- After hours, weekend, and holidays: through the Samuel Simmonds Memorial Hospital Emergency Room or through your local village clinic

Arctic Women in Crisis (AWIC)- continues to serve the North Slope by providing an inclusive shelter for women, elders and children who are survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. AWIC staff provides shelter, a 24-hour crisis line, education, counseling, legal and medical advocacy. Staff provided bags of food for village participants and OCS referrals, diapers and hygiene products to community members. AWIC helps provide emergency travel for families in need of services. Staff provided information to Safe Home Providers about healthy relationships and ways to foster self-esteem. If you would like to know more information on safe homes and how to become a safe home, please contact AWIC at 907-852-0261.

The Senior Program for the North Slope Elders is a program for anyone 60 and older. The Senior Program provides van services in Utqiagvik and our outlined North Slope villages. The services run 7 days a week and limited services on special events. The senior elders may call in and request to be transported to events, the airport, for meals, and other destinations. Please call 907-852-0276 for an application and more information on the Senior Program.

Public Health Nursing The Pfizer vaccine (pediatric and bivalent) is available for anybody ages 6 months and older. Call 907-852-0270 to make your appointment today!

Flu season is upon us, please take precautions to prevent yourself from getting sick. The flu vaccine is available on a walk-in basis. The staff have traveled around the North Slope this fall to deliver childhood immunizations, infant health screenings, well child checks and healthy lifestyle screening and counseling. PHN staff provide flu and COVID booster vaccines to homebound elders on an as needed basis, the staff also continue to enter in all COVID vaccination data into the RPMS system.

Women, Infant, & Children (WIC) is a supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children 5 years and younger. WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support and education and healthy foods to eligible participants. The WIC program provides eligible participants with an E-WIC card which makes it easier for clients to receive benefits. WIC completed travel to all North Slope communities twice in 2022, quyanaq WIC Staff for your outreach efforts! The WIC staff encourages everybody who is eligible to apply, call 907-852-0410 for more information.

Community Health Aide Program (CHAP) provides health care services to villages of the North Slope through the medical oversight of Samuel Simmonds Memorial Hospital/ASNA contract. Staff train with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Samuel Simmonds Memorial Hospital, Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, and with many agencies to ensure services can be provided in our local villages. Referrals are made for substance abuse, mental health, public health nursing, dental care, eye care, victim assistance, and other supportive services.

Other Activities:

Director Brower, Deputy Directors Watson and Valenzuela, and Assistant to the Director Donovan will be attending the 2023 Alaska Public Health Association Health Summit in Anchorage from January 23-28. Director Brower and Deputy Director Valenzuela were chosen to present an abstract regarding Healthy Ways, the SOA grant funded program Health Department engaged in throughout 2021 and 2022.

The NSB Health Department is working with NSB IBH staff and local community members to discuss the topic of death, dying, grief, and loss from an Inupiaq perspective. This two-day training will take place in January and will greatly benefit the providers when responding to crisis situations as requested by family or community members. NVB and ASNA have been invited to participate.