

# Department of Health & Social Services

## MISSION

*To promote and protect the health and well-being of Alaskans. AS 47.05.101*

*Priority 1. Health & Wellness Across the Lifespan*

*Priority 2. Health Care Access, Delivery & Value*

*Priority 3. Safe & Responsible Individuals, Families & Communities*

The Department of Health & Social Services (DHSS) is the largest largest department in the state's budget. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reports that this department has 3,419 full time, 48 part time, and 85 non-perm employees.

As budget items were examined, we determined that Medicaid services should be made the same as Medicare services. Currently, the State pays more than \$265 Million in twenty-seven optional services for Medicaid. Most of these Medicaid services are not available to Medicare seniors who have paid into Medicare. These seniors must pay an additional monthly premium of \$110 for Medicare outpatient care. To equate these two will solves the inequality of Medicaid/Medicare system. It is recommended that the health care provider reimbursement rates are the same for Medicaid and Medicare. Currently, in Alaska Medicaid pays a health care provider 31% more to see a Medicaid patient than Medicare would pay that provider for the same services.

We recommend eliminating the Tribal Assistance Grants, saving more than \$14 million. We recommend eliminating all DHSS grants which totaled more than \$165 million in FY2017. Granting money is a luxury and not critical to the mission of DHSS. There is no accountability, no audit trail, and no performance standards to determine if these grants are working and achieving qualitative outcomes.

