

Grant Approval Memo



Grantee: Interior Community Health Center
Request Amount: \$20,000.00
Project Title: Interior Community Health Center Dental Grant FY27
Grant Term: 12/1/2026 to 11/30/2027
Trust Staff: Eliza Muse

Staff Analysis:

- What does this project do?
Trust funds will support Interior Community Health Center's (ICHC) delivery of general dentistry services to Trust beneficiaries in the Fairbanks North Star Borough. Trust funds will pay for dental procedures at 85% of ICHC's fee schedule rate, allowing ICHC to serve approximately 60 Trust beneficiaries at an estimated cost of \$333 per beneficiary. Services covered will include exams, films, fillings, extractions, fluoride applications, sealants for children, oral hygiene coaching, and health promotion/prevention education. The project will also provide referrals for services not offered onsite.
- Who is receiving the funds?
The grantee is Interior Community Health Center (ICHC), a Federally Qualified Health Center located in Fairbanks, Alaska. ICHC has operated a dental program for over 17 years and maintains strong partnerships with Interior behavioral health agencies.
- Why is staff recommending this project?
This project directly supports Trust beneficiaries by ensuring access to consistent preventive and restorative oral health care—especially when Medicaid dental benefits run out mid-year. Maintaining oral health homes improves overall health and quality of life and reduces long-term costs. ICHC has demonstrated strong clinical performance, community partnerships, and a longstanding commitment to serving Trust beneficiaries. Trust funds fill a critical gap when adult beneficiaries lose access to Medicaid dental coverage, preventing lapses in care that can worsen oral and overall health.
- Will this be a multi-year project?
This is a one-time funding request. The Trust has consistently funded this project over the past several years, and although this request is one-time for the current fiscal year, the underlying need persists, and similar requests may continue in future years.

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Trust Five Year Funding History

Fiscal Year	Project Title	Amount	Status	Final Expended
2026	Interior Community Health Center Dental Grant	\$50,000	Active	Final Report due 12/31/2026
2024	Interior Community Health Center Dental Grant	\$100,000	Closed	\$51,453
2023	Interior Community Health Center Dental Grant	\$100,000	Closed	\$100,000

Comp Plan - Area of Focus	Strategic Priority Area
Area of Focus 2: Healthcare	Priority 4: Ongoing Support & Wellbeing

Project Description (from grant application)

The interior of Alaska has many beneficiaries who have oral health problems, including dental decay and gum inflammation. Interior Community Health Center (ICHC) knows this because they have an oral health program that has served as an Alaska Mental Health Trust grantee for the last 17 years, and, has provided wrap-around and supplemental general dentistry services for Trust beneficiaries. ICHC will address this problem by providing general dentistry services consisting of fluoride/applications/preservations (pregnant women), sealants (children), oral hygiene, comprehensive and limited exams, films, fillings, and extractions as well as health promotion and prevention coaching, including toothbrushing (all ages). For services that ICHC does not deliver onsite, ICHC will also provide referrals to specialists in the Fairbanks North Star Borough community.

ICHC has well-established collaborative relationships with Interior behavioral health agencies to connect Trust beneficiaries to its general dentistry program. ICHC developed a flier to advertise its dental services and periodically outreaches to community agencies (see attachment #1). The outcome of its dental program is to establish/maintain an oral health home for patients so they prevent, as in the case of dental sealants and/or as in the case of adolescents, adults and seniors, reach and maintain Phase 1 treatment complete. Phase 1 treatment complete is when the patient is cavity- and periodontal disease-free. As sealants prevent the development of caries (e.g. tooth decay), ICHC also focuses on applying sealants on permanent first molars in its pediatric/child population. ICHC has been in the top 10 percent of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) for 8 years in a row for its clinical outcomes. ICHC has broad-based community support as evidenced by memorandums of agreement or letters of support with its Interior behavioral health agencies (Alaska Behavioral Health, Family Centered Services of Alaska, Presbyterian Hospitality House and Railbelt Mental Health and Addictions). In summary, Trust beneficiaries served will include those with mental illness, substance use disorders, intellectual and developmental disabilities, patients with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, and traumatic brain injuries. ICHC, as a general dentistry practice, does not provide conscious sedation; if this is needed, it will refer out to a specialist. Serving as an oral health home is evidence-based as this provides the individual care continuity, leading

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to more comprehensive and better care at less cost over time than an approach of individuals receiving sporadic ad hoc care.

Grantee Proposed Evaluation Measures (from grant application)

ICHC's dental electronic health record (Dentrix) can track by patient each procedure code and price for services delivered to its patients. ICHC will track the following in Dentrix:

- 1) 50 adults and adolescents for Phase 1 treatment complete
- 2) 10 children who have sealants placed on their permanent first molars.

ICHC tracks this as part of its HRSA Uniform Data System report. The impact of Phase 1 treatment complete is that beneficiaries are in better overall oral health (as they are out of decay and periodontal disease). When beneficiaries are in good oral health, their overall health and well-being are better. The impact of dental sealants in children is huge, as sealants, when applied to first molars, can prevent the development of future decay and periodontal disease.

In addition to the above outcomes, qualitatively, ICHC conducted a telephone survey in June 2026 of the 43 Trust recipients served in its dental program between August 2025 through June 30, 2026, with a 42% (18/43) response rate. Responses to the questions posed were good to excellent (see attachment #2 for survey). The sole area of concern was "dentist availability." As one of our experienced dentists left in May 2026, the two remaining dentists had limited availability. ICHC has been working on this patient access issue by recruiting another dentist to resolve this service gap.

Proposed Project Performance Measures (developed by the Trust)

Performance Measure 1:

How much did you do?

- a) Number (#) of unduplicated Trust beneficiaries served during the reporting period, broken down by primary Trust beneficiary category.
- b) The quantity and rate for each dental service provided.
- c) Average dollar (\$) amount for dental services per beneficiary served.
- d) Number (#) and percentage (%) of individuals referred to outside providers during the reporting period.

Performance Measure 2:

How well did you do it?

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- a) Provide a narrative describing the activities, timeline, successes, challenges, and any lessons learned during the grant reporting period. Be sure to address outreach efforts, as well as how beneficiaries were identified for services.
- b) Number (#) and percentage (%) of individuals served who felt they were treated with dignity and respect while receiving dental services.
- c) Number (#) and percentage (%) of individuals served who were satisfied with the dental services they received.
- d) Number (#) and percentage (%) of individuals served who would recommend dental services through the program to others in need of such services.

Performance Measure 3:

Is anyone better off?

- a) Number (#) and percentage (%) of individuals served whose quality of life improved since receiving dental services through the program.
- b) Two statements from participants of the program on how their quality of life has been impacted since receiving dental services through the program.

Sustainability (from grant application)

As an FQHC, ICHC receives HRSA funding that enables it to provide a sliding fee to its dental patients based on household size and income up to 200% of poverty. ICHC also files insurance, including Medicaid, for its patients. Medicaid funds for adults are capped at \$1,150 and are utilized prior to using the Trust funds. Over two-thirds of ICHC's dental patients are adults on Medicaid. The Trust's funds help supplement Trust beneficiaries' receipt of ongoing oral health care. This is important as when adult beneficiaries run out of their Medicaid funding, they frequently will discontinue their dental care despite ICHC's availability of a sliding fee. While the ICHC dental program is a year-round operation, the Trust beneficiaries' interruption or suspension of care until the next year (when the beneficiary's medical benefit restarts) can be detrimental to their overall health.

Who We Serve (from grant application)

ICHC has broad-based community support as evidenced by memorandums of agreement or letters of support with its Interior behavioral health agencies (Alaska Behavioral Health, Family Centered Services of Alaska, Presbyterian Hospitality House and Railbelt Mental Health and Addictions). Trust beneficiaries served will include those with mental illness, substance use disorders, intellectual and developmental disabilities, patients with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, and traumatic brain injuries. The impact of Phase 1 treatment complete is that beneficiaries are in better overall oral health (as they are out of decay and periodontal disease). When beneficiaries are in good oral health, their overall health and well-being are better. The impact of dental sealants in children is huge, as sealants, when applied to first molars, can prevent the development of future decay and periodontal disease.

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Estimated Numbers of Beneficiaries Served Experiencing (from grant application)

Mental Illness:	48
Developmental Disabilities:	2
Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementias:	2
Substance Abuse	8

Project Budget (from grant application)

Other Costs	\$20,000.00
Other Costs (Other Sources)	\$0.00
Other Costs Narrative	ICHC will bill at a rate of 85% of its fee schedule rate for services provided. ICHC will see 60 Trust beneficiaries with the \$20,000 AMHTA funds at a cost of approximately \$333 per beneficiary.

Other Funding Sources (from grant application)

Total Leveraged Funds	\$0
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