



# **Alaska's Health Workforce:** *Collaborating to Mitigate the Crisis*

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# Key Points

- Health care is big business
- Shortages are widespread and expensive
- Itinerants are a cost to employers, and a drain to our local economies
- Collaborations are happening
- Solutions must be resourced at every level



# Big Industry

- 8% of AK's workforce (aiming over 9%) - 26,500 people
- 62% employment growth from 1992-2002, *triple all-industry growth*
- 9 of the 10 fastest growing Alaska jobs
- Continuum ranges from OJT to PhD
- Shortages exist in all 119 occupations
- Lifelong satisfying jobs in local communities



# Big Employers

- Providence Health System- Alaska's largest employer since 2001
- Five of top 20 employers are healthcare
- 24 of top 100 employers are health and social services
- Health topped \$5 billion in 2005, 1/3 the value of North Slope oil exports that year

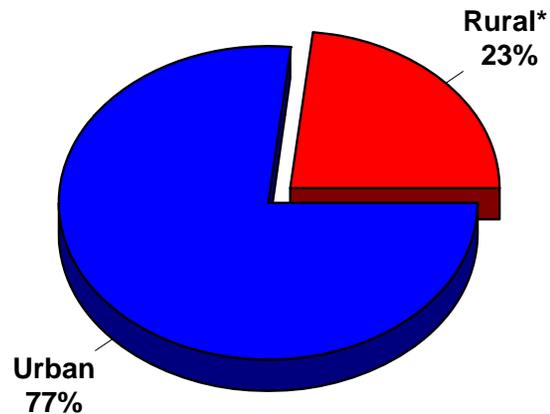
1-3 Data from Alaska Dept of Labor and Workforce Development, Research & Analysis Section

4 Data from Institute for Social and Economic Research, UAA

# Where The Health Care Workers Are

## And Many are Rural Alaska's Largest Employers

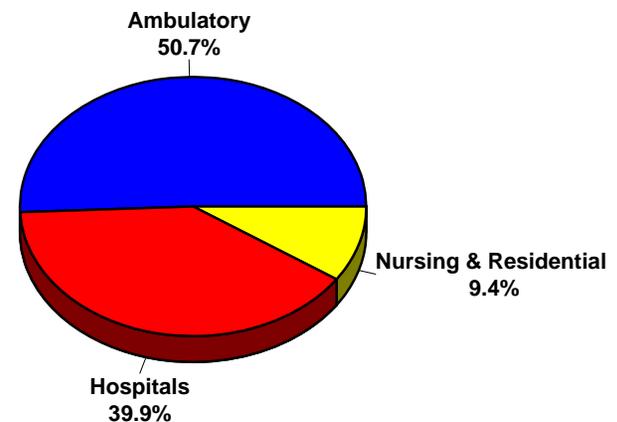
### Many Of Alaska's Health Care Workers Are Employed In Rural Alaska



\*Rural excludes Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, MatSu and Kenai Peninsula, 2006.

Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation	1097
SE Alaska Regional Health Consortium	664
Maniilaq Association	516
Norton Sound Health Corporation	420
Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation	350

### Where Alaska's Health Care Services Jobs Are-2006\*



\*Includes public sector  
Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section.

Data from Alaska Dept of Labor and Workforce Development, Research & Analysis Section

# Shortages: An Overview

Occupation Group	# Vacancies	Vacancy Rate	Mean Longest Vacancy (months)
Physicians	226	11.7%	18 months
Registered Nurses	439	8%	Two years
Behavioral Health	1033	13.9%	17 months
Allied Health	434	7.9%	11 months
Dentists	71	10.3%	19 months
Pharmacists	98	23.7%	15 months
Therapists (PT,OT, ST, SLP)	234	15-30%	Two years
Other Occupations	994		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3529</b>		



# Industry Perspective

**Itinerant providers mean dollars lost to employers, and resources not invested in local economies. In 2005, we know:**

- 80 hospitals/THOs/Mental Health Centers spent over \$11M in recruitment, \$13M in Itinerants (**\$24M total**), 16 occs
- FMH spent over \$640K in recruitment, and \$920K in Itinerants
- FMH has **saved at least \$1.5M** in nurse recruiting since local training started

Possibles: Alaska  
population 663,661

Prospects

Participants: formal  
trng or OJT

Alaska Trained  
Professionals

Active Practitioners  
AK HC Workforce  
Direct Care  
Non-Direct

Trained  
outside AK

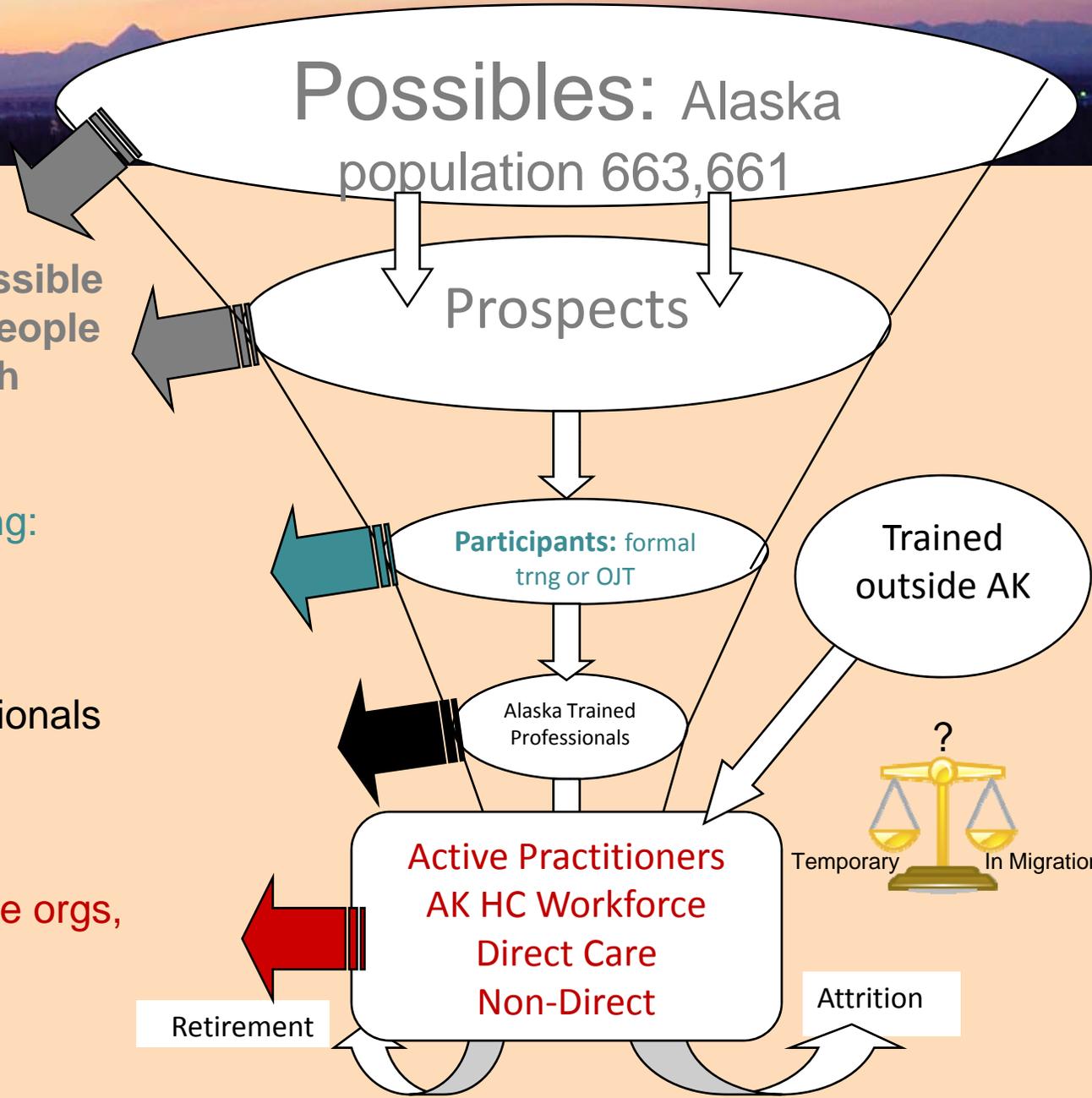
Temporary In Migration



Attrition

Retirement

- Universe of future possible health workers, and people seeking to enter health careers
- Actively in health training: 4,330 in UA system OJT (unknown)
- Alaska Trained Professionals
- 26,500 employed in health and social service orgs, mean vacancy of 10%





# What's working: UA Health Students

- University of Alaska Health Students
  - Increase of **66%** in enrollment
  - Increase of **55%** in graduates
  
  - 4,330 Students
  - 1,298 Graduates



# What's Working: Partnerships

## Funders

- AK Mental Health Trust Authority (Trust)
- Denali Commission
- State of Alaska (HSS)
- Federal Government (HHS, DoL)

## Collaborations – selected examples

- Trust Workforce Development Initiative (30)
- HSS Primary Care Council (17)
- Alaska Center for Rural Health-AHEC Board of Directors (18)

# Critical Actions: Grow Our Own

- Institutionalize a regional system to recruit and prepare K-20
- Training Cooperative
- Apprenticeships/clinical rotations
- Loan Repayment Program
- Training Plan

