

Section 1: How to Use This Guide

PURPOSE AND VISION OF THE GUIDE

This guide was created to support the emotional, mental, and behavioral wellness of residents across the North Slope Borough. Whether you are looking for help for yourself, a loved one, or a community member, the goal is to make it easier to understand what services are available, where they're located, and how to access them.

Behavioral health services can sometimes feel confusing or disconnected – but across the North Slope, many organizations are working together to provide care, build relationships, and help every person feel supported. This guide is part of a larger effort, led by the Nunaaqqiurat Tumitchianjit Social & Emotional Wellbeing work group, to improve how we connect people to care and strengthen the systems that serve our communities.

We hope this guide serves as a bridge – to link our community members with the care, relationships, and healing we all deserve.



WHAT ARE SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIORAL & MENTAL HEALTH?

Social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health refers to how we think, feel, and act – and how we connect with ourselves, others, and our environment. It includes things like:

- Managing stress, grief, and anxiety
- Having strong relationships with friends, family, and community
- Getting support for substance use or trauma

- Knowing when to ask for help and where to turn

In this guide...

- **Mental health** often refers to how we feel and think on the inside (e.g., depression, anxiety).
- **Behavioral health** includes how we act and function in daily life – including substance use, coping habits, and relationship patterns.
- **Social and emotional wellness** includes our sense of connection, belonging, and community support.

These terms are closely connected, and many services on the North Slope address more than one at the same time.



*Wellness means more than just the absence of illness
it's about connection, healing, and having the tools to move forward.*

Emergency/Crisis Contact Options

If you or someone you know is in crisis:

- 24/7 North Slope Crisis Line: 907-855-0833
- Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Shelter (AWIC): 1-800-478-0267
- National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988
- NSB Police (Emergency): 911

- NSB Health & Social Services (Non-emergency): 907-852-0366

You are not alone. Help is available – any time, any day.

Section 2: Understanding Behavioral Health on the North Slope

Behavioral health on the North Slope is shaped by our unique geography, cultural strengths, and community structures. Understanding how care is provided – and how to access it – can help make the path to healing feel clearer and more connected.

WHAT BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH MEAN HERE

In the North Slope, behavioral and mental health are about more than just treating illness. They're about supporting the whole person – emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and socially – and helping individuals, families, and communities stay strong through connection, healing, and care.

- Mental health relates to how we think and feel inside – our emotions, thoughts, and ability to manage stress or trauma.
- Behavioral health includes how those thoughts and emotions show up in our actions – like how we cope with stress, how we form relationships, and whether we engage in healthy or harmful behaviors (like substance use).

Many programs in the North Slope support both mental and behavioral health at the same time – this might include counseling, family services, crisis support, or substance use treatment.

COMMON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TERMS EXPLAINED

You may hear different words used when talking about behavioral health services. Here's what some of them mean:

- Case Management – A service that helps coordinate care, appointments, referrals, and follow-up support.
- Case Manager – A person who helps you coordinate your care, connect to services, follow up on appointments, and navigate complex systems like housing, healthcare, or court-related services.
- CHAP – Community Health Aide Program
Behavioral Health Aide (BHA) – A village-based community provider trained to offer mental health support, education, and referrals. BHAs are part of the CHAP program and often work in close partnership with clinicians and tribal health systems.
- Crisis Intervention/ Crisis Stabilization – Immediate help and/or short-term care during a mental health emergency or time of distress to help someone get safe, calm, and connected to longer-term support – can include therapy, medication, or observation.