

# Streamline

Department of Health & Social Services / Rasmuson Foundation Grantee Partnership Project, Phase II

## Desired Results

As a team of professionals, realign the department and grantee's efforts toward our shared goals of providing high quality services to Alaskans efficiently and effectively.

## Overall Project Objective & Goals

The overall goal of this project is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of DHSS grant-making processes in order to:

- reduce administrative burden for DHSS while ensuring adequate fiduciary control;
- increase grantee/customer satisfaction; and,
- reduce the administrative burden for grantees to interface with the state.

### Project Co-Directors

**Bill Hogan**  
Commissioner

**Patrick Hefley**  
Deputy Commissioner



Sarah Palin  
Governor



Bill Hogan  
Commissioner

## First full year of implementation completed!

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) and its grantee partners, Rasmuson Foundation, Mental Health Trust, Mat-Su Health Foundation and the Foraker Group, have completed their first full year of developing and implementing recommendations from a study completed by Cliff Consulting, Inc., in October 2007.

### Message from Chris L. Carson Project Manager

With one full grant year under our belts, I'm very pleased with what we have accomplished. When I took over this project and completed my initial reviews of reports and recommendations, I immediately focused the majority of our efforts on the Department of Health and Social Services internal processes.

Experienced DHSS workers provided a tremendous amount of knowledge in the grant and program management field. They understood the issues the department faced when working with grantee partners and the responsibility that comes with funding public dollars while managing critical health and social services. We also understood the frustration our grantee partners had when working with multiple divisions, which had different styles and systems for managing and procuring grant services.

### Standardizing grant management styles

Developing consistency within DHSS, with eight divisions all funding grant dollars to the same grantee partners, was not going to be easy because divisions have procured and managed their programs under different styles put into place over years past.

When DHSS consolidated all grants administrators and procurement officers into the Grants and Contract Support Team, it

was clear that the department had various methods and styles of managing their grant programs. This was a serious concern for nonprofit organizations statewide, as they had to learn different sets of management and procurement styles.

The success in standardizing the administrative process for procuring grant programs made standardizing the management of grant programs department-wide the next logical step.

During the first year, our efforts to standardize how we do business focused on DHSS by collaborating with divisions and their staff. Over the past year, we developed department policy and procedures that guide all DHSS staff directly involved with the management and procurement of grant programs.

### Training

We developed Program Management Training for DHSS program managers, administrative operations managers, and grants administrators, thus identifying management standards the department as a whole will follow. Since completing our first round of training to all divisions, DHSS will continue to mandate this training to all employees. We have developed a training manual that will be given to every staff member and especially to those new to the department. The key to maintaining a standardized DHSS grant system will be continued training.

## Change is challenging to all

We all know that change can be hard to accept. However, the changes we have seen over the past 12 months have allowed the department to plan and coordinate appropriately for the future. Divisions are coordinating efforts to ensure services are available to all eligible Alaskans.

By thinking outside the box, DHSS is building grantee relations by including grantees and nongrantees in the enhancement, development, and design of programs statewide. DHSS can collaborate with its partners through public meetings and focus groups regarding the future needs and methods of providing services to the citizens of Alaska. Gathering local knowledge and concerns from grantee partners and the public is proving beneficial to DHSS as we continue to move forward. Although grantees and public members involved with collaborations will not have direct access to the program solicitation process, the information collected through these forums is valuable to DHSS for developing new grant solicitations, the mechanisms used to deliver services, and evaluating their success.

One of our biggest challenges is the move to outcomes-based programming and reporting. Over the past eight months, DHSS and the Foraker Group (funded by the Mat-Su Health Foundation) have been providing Logic Model training to DHSS staff and all interested nonprofit and for-profit organizations whose goals are in line with the support of health and or social services. This is a huge culture change for DHSS, as we have historically collected outputs (number of services provided) and not outcome, (the quality of services provided and the impact those services are having on the citizens of Alaska).

## Thank you

I personally would like to thank the Rasmuson Foundation, Mental Health Trust, Mat-Su Health Foundation, Foraker Group, members of the Internal Organization Committee, Streamlining/Grantee Relations Committee and the Steering Committee. I would also like to thank Commissioner Hogan and his senior management team for their support and willingness to allow me and others to implement recommendations from the Cliff Consulting, Inc., report, while allowing the streamline committees to cultivate new ideas and approaches to successfully develop a streamlined grant system that will have a tremendous impact for years to come.

## Moving forward

At the end of our first full year, I'm excited and ready to keep things moving forward. We have a lot of work ahead of us and will continue to improve and streamline efforts to ensure more grant funds reach the citizens who truly need our assistance.

With the Grantee Partnership Project Web page online and identifying up to date information and training opportunities,

the Streamline Newsletter will be published on a quarterly basis starting October 2009. The GPP homepage is available at <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/grantees/default.htm>.

## Looking ahead

Over the next six months, the GPP will focus on:

- Streamlining grant narrative reports by focusing on those programs that are beginning their first year of a multi-grant year, starting in 2010.
- Finalizing grantee program past performance with grantee reorganization. Our goal is evaluating and recognizing grantees' success for efforts provided in 2009.
- Providing additional Logic Model training with a "train the trainer" program and online training.
- Identifying new programs to implement logic models in support of outcome based programs.
- Providing grantee training (Doing Grant Business with DHSS).
- Creating Policy and Procedures for a Web Page Organizer to assist divisions in maintaining and keeping their Web pages up to date.
- Providing ongoing quarterly program management training
- Providing ongoing policy development
- Finishing the Events SharePoint site, which will allow the department as a whole to piggyback on other division efforts to work with partnering grantees and community collaboration.
- Identifying the cost savings to both DHSS and grantees as we continue to finalize streamlining efforts.
- As we move toward the final year of this project, we want to ensure there is a mechanism in place to keep up with changes and ensure the department acts as a whole when procuring and managing grant programs for years to come.

## Reminder

**The Streamline Newsletter will be published on a quarterly basis starting October 2009 and posted online.**

**The GPP homepage is at <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/grantees/default.htm>.**

## Keep in touch

The department would like to hear from any DHSS grantees or employees regarding the Grantee Partnership Project. Please contact Chris Carson, [chris.carson@alaska.gov](mailto:chris.carson@alaska.gov) or (907) 465-6522.

If you have any questions or comments regarding grant management within DHSS, please contact Linda Hulse, Grant Manager, at [linda.hulse@alaska.gov](mailto:linda.hulse@alaska.gov).

Reminder: you can find every issue of Streamline and the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at the following DHSS Web site: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/grantees/>.

I hope this ongoing correspondence is helpful to you. If you have questions about the department's Grantee Partnership Project, please contact me at [chris.carson@alaska.gov](mailto:chris.carson@alaska.gov) or (907) 465-6522.

Chris Carson, Project Coordinator

# Grants & Contracts Support Team

## 2-1-1 Get Connected, Get Answers

United Way of Anchorage continues to develop its 2-1-1 information system (get connected, get answers). The 2-1-1 system is an easy-to-remember telephone number, with supporting Web site, which connects callers to free information about critical health and human service resources available in their community.

The department's ongoing effort to build grantee relations and community collaboration fits well with the Alaska 2-1-1 project and believes strongly that this service will have a tremendous impact on the citizens of Alaska by helping them locate the closest and most appropriate services available to them.

We hope you will take a moment to register by calling 1-800-478-2221 or via their Web site at <http://www.alaska211.org>.

## Of special note to grantees with electronic (EDI) payment capability

Many of you may not be aware of the Electronic Payment Inquiry System. The EDI Payment Inquiry System allows vendors to view remittance information about the electronic payments vendors receive from the state of Alaska. This system is provided for the use of vendors who do business with the state, and who have requested

that payments be deposited electronically to their bank account. To access the system you will need to know the vendor number assigned to you in the Alaska Statewide Accounting System (AKSAS). You can find this number in eGrants under your Agency Profile, or you may contact your Grants Administrator directly for that information.

The Web site for logging into the Electronic Payment Inquiry System is <http://fn.admin.state.ak.us/aapvis/index.jsp> (select "Enter Payment Inquiry" button).

If you would like more information on the Electronic Payment Inquiry System, please refer to the FAQ documents posted on <http://fn.admin.state.ak.us/aapvis/faq.jsp>.

If your agency does not have electronic payment capability for funds received from the state you may sign up for this service at <http://fn.admin.state.ak.us/aapvis>.

## Important date to remember

July 30, 2009. This is the deadline for submitting your final Cumulative Fiscal Reports (CFR), revised CFRs, narrative reports and Line Item Budget Revisions (LIBR). Please also keep in mind that you may only have one report submitted through eGrants and awaiting approval at any one time. Waiting until the deadline to try to submit LIBRs, CFRs or revised CFRs could cause a conflict preventing you from submitting timely.