



## Supporting Public Health Nursing in Alaska

**WHEREAS**, Article VII Section 4 of the Alaska Constitution defines public health as a State responsibility;

**WHEREAS**, Alaska's population and geography require provision of healthcare that is culturally relevant and accessible;

**WHEREAS**, Alaska has high rates of certain infectious diseases, including:

- The highest *Chlamydia trachomatis* infection rate in the United States (771.6 cases per 100,000 population, compared to national rate of 497.3)<sup>1</sup>
- The fourth-highest rate of reported gonorrhea in the United States (196.9 cases per 100,000, compared to national rate of 145.8)<sup>2</sup>
- The second-highest incidence rate of tuberculosis in the United States (7.7 cases per 100,000 population, compared to national rate of 2.9);<sup>3</sup>

**WHEREAS**, Public Health Nurses have special training to address health needs of individual and communities and provide a service that is distinct from primary care;

**WHEREAS**, Public Health Nurses' established relationships in communities across Alaska enable responsiveness to emergent situations;

**WHEREAS**, the Section of Public Health Nursing has sustained significant budget cuts in recent years resulting in staff layoffs, closure of Public Health Centers, and reduction in services to individuals above age 29; and

**WHEREAS**, need for safety-net healthcare services remains among Alaska's poorest and most vulnerable populations;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska Public Health Association supports the full funding and support of the Section of Public Health Nursing within the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services at a level sufficient to meet the scope and standards of practice and in alignment with the needs of the state;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution shall be the position of the Alaska Public Health Association until it is withdrawn or modified by a subsequent resolution.

**FISCAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT STATEMENT:** This action will result in minor costs associated with sending this resolution to ALPHA's federal, state, tribal and local partners.

*Adopted January 16, 2018*

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2017). *2016 Sexually Transmitted Diseases Surveillance*. Table 2. Chlamydia — Reported Cases and Rates of Reported Cases by State, Ranked by Rates, United States, 2016.

<https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats16/tables/StateRankingTables.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2017). *2016 Sexually Transmitted Diseases Surveillance*. Table 13. Gonorrhea — Reported Cases and Rates of Reported Cases by State, Ranked by Rates, United States, 2016.

<https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats16/tables/13.htm>.

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2017). Tuberculosis — United States, 2016. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* 66(11); 289–294. [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6611a2.htm?s\\_cid=mm6611a2\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6611a2.htm?s_cid=mm6611a2_w).