

Partnerships

Animal Care and Control

Animal Care and Control provided \$10,000 in seed money to the Alaska SPCA for their mobile Fix-a-Feline program. Using a mobile spay/neuter facility (a converted motor home outfitted with a veterinarian clinic area), SPCA visited multiple areas of town, including Eagle River and Girdwood, providing low-cost spay/neuter services. The program took off on its own via word of mouth and the clinic was quickly booked to capacity for the entire summer. Funding came from public donations to a special Animal Control account set aside for animal services. As a result of our grant, SPCA received a matching grant of \$2,500 from a local non-profit to expand the program. By the end of the summer, over 300 cats had been spayed or neutered, having the potential impact of reducing Anchorage's stray cat population by tens of thousands over the lifetimes of those cats. This helps keep our neighborhoods clean and our pets healthy.

Grants and Contracts

Grants and Contracts facilitated the transition of a key public health and public safety program from DHHS to a community partner. The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) in Anchorage is comprised of sexual assault nurse examiners, detectives, and victim advocates, providing victims of sexual assault a coordinated care program. DHHS nurse examiners moved to the new Providence Multidisciplinary Center along with other SART members, and became part of the Providence Health System. Now, the detectives, victim advocates, and nurses all work in the same building, with easy communication and access to each other, as sexual assault victims are cared for and investigations proceed. Managing the transition of a city-operated program to a local non-profit involved the coordination of many moving parts. While our work is usually "out of sight and out of mind," it was essential to this major project that has led to increased sexual assault prosecutions and better care for victims.

People

- ◇ 851 women received life-saving Breast and Cervical Health Checks vital for early detection and treatment of breast and cervical cancers.
- ◇ We ensured your safe dining experience by performing 2,779 restaurant inspections.
- ◇ Animal Care & Control found new homes for 3,513 pets.
- ◇ 2,838 families received help with childcare, allowing parents to work or attend school.
- ◇ Our Plug@20 Campaign reduced 530 lbs of carbon monoxide a day all winter long.
- ◇ 185 new burials joined the 9,700 people already in our care at the Cemetery.
- ◇ We trained 72 student health care professionals in our clinics.
- ◇ Working with police and prosecutors, we helped protect 2,579 victims of domestic violence by increasing arrests of violators of bail conditions by 13%, while reducing unlawful contacts between defendants and their victims by 40%.
- ◇ 1,121 people were screened for tuberculosis; 62 required and received treatment.
- ◇ We made sure your children will be safe and secure in daycare by licensing 111 child care centers and 207 child care homes.

Words from Our Director

Our Numbers:

Revenues:

- \$3,958,790

Operating Expenditures (tax supported):

- \$12,630,247

Total Grant Funding:

- \$14,800,000

Personnel:

- 174



"It is my great pleasure to serve as the Director of the Anchorage Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Three key words sum up the core functions of our department: Prevent, Promote, Protect. DHHS engages in a wide variety of programs and strategies

to keep you healthy by preventing communicable disease and keep you safe by preventing domestic violence and sexual assault. We promote better health and social outcomes through efforts around obesity, aging and disability resource services, and early childhood and family nutrition. We make sure the air you breathe is clean, the meals you eat in restaurants won't make you sick, and your children will be safe at daycare. Most of our programs and activities do not fall into just one category, often working toward all three functions of prevention, promotion, and protection. DHHS is dedicated to the health and well being of our Anchorage Community, and I hope that you will find this publication a helpful insight into our department.

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Municipality of Anchorage Department of Health and Human Services

Highlights to the Community 2008



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Prevent

Air Quality

The Air Quality program works to reduce pollution and improve the air we breathe. Our Plug@20 public awareness campaign is an innovative program promoting reduced vehicle emissions through the use of engine block heaters. Emissions from starting and idling cold engines prior to the work commute negatively impact winter air in our neighborhoods. Block heater use allows engines to start much more cleanly, reducing carbon monoxide and air toxins. We organize public distributions of free mechanical timers for use with block heaters to increase convenience and reduce the cost of electricity for plugging in. We also sponsor the annual Anchorage Bike to Work Day. In 2008, more than 900 riders registered as part of 112 work place teams, reducing the amount of carbon dioxide produced by cars and improving our air quality. The Plug@20 campaign and Bike to Work Day help keep Anchorage's air clean for residents and visitors alike.



Electronic Medical Records

The Reproductive Health Clinic (RHC) served 4,833 clients through 6,757 visits in 2008. In an effort to improve customer service for our clients, RHC and Health Information Management shifted from paper records to Electronic Medical Records (EMR). This transition greatly reduced the amount of forms and paperwork, increased the accuracy and accessibility of medical records for both providers and clients, reduced potential duplication of client information, and facilitated quality improvement and program evaluation efforts. The decreased amounts of paper, forms, labels, charts and printing services also make us more environmentally friendly. RHC is one of the first family planning clinics of its kind in the northwest region to switch to EMR. EMR helps us better provide the high quality, efficient service that you expect when you visit our clinic.

Public Health Nurses and Inspectors



Our programs often work closely with each other to respond to public health threats. Last summer's "pea outbreak" involved our public health nurses, environmental health specialists, and public information staff, as well as state agencies. Our epidemiology nurse observed an increased numbers of campylobacter case reports and immediately alerted the State Section of Epidemiology to report the outbreak. Our team rapidly came up with a game plan to collect, examine, and distribute pertinent information to our health partners.

We worked with the state to get information to the public concerning the outbreak. The investigation identified 99 cases of campylobacter associated with peas. Although the outbreak originated on a farm in the MatSu Valley and outside our jurisdiction, the peas were sold at an Anchorage farmers market, and almost half the cases of campylobacter were in the Municipality. We interviewed many members of the public who reported symptoms to determine whether they had consumed any contaminated peas. We worked with grocery managers and farmers market organizers to remove the peas in question. Our collaborative work helped identify and remove the source of the outbreak and prevented further illness.

Promote

Senior Services

"I just didn't know where to start—can you help me?" This phrase is often heard at the Aging and Disability Resource Center, a program started by the Municipality of Anchorage in 2008. The ADRC is here to collect, organize, and disseminate unbiased information about options in our community that can meet the long term care needs of consumers and their caregivers. We are working with the State of Alaska and multiple partners in the aging and disability network to assure that when someone needs help with information and assistance regarding long term care options, we have the answers. Facing the complex and often fractured world of long term care can be overwhelming and confusing, especially when you are elderly, disabled or taking care of a loved one who needs more care.

Women, Infants, and Children

The Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Food Program (WIC) serves pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding moms, their babies and young children who are at nutritional risk. We do much more than hand out food vouchers. Here is one story from the nearly 7,000 clients in the Anchorage/Eagle River area that WIC serves. We recently saw a young woman at our L Street clinic. She had less than \$5.00 to get her through the month, her family had just had their gas turned off, and they were late with rent. On top of all that, she was having difficulty breast feeding her baby. We provided food and formula vouchers and nutrition education, breastfeeding counseling, and a donated snowsuit for her baby. We walked her across the hall to get help with her gas and rent from our Human Services Safety Links program. The next week, she reported back that she had gotten her gas service restored, was working with the landlord to stay current on her rent, and the advice taken from the breastfeeding peer counselor had helped her restore her breast milk. Our assistance helped this mom take control and take care of her family.

Anchorage Memorial Park Cemetery



My name is Rob Jones. I'm the Director of the Anchorage Memorial Park Cemetery. I recently met with the family of a young woman who died after surgery. Her husband is left alone to care for their three beautiful children, all under the age of eight. He visits her grave regularly and we've developed a friendship.

He is moving out of state to be closer to family members who will help raise the kids. He said to me casually, but with tears on his cheeks, that he was thankful I would be here to watch over her grave for them. That's a powerful statement. It is a big responsibility and I'm glad I could help when he needed a hand.

Protect

Child Care Licensing



Child and Adult Care (CAC) keeps our children safe. On a daily basis, we perform health and safety inspections for childcare facilities. A recent investigation partnered us with the Office of Children's Services, the Anchorage Police Department, and the Municipal Law Offices and ultimately resulted in legal action to stop someone who was providing illegal and dangerous childcare. We recently developed a new, dynamic website that gives the public access to inspection reports and other information they need to make informed choices about childcare. We oversee 300 licensed childcare facilities to protect children and promote nurturing environments that provide opportunities for children and their families to thrive.

Food Safety

The Food Safety & Sanitation program investigated numerous foodborne illness reports and recalls in 2008, including improperly refrigerated fish that had developed a scombroid toxin that resulted in two reported illnesses and one hospital visit, and a vomiting incident at a restaurant that caused at least a dozen people to become sick from norovirus. We investigated sixty-three unique foodborne complaints, some of which involved numerous people becoming ill and likely as many illnesses prevented because of our investigations. In addition, we assisted the State of Alaska with several verification inspections for FDA recalls in 2008, including the nationwide recall of tomatoes and peppers due to salmonellosis and infant formula from China containing melamine. These special investigations, combined with our regular inspections of restaurants, food carts, and other food venues, ensure that you can enjoy a safer, healthier meal in Anchorage.

Emergency Preparedness

The Public Health Emergency Preparedness program works to protect the people of Anchorage from public health threats such as pandemic flu, bioterrorism, and other infectious disease outbreaks. We also work to ensure there is adequate shelter and medical treatment for the population in disaster events, such as earthquake. Every year we conduct mass dispensing exercises to ensure we are prepared to distribute life saving medications to every man, woman, and child in Anchorage in the event of a large biological threat. Last fall, we conducted the largest and most involved mass dispensing exercise to date using the annual flu vaccine, involving the Anchorage School District with five elementary schools, along with the entire Fire and the Police departments. In addition to ensuring our fire and police first responders receive critical medications, we recognized the importance of including the school district to ensure they are prepared and our children are protected.

