

FY28 Stakeholder Budget & Planning Survey Results June 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A survey was developed and fielded to gather supplemental information to help inform the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority's (Trust) planning for work on behalf of Trust beneficiaries, and the FY28 budget development process.

A 10-item survey was developed to gather feedback about how the Trust is doing and identify opportunities for improvement, a top priority for a new major Trust initiative, recommendations to consider while developing the FY28 budget, to identify any gaps or opportunities to improve the system of care for Trust beneficiaries, and areas of [Alaska's Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Program Plan](#) and the [Trust Strategic Plan](#) the Trust should focus on in the coming year. The average time to complete the survey was approximately 8-10 minutes.

The survey was distributed electronically to approximately 3-4,000 estimated people across the state via the Trust email distribution list, the Trust website and social media accounts, and through the Trust staffs' network of contacts. In multiple instances, the survey was forwarded and distributed by stakeholders to their stakeholder networks. It was primarily distributed to people who have at least a limited awareness of the Trust, however, there were some participating members of the public who did not appear to be aware of the Trust.

The survey was open from May 5, 2026 to June 8, 2026.

A total of 278 stakeholders statewide responded to the survey. Participants represented nonprofit providers, state and Tribal entities, community coalitions, caregivers, beneficiaries, and members of the public - and responses came from every region of Alaska.

Stakeholders reported a strong overall level of support for the Trust's work, rating Trust leadership across six core domains at an average of 7.2/10, a slight increase over the prior year. Respondents affirmed the Trust's essential role in Alaska's behavioral health ecosystem while expressing a desire for strengthened advocacy, improved alignment with State systems, expanded transparency, and deeper community-based engagement—including in rural and Indigenous communities.

Top Priority Areas Identified

Prevention and Early Intervention emerged as the dominant focus, selected by 46% of respondents as the Trust's top investment priority. Along with Prevention and Early Intervention, respondents also identified the Trust Strategic Plan's other priority areas, Ongoing Support & Wellbeing, Treatment & Recovery, and Crisis Response, as high priority areas.

Stakeholders also identified five broad themes for a potential new major Trust initiative:

- Statewide Prevention & Early Intervention System for children, youth, and families
- Behavioral Health Workforce Transformation
- Supportive Housing & Community Inclusion
- Crisis Continuum Expansion
- Harm Reduction & Substance Use Prevention

Key Budget Recommendations for FY28

Respondents consistently urged the Trust to:

- Deepen investment in prevention and early intervention, especially for youth and families
- Strengthen Alaska's behavioral health and long-term care workforce
- Expand housing and core stabilizing supports
- Maintain continuity for successful existing programs during the transition to new strategic priorities
- Increase crisis response capacity and treatment and recovery resources

These recommendations underscore the need for balanced investment across the full continuum of care—upstream prevention through long-term support.

System Gaps and Opportunities

Stakeholders identified several systemwide gaps that should inform FY28 budget decisions:

- Significant shortages in youth behavioral health services, early childhood supports, and family-centered care
- Severe statewide housing shortages, including supportive housing and complex-care options
- Acute workforce shortages across behavioral health, disability services, long-term supports, and crisis care
- Rural service disparities, including limited local providers, transportation barriers, and inconsistent access to prevention and crisis services
- Fragmented care pathways, with inadequate transitions, navigation support, and follow-up care

Addressing these gaps is viewed as essential to stabilizing Alaska's behavioral health and disability systems.

Comp Plan Priorities

When asked which areas of the Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Program Plan

should guide Trust focus in FY28, respondents most frequently selected:

- Early Childhood & Youth (35%)
- Workforce (28%)
- Protecting Vulnerable Alaskans (24%)
- Integrated Healthcare (22%)

These results reinforce the need for early-stage support, a sustainable workforce, and protection of high-risk beneficiaries.

Final Stakeholder Themes

Participants' closing comments emphasized:

- Strong appreciation for the Trust's leadership, investments, and staff professionalism
- Calls for deeper engagement with rural, Indigenous, and community-based partners
- Continued concern about workforce shortages
- Requests for improved governance transparency and respectful board-stakeholder interactions
- Desire for more flexible, equitable, and outcomes-focused grantmaking

Overall Summary

The FY28 survey confirms strong stakeholder alignment with the Trust's new strategic direction outlined in the Trust Strategic Plan, while highlighting critical needs across prevention, workforce, housing, crisis response, and long-term supports. Stakeholders view the Trust as an essential statewide leader and partner and urge continued focus on system capacity, transparency, collaboration, and equitable investment as the Trust transitions to its FY28-FY33 priorities.