



ASHNHA

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WHAT IS THE ALASKA STATE HOSPITAL & NURSING HOME ASSOCIATION?

ASHNHA's mission is to advance the shared interests of Alaska's hospitals, nursing homes, and health care partners, to build an innovative, sustainable system of care for all Alaskans. Our association represents more than 65 hospitals, nursing homes, and health care organizations from communities across Alaska that employ over 10,000 Alaskans.

ASHNHA PRIORITIES

- Support stable health care capacity and access
- Advance system innovation and payment reform
- Facilitate collaborative quality improvement strategies
- Increase behavioral health services across the continuum of care
- Enhance data analysis

THE ALASKA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM: HOSPITALS AND NURSING HOMES

Alaska has 26 hospitals, which are categorized as follows: 13 critical access hospitals, 5 sole community hospitals, 3 general acute care hospitals, and 5 specialty hospitals (which include 2 military hospitals). A significant portion of Alaska's hospitals and health care facilities is run by a robust tribal health system: 8 of Alaska's 26 hospitals are tribal facilities.

Alaska's hospitals consist of approximately 1,500 acute care beds, which include about 160 intensive care unit beds. Given Alaska's geography, around 21% of these acute care beds are not accessible from the road system. Nationally, the average for acute care is 2.5 acute care beds per 1,000 people. In Alaska, setting military hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, and specialty hospitals aside, we have about 2.0 acute care beds per 1,000 Alaskans.

Additionally, Alaska has 20 nursing homes statewide, with all but 6 nursing homes being co-located with either a critical access hospital or sole community hospital. Based on this count, Alaska has the fewest nursing homes in the country with the next closest being Vermont and Wyoming, which both have close to double Alaska's capacity. Alaska has the fewest average beds per facility with 40 beds—the next lowest state is South Dakota with 62 beds. Finally, Alaska has the fewest long-term care beds in the country per 1,000 persons who are 65 and older, and no specialty long-term care facilities, such as Alzheimer's memory care or geriatric psychiatric and chemical dependency facilities.

Alaska is unique, and operating hospitals and nursing homes in this environment is challenging. Alaska is 663,268 square miles, which is one-fifth the size of the U.S. mainland, and bigger than Texas, California, and Montana combined.

THE YEAR OF COVID-19

Alaska's hospitals, nursing homes, and all health care providers have been on the frontlines in the battle against COVID-19. We weathered an economic storm early in the pandemic as facilities shut down medical care to preserve PPE and brace for a surge on the health care system. This resulted in an estimated revenue decline of \$282.8 million for Alaska's hospitals and nursing homes over four months.

From there, hospitals and nursing homes augmented critical infrastructure, developed pandemic surge plans, and implemented a variety of protocols to preserve capacity and care delivery, and pave the way for vaccine distribution. We are being tested now, more than ever before. With 150 Alaskans in the hospital with COVID-19 on a daily basis, hundreds of staff infected or in quarantine from community spread, and a stark projection for increased pressure across the health care system, Alaska's hospitals and nursing homes continue to push forward.



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