

2019
COMMUNITY
IMPACT
REPORT



IT'S ALL
ABOUT
LIFE



DEAR FOUR A'S FAMILY,

The fight against HIV and AIDS takes passion, perseverance, science and hope. We are grateful for the Four A's community of donors, volunteers, clients and staff that make our work possible. In 2019, Four A's has evolved into a stronger and more connected service organization focused on our core purpose: support, empower, prevent. The future we envision for Four A's has our organization, with your engagement and support, on the leading edge of treatment for HIV/AIDS with a solid focus on prevention.

What a time to lean fully into our mission. HIV treatments continue to improve as medications become more durable, safer and many individuals experience significantly fewer side effects. Research for a functional cure for HIV/AIDS continues to make progress. On the national scale, significant efforts have been invested to normalize preventative measures like, regular condom use and utilizing preventative medications (PrEP). Additionally, very public and recognizable voices have shared their HIV positive status and stories in efforts to help fight the stigma of HIV that continues to prevent people from accessing healthcare and treatment. Today, Four A's leans fully into our mission to ensure that every person affected by HIV/AIDS in Alaska has the opportunity to live their best and fullest life.

Still, much work remains. Four A's continues to provide vital services for some of the most vulnerable Alakans. We also continue to work on ourselves with stronger accountability, deeper commitments to true partnerships, and honest evaluations of the way we work and show up for work. The upcoming year promises still more change, further expansions of service in Southeast Alaska, Kenai and the Mat-Su borough. With your support, we plan to fully invest in testing, prevention and care as the multi-phase approach that will end the spread of HIV and AIDS in our lifetime.

This annual report is a testament to what is possible with a community like ours. Thank you.

KYLE GRIFFITHS
Board President
(Left)

RACHEL MORSE
Interim Executive Director
(Right)

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
GENEROSITY
AND SUPPORT

ENDING THE HIV EPIDEMIC: EFFORTS ACROSS THE NATION AND HERE IN ALASKA.

More than 700,000 American lives have been lost to HIV since 1981. In Alaska, more than 650 individuals have lost their lives to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Today, it is estimated that more than 1.1 million Americans are currently living with HIV and many more are at risk of HIV infection. While new HIV diagnoses have declined significantly, and Alaska remains a low incidence state, the risk of resurgence still exists.

On February 5th, 2019, 'End the HIV Epidemic' became national news. The new initiative, launched by the US Department of Health and Human Services seeks to reduce the number of new HIV infections in the United States by 75 percent within five years, and then by at least 90 percent within 10 years. The efforts will focus on four key strategies that together can end the HIV epidemic in the U.S.: Diagnose, Treat, Prevent, and Respond. This initiative will leverage scientific advances in prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and outbreak response through coordination with programs, resources, and infrastructure of many agencies and offices.

Early diagnosis and treatment are critical for reducing HIV transmission. In an effort to diagnose and secure treatment all persons with HIV, Four A's plans to continue to expand testing/outreach efforts and to significantly expand our prevention programming over the coming years.

On a national level, prevention efforts will focus on utilization of proven interventions, including pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP, a daily pill which reduces the risk of getting HIV from sex, and syringe services programs (SSPs). Four A's is proud to have been operating the Four A's Syringe Access Program since May of 2007. This program is critical for mitigating disease spread, reducing the harms associated with injection drug use, and connecting individuals to community resources.

National and local efforts will respond quickly to potential HIV outbreaks utilizing prevention and treatment services for individuals at risk. Locally, Four A's works with the State of Alaska and Anchorage Health Departments to respond to immediate outbreaks and conduct targeted testing efforts.

In partnership with national, statewide and local stakeholders, Four A's is committed to ending the HIV epidemic starting right here, in Alaska.



Sonny Fabiano, Case Manager



Angela Dunn, Case Manager

CLIENT RESOURCES

Client Resources remains at the core of Four A's mission. While today we are fortunate to be managing a chronic illness as compared to a terminal condition; it remains the core of our work to support and empower individuals living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Our experienced Case Managers work with clients every day to understand how health care decisions can affect the treatment of HIV/AIDS, what resources are available, and how to access much needed supportive services. Case Managers attend a variety of doctor's appointments, housing placement meetings, supportive services appointments, and many others in order to help clients fully understand what is being said, to be an advocate for them, and to let them know that they are not fighting this disease on their own.

Currently, five Case Managers work to support and empower our clients living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Most importantly, Case Managers are working with clients to help them realize, while an individual client is HIV positive that is not an indication that they can't live a happy healthy life. Clients are encouraged to realize that; they are not HIV/AIDS but have HIV/AIDS. Today, HIV is no longer considered a disability. Clients are becoming undetectable in their viral loads; at undetectable, HIV cannot be sexually transmitted. This progress has allowed HIV positive persons to sustain healthy relationships and empowers our Case Managers and our clients to talk openly about healthy sexual behaviors/practices. Currently, 79% of Four A's HIV positive clients have reached and/or sustain an undetectable viral load.

With the assistance of our dedicated Case Managers, 33 clients-maintained housing under the two housing programs provided. Additionally, 16 clients experiencing homelessness were placed into stable housing, and 63 clients were provided housing assistance to prevent homelessness.

The direct support the Case Managers provided to the clients, gives them the tools they need to be successful in the community. The five Case Managers and ADAP coordinator come to work every day to make it a better place for each existing client and future new clients who walk through the doors. All the work the client resources program does is not successful without the relationship and partnership of pharmacies and medical offices throughout the state. It is through the communication with the doctors and that pharmacy, the Case Managers and ADAP coordinator can provide the best care for the client. This work is also not possible without the dedication and support of our generous community partners/donors. You make a difference, every day.

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

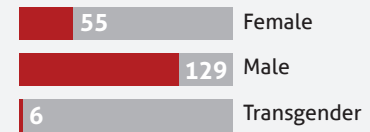
Over 15 years ago a special client came to Four A's. Over the years, he was assisted with the food bank, Friday lunches, housing, medical appointments and Case Management support. He worked numerous jobs throughout the years and struggled with on and off homelessness. For a long time, this client struggled to maintain consistent housing/employment, and often struggled with his overall health being burdened by a serious mental health diagnosis. However, he always brought laughter and smiles to the Four A's office when he came in. A joyous man filled with song would lift the spirits of Four A's staff and clients. He always said, Four A's was his family. After 15 years as a client, he passed earlier this year from causes unrelated to HIV. He is missed greatly by all who knew and loved him. Four A's clients, staff and partners grieve for our friend and will press on always holding him near our hearts.



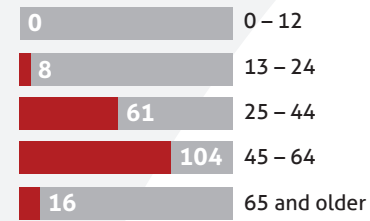
CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

BY # OF CLIENTS

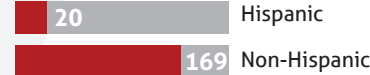
GENDER



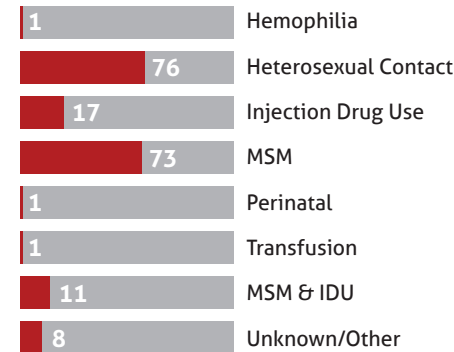
AGE



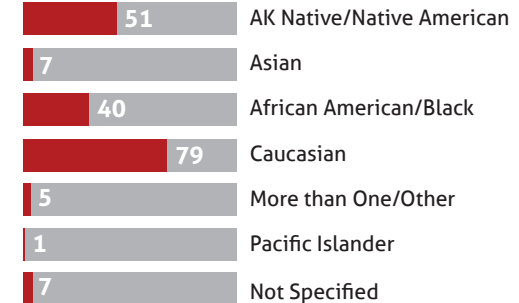
ETHNICITY



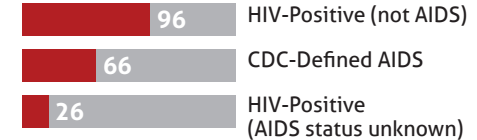
HIV RISK FACTORS



RACE



HIV STATUS



HOUSING



"I have a family at Four A's. When I got diagnosed with HIV a lot of my family and friends left. That's still hard. I'm so glad there are people that care for me, that support me, regardless of my HIV status. I'm really glad for the folks here at Four A's."
– Four A's HIV Care Client

HIV PREVENTION

Four A's believes that empowering individuals with education and choice is the key to helping limit risks, reduce harm, and eliminate stigma. While there is still a great amount of work to be done, it is through education and greater understanding that we will come to see a healthier community. Four A's continues to lead HIV prevention efforts throughout Alaskan communities such as: rapid HIV and Hepatitis C testing, statewide condom distribution, HIV prevention/education outreach and operation of the Four A's Syringe Access Program (FASAP).

It is successes like the testing of over 90 individuals at Anchorage's PrideFest that bring us satisfaction in knowing that not only are individuals seeking safer sex practices but that the stigma and fear of testing is being slowly diminished. Thanks to an increased prevention staff we've been able to increase testing opportunities at Mad Myrna's, Identity Inc, the Raven, and Pride Fest events across Alaska, such as Seward Pride. We have also been actively partnering with the State of Alaska and Anchorage Health Department to perform targeted HIV/HCV and syphilis testing throughout southcentral Alaska. This year we have significantly invested in expanding testing and outreach/education services in Juneau and throughout southeast Alaska. Over the coming year we will continue to increase our testing/education efforts in southeast.

Over the past two years we have also focused on the expansion of our syringe access program; this year we continued that expansion by partnering with service providers throughout southcentral Alaska. Four A's Syringe Access Program continues to be a crucial public health tool for reducing new HIV and Hepatitis C infections. Through FASAP individuals can get free HIV and Hepatitis C testing, syringe exchange and supplies for safe injection, risk reduction education, referrals and NARCAN. We continue to learn about better ways to serve our Alaskan communities and are thankful for the many program partners, government agencies, and individuals that support the Four A's Syringe Access Program.

As we look forward to the next year Four A's is excitedly preparing for continued growth in prevention and education efforts. We believe eliminating the HIV virus will largely come from increased education/prevention programming encapsulated in a variety of community partnerships. We look forward to greater engagement and partnerships that will move Alaska closer to eliminating the HIV virus. We look forward to working with you.

Venus Woods, Director of HIV Prevention & Education



In FY19 TOTAL NUMBER OF

- Rapid HIV tests given > **915** (Anchorage and Juneau)
- Rapid HCV tests given > **717** (Anchorage and Juneau)
- Sterile syringes given > **980,925** (Anchorage and Juneau)
- Used syringes returned > **987,304** (Anchorage and Juneau)
- Condoms distributed > **62,000+** (Statewide)

"Staff really care about you here; you don't get that much as an addict. That's one thing that makes Four A's so special, they really care."
– Four A's Prevention Client

STORY HIGHLIGHT

The story Lisa tells indirectly at every visit she makes to the syringe exchange illustrates the many difficulties a young homeless woman encounters living on the streets in Anchorage. When Lisa did an intake at the Brother Francis Shelter several months ago, staff held a discussion with her about how the syringe exchange is a first step to avoid the transmission of HIV or Hepatitis C. Lisa immediately shared she had recently recovered from endocarditis and hoped to be able to return to the rural community where she grew up, but lacked the money to get there. Homelessness appears to be a significant factor for Lisa to use drugs. She says, "it is hard not to use when other people on the street are using." Lisa said she is embarrassed and ashamed that she is continuing to inject drugs after being hospitalized for endocarditis. She said the syringe exchange is a place where she does not feel ashamed, and guilty, for being an addict. Lisa's awareness of the risks of continuing to inject drugs is high, and coming to Four A's reinforces that she is working to address those risks. Four A's staff shared their appreciation for her visiting the exchange and encouraged her to stay as safe as possible.

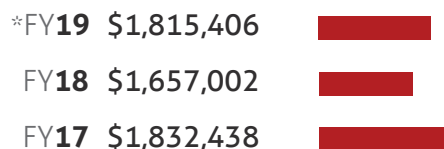


YOUR SUPPORT HELPS US

continue services, expand opportunities and build resiliency in the face of change.

FINANCIAL STATS

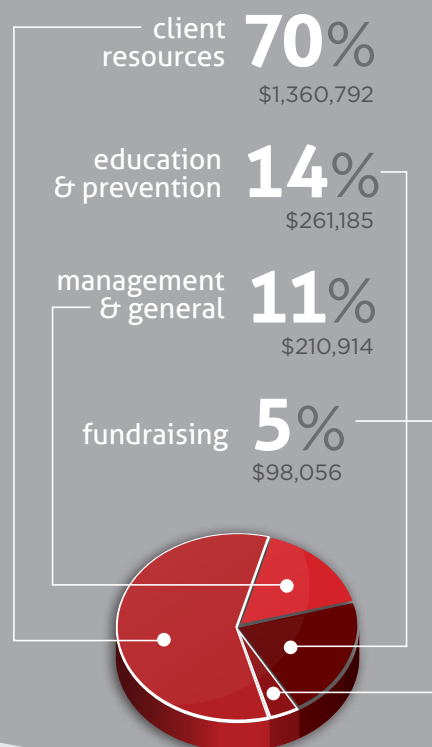
REVENUE COMPARISON



REVENUE SOURCES

	FY17	FY18	FY19
grants	1,573,271	1,371,890	1,623,129
earned income	60,220	37,460	32,829
direct giving	162,818	200,009	137,118
other	18,555	19,341	7,973
in-kind	17,344	28,302	14,357
total	1,832,208	1,657,002	1,815,406

FY19 EXPENSES



THANK YOU!

The stories of success and encouragement in these pages are possible because of you. These include the client that celebrated achieving an undetectable status, the young man that got tested for the first time at Pride Fest, the young girl that came to the exchange for the first time. These stories and greater yet, these essential services, only happen because you continue to stand with Four A's.

Though a substantial amount of funding for Four A's work comes from federally allocated sources granted through the State of Alaska, donor support plays a critical role in providing a portion of the wrap around care and harm reduction not covered by these restricted programs. This year, your support was critical for Four A's ability to weather the uncertainty of state budget cuts and governor vetoes that delayed the grant award timeline of our federally sourced funding. We continue to monitor the impacts of significant reductions in services for the most vulnerable Alaskans and prepare for what is expected to be another tumultuous start to the next fiscal year with more cuts, vetoes and delays. Your support helps us continue services, expand opportunities and build resiliency in the face of change.

This year, you made possible our expanded partnership with the State of Alaska Department of Health and Human Services and the Anchorage Health Department for testing and critical engagement of high-risk housing insecure individuals. While we are fortunate that, to date, none of these tests have yielded a positive HIV results, many individuals have been linked to critical care for positive syphilis results and more individuals are linked to supportive services. You have also made possible our renewed focus on client centered care. As the treatment of HIV has changed, we continue to readdress how we best serve our neighbors living with HIV/AIDS. Today, Four A's commits to not simply treating the disease and disease spread but to embracing the whole individual by supporting each client's efforts to live a complete and fulfilling life. Your support has also enabled Four A's to significantly readdress our work and how we achieve that work in southeast, Alaska. We continue to engage with our dedicated southeast advisory board in addressing how we can accomplish and excel at serving the southeast region.

As we look forward to the year and years to come Four A's remains deeply vested in the highest quality of care for our clients living with and affected by HIV/AIDS and looks to be continually advancing our approach to preventative services. Know that every day we hold you with us as we strive for better care, comfort and hope for all persons served. It is with passion, perseverance, science, hope, and you that we will see the end of HIV around the world and right here in Alaska. Thank you.



Four A's Case Managers



Douglas Echternacht (left), Byron Kim (right), HIV Prevention Harm Reduction Specialists

VOLUNTEER

In 2019, over 100 volunteers gave of their time and talent to Four A's. From serving on Four A's Board of Directors or the Southeast Advisory Board, to serving clients directly at lunches, events, testing and the syringe access program. Volunteers also serve as community advocates raising the profile of our mission and helping support the agency through participating on event committees, committing an egregious amount of hours to hand make corsages for Fetish Ball, acting as agency ambassadors at Dining Out For Life, assembling Narcan kits, and so much more.

A special thank you to our Board of Directors who have provided leadership and direction to the agency during this year of change and to the Southeast Advisory Board as we stabilize and expand services in Southeast Alaska.

To all our volunteers, thank you.

"I volunteer with the Four A's because I know we're making a difference! You see it every day in the lives of clients served through Case Management and especially here at the Syringe Exchange. Four A's is so important and I'm glad to be a part of it"
— Four A's Prevention Volunteer.

If you'd like to make a difference with Four A's to address the health and well-being of the people we serve, or to help end the spread of HIV and AIDS in our lifetime, please connect with Four A's staff. We welcome you.

Annie, a long-time HIV positive client of the Four A's, who has struggled with substance misuse and domestic abuse, has found stability with the support of Four A's and partner agencies like AWAIC and RurAL CAP. Annie worked with Four A's case management team to find safe housing through the Four A's rental assistance program. She is now working to maintain sobriety, taking computer classes to improve job skills, has an improved outlook and positive feelings about the future; Annie is ecstatic to be exploring options to return to work.



"I know so much more now! I feel like after testing I can be a better/ safer partner and a better community advocate. Everyone should get tested!"

— Katie, *first time HIV Testing Participant, Anchorage Pride fest*

"Four A's is somewhere I feel safe. Safe from stigma, discrimination, harassment. Without Four A's I wouldn't have anywhere to go. We're lucky to have this program."

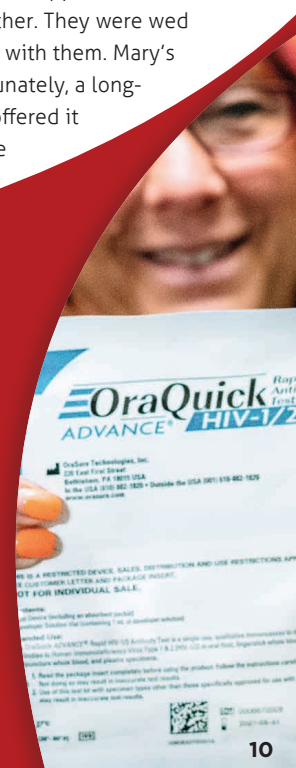
— Four A's Prevention Client

Tina & Mary are a gay couple, that for many years kept their relationship a secret from friends, family, and the whole world. Tina couched surfed with family and friends. Mary came into the Four A's program and obtained housing. As time went on, with the support of case management and Four A's staff, Tina and Mary came out as a couple together. They were wed and shared the exciting news with all the staff at Four A's who celebrated with them. Mary's living situation turned sour and the landlord appeared to target her. Fortunately, a long-time donor to the Four A's had an apartment come open. He generously offered it to a Four A's client. Tina & Mary are now living openly as a married couple and enjoying life.

CLIENT STORIES & QUOTES

James had not been to Four A's Syringe Access Program (FASAP) in several months and one day came back in. He looked much healthier, cleaner, and was practically unrecognizable compared to how he looked previously. The James that came in to Four A's was a different person! James had been through an ordeal the last few months and came out the other side a "better person and my old self". James explains to Four A's staff that he had been arrested during a sting operation; wrong place, wrong time. He spent a few months in jail where he went through detox and withdrawal from his heroin addiction. Once released, he found help from other organizations and vowed to himself and his family to never use again. One month later and James was still in recovery. His primary reason for coming to Four A's that day was to thank staff for the services we provided and because he missed staff's inviting smiles.

Sarah had never heard of Four A's until a few months ago after her adult daughter had overdosed on heroin and was hospitalized. Hospital staff encouraged Sarah and her daughter to keep Narcan on hand in case her daughter or someone else overdosed. Staff trained Sarah on how to use the medication and what to do if she witnessed an overdose. Sarah was full of questions about drug use. "I have been in denial for a very long time", Sarah admitted. She had seen the signs, but never thought her daughter would have an addiction to anything. Staff asked Sarah if she knew if her daughter injected; she was adamant that her daughter wasn't doing that. Staff encouraged Sarah to have an open, nonjudgmental conversation with her daughter about her drug use and explained FASAP in case the service was needed. Sarah left informed with referrals and two Narcan kits.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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Lovalaska
Pick. Click. Give.

Thank you to everyone who Picked, Clicked, and Gave a portion of their PFDs to Four A's in 2019. Thanks to your generosity, Four A's received a total of \$7,775. When you file for your PFD in 2019, please consider donating through Pick.Click.Give to the Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY

Photos courtesy of Jason DeHeus

COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT DESIGNED BY

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