

# ASHNHA 2017 Policy Agenda



## **Alaska hospitals and nursing homes**

save lives, help heal the sick or injured and keep families together by delivering care close to home. Across the state, ASHNHA members care for their communities, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Our hospitals serve as the safety net for all residents, treating and caring for everyone regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay.

2017 is shaping up to be a critical year for health care providers and all Alaskans in terms of state and federal policy impacting healthcare.

The following are ASHNHA policy priorities for 2017:

## **Preserve access to health care and coverage for all Alaskans**

- In the face of possible federal changes, advocate for Alaska-specific solutions to provide Medicaid coverage for low-income Alaskans.
- Support federal and state policies to stabilize and strengthen the individual health insurance market.



## **Maintain hospital and nursing home financial stability by safeguarding fair reimbursement**

- Maintain Medicaid rate stability as we look at new payment models.
- Provide rebasing & inflationary increases for hospitals and nursing homes.
- Recognize the unique needs of critical access hospitals and rural long-term care facilities and protect fair reimbursement.
- Ensure payment (MMIS) and eligibility systems and processes provide timely and accurate enrollment and reimbursement.

## **Support innovative care models that work to transform payment and delivery systems**

- Implement a hospital-based project to reduce the use of unnecessary emergency department (ED) services and develop a shared savings methodology.
- Support Medicaid reform that allows provider-based organizations to perform care and disease management as an alternative to models that extract resources from the Alaska health care system.
- Explore opportunities for new models to support vulnerable critical access hospitals.
- Monitor the recommendations of the telemedicine workgroup and support efforts to expand telemedicine.
- Advocate for improved use of quality and cost data to drive improvement in the Medicaid program.

## Focus on opportunities to combat opioid abuse

- Finalize uniform statewide guidelines for prescribing narcotics in an emergency department as part of the SB74 hospital-based project to reduce use of ED services.
- Support efforts to use the prescription drug monitoring database to improve prescribing practices and reduce opioid abuse.

## Address consumer and insurance issues

- Monitor potential balance billing legislation to get the best outcome for consumers while maintaining an adequate number of providers.
- Support responsible Workers' Compensation reform that maintains access to necessary treatment but addresses the escalating costs of coverage.



## Build and maintain a strong health care workforce

- Support nursing and physician interstate licensure compacts that reduce barriers to licensure.
- Support a strong health sciences program at the University of Alaska.

## Improve the behavioral health system

- Participate in the 1115 Behavioral Health Waiver process. Encourage the state to engage in a deliberate, data-driven approach to the waiver process.
- Encourage the state to carefully consider all the impacts of a behavioral health carve out model with an Administrative Services Organization management structure.

## Support collaborative, common-sense approaches to regulating hospitals and nursing homes that help improve quality without adding regulatory burden and/or increasing costs

- Engage in conversations about the importance of Certificate of Need in addressing health care costs and the significant problems with the state's current CON program.
- Advocate for meaningful stakeholder engagement prior to the issuance of proposed regulations.
- Monitor and comment on regulations in areas impacting hospitals and nursing homes including fraud and abuse regulations, CARE act, HIE mandated reporting, licensing fees, etc.
- Maintain confidentiality of peer review.

