

Orchestrating the Voice of the People

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Alaska PHNs :

- Strategically positioned to influence the allocation of scarce health resources



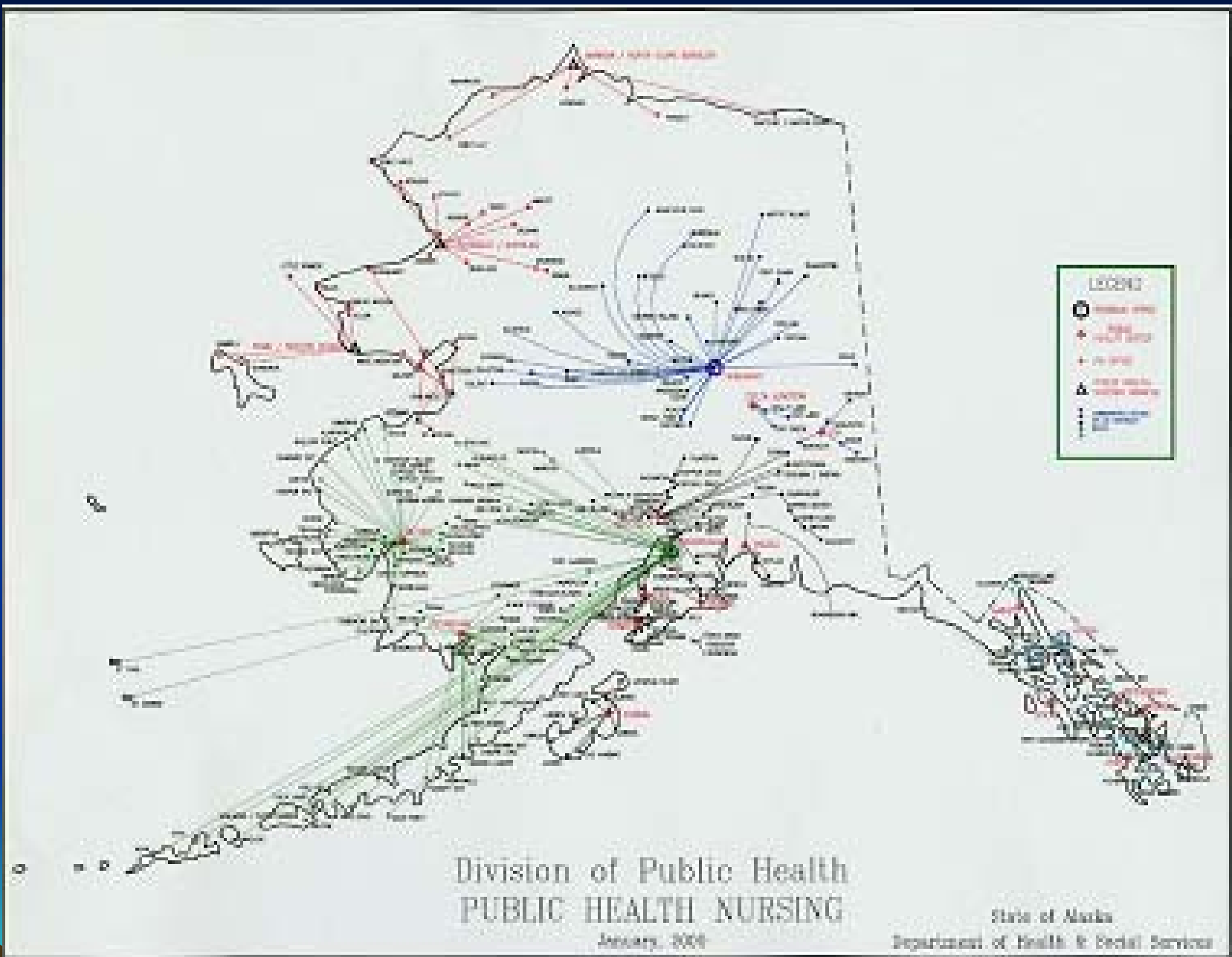
Reflection





Alaska PHNs Strategically Positioned

- Local presence for public health services in a rural/frontier state
- This presentation focuses on State of Alaska PHN employees
- PHNs form “the public health safety net” throughout Alaska



Context: Alaska PHN Services

- Health assessment,
- Health promotion and
- Disease prevention
- Interventions at individual, family, community and system levels

Categories of AKPHN Services

- Infectious Disease
- Family and Individual Health
- Violence and Injury
- Health Data Assessment
- Community Health
- Quality Assurance
- Policy Development
- Administration

AKPHN System

- Health Centers are nurse managed
- PHN Section component of Division of Public Health... ” nurse led”

PHNs Connected to People

- Many live and raise their families in the small towns
- Retention

Definition of Politics:

- Process of influencing the allocation of scarce resources
- Influencing implies that opportunities exist to alter the outcome
- Allocation is the decision-making process to divide up resources from a finite source among competing groups or individuals
- Mason, Leavitt & Chaffee (2007). *Policy & Politics in Nursing and Health Care*. St Louis: Saunders Ch 1

Resources

- Funding from both private and public sources
- Time: In this context how community members utilize their time to improve the health status of the community

Advocacy or Politics

- Advocacy
- Relationships
- Collaboration
- Community Organization



AKPHNs Transition to Population focus

- Catalyst in community:
 - Dillingham: Bike path
 - Prince of Wales: Domestic Violence
 - Bethel: STI

Local Community leaders

- School Board President (elected)
- Chairpersons Commissions, Task forces
- Turning Point Grant Community Leaders
- Now Local Emergency Planning Councils

Leaders at State Level

- PHN administration often link direct service PHNs to state level discussions re statewide program implementation (resource use)
- Perspective of PHN often invited to “the table” at local and state levels
- PHN administration participate in both Division and Dept of Health & Social services planning; grant proposals, program design and implementation (time)

Capital Funding

- PHN managers persevered in the nineties into the new millennium to gain capital funding for replacement of out-dated facilities in Ketchikan, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kenai and Bethel
- Dedicated resource of time
- Collaborated with both local and state level stakeholders

Capital funding

- Demonstrated community organization and advocacy skills
- Demonstrated political skills

Most significant role is invisible

- Facilitate people to tell their story/testify often leads to empowerment (Fairbanks Pregnant Teens)
- Community catalyst
 - Orchestrate: DenaliKid Care
 - Often take a backseat when other providers and agencies take lead (credit)
 - Outcome more resources for their communities

OK for all PHNs to

- Acknowledge political skills (it is more than advocacy)
- Utilize nursing's ongoing legacy of trust and respect
- Invest and prioritize their time and energy to influence the allocation of time and funding towards improving population health with upstream approaches

At 591,000 square miles, Alaska is as wide as the lower 48 states and larger than Texas, California and Montana combined.

