



# VOA Alaska





## **VOA Alaska's Mission**

To empower Alaskans and uplift the human spirit through recovery services, housing, and promoting healthy communities.

## **How We Achieve Our Mission**

By offering a range of services in-person, in schools, in the community, and via telehealth. Based on the needs of the youth, our team is providing the right level of care at the right time.

# How We Serve: Our Continuum of Care



**Peer Support** | Providing immediate connection to youth and families in need, creating engaging pathways to care, and guiding youth in their journey through mentorship from those with lived experience.

**Family Services** | Supporting all families with youth enrolled in VOA Alaska's care through education, intervention, home-based services, and family therapy; with additional supports for Alaskans raising relative children.





## Impact of ARPA and Alcohol Tax

***In calendar year 2023, the Municipality of Anchorage has invested or committed to investing just under \$1 million in VOA's School-Based and Access & Engagement (A&E) programs.***

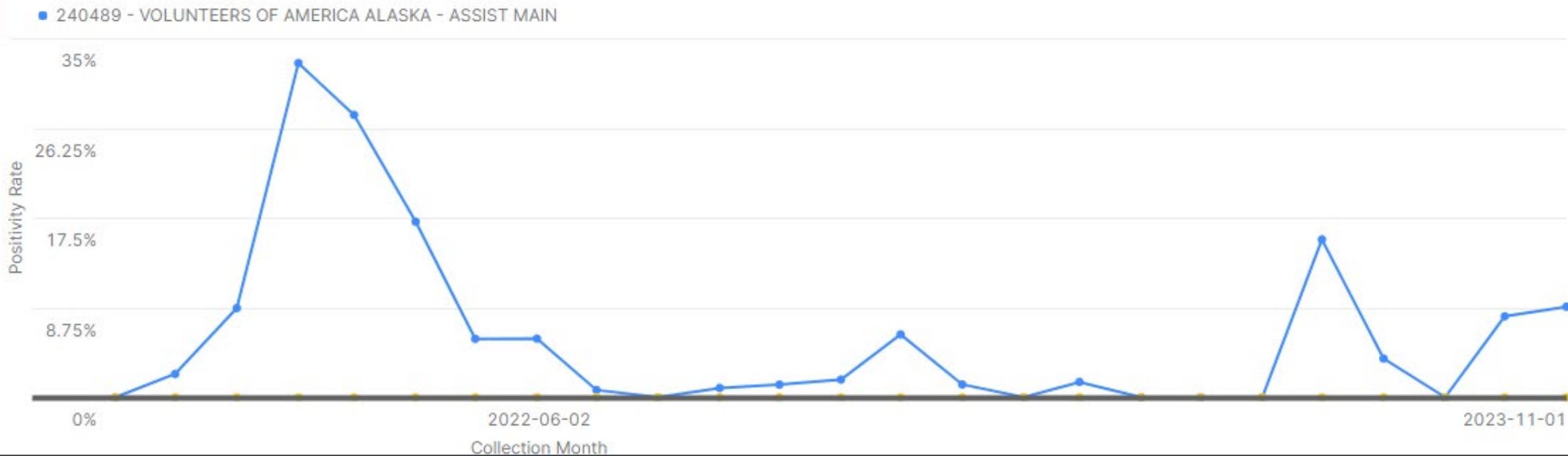
- Through Alcohol Tax funding to A&E, VOA has offered 120 engagement activities with an unduplicated attendance of 1,147 youth. Of participating youth, 16 enrolled in treatment services after participating in an event.
- Through Alcohol Tax funding for School-Based services, VOA offered a brand-new trauma-informed summer camp for rising 6<sup>th</sup> graders at Begich Middle School, reaching 42 youth and 60 family members.
- Through ARPA 2 funding, VOA's School-Based services has grown from serving 4 schools in 2018-2019 to 11 schools in 2023-2024, opening access to mental health services to nearly 8,000 students.



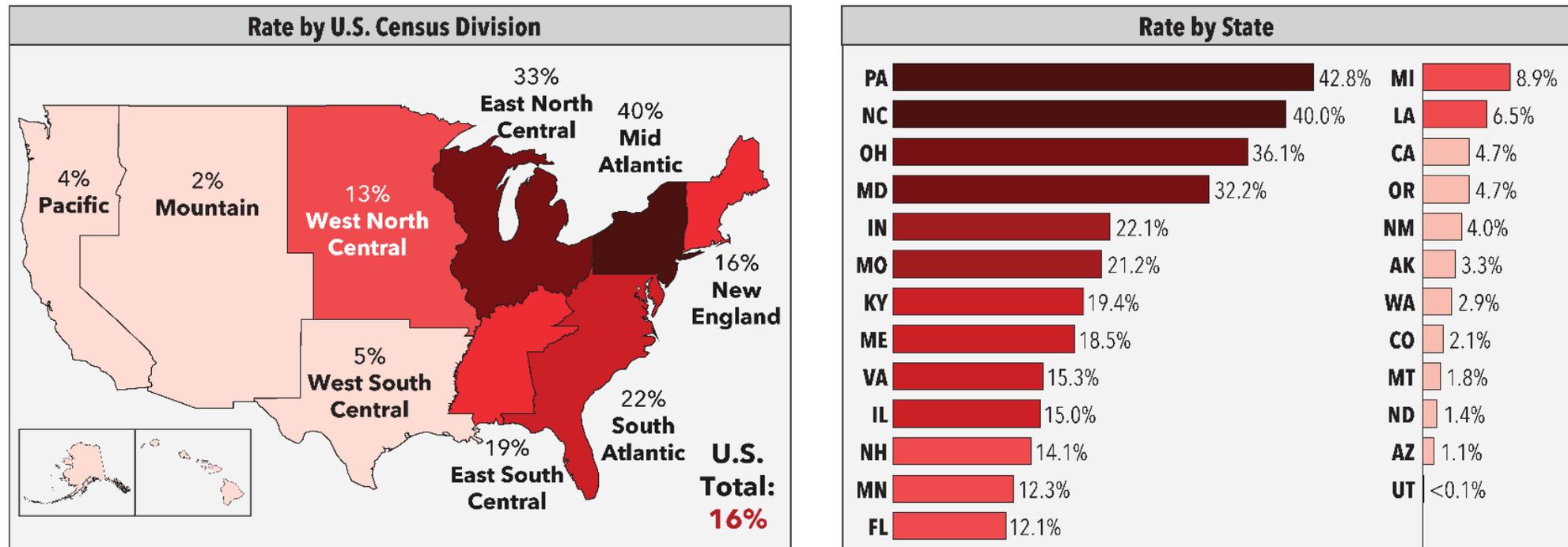
## Youth Mental Health & Substance Use Needs

- Alaska is #1 in the country for youth suicide, and intentional self-harm is the leading cause of death for 15–24-year-olds.
  - That's an average of 54 years of life lost for every young person dying by suicide.
- Increased client acuity and instances of self-harm and suicidal ideation.
- Reports of prior abuse have increased 550%.
- PTSD is in top three diagnoses for clients
- Fentanyl: It's everywhere, so the fear is declining among youth
- 7,379 Naloxone overdose first aid kits have been built and distributed by VOA and our Prevention Coalition.

### Volunteers of America Alaska - Fentanyl Positivity Rate 2 yrs.



**Figure 1. Geographical Analysis of Xylazine Detection in Fentanyl-Positive Specimens**

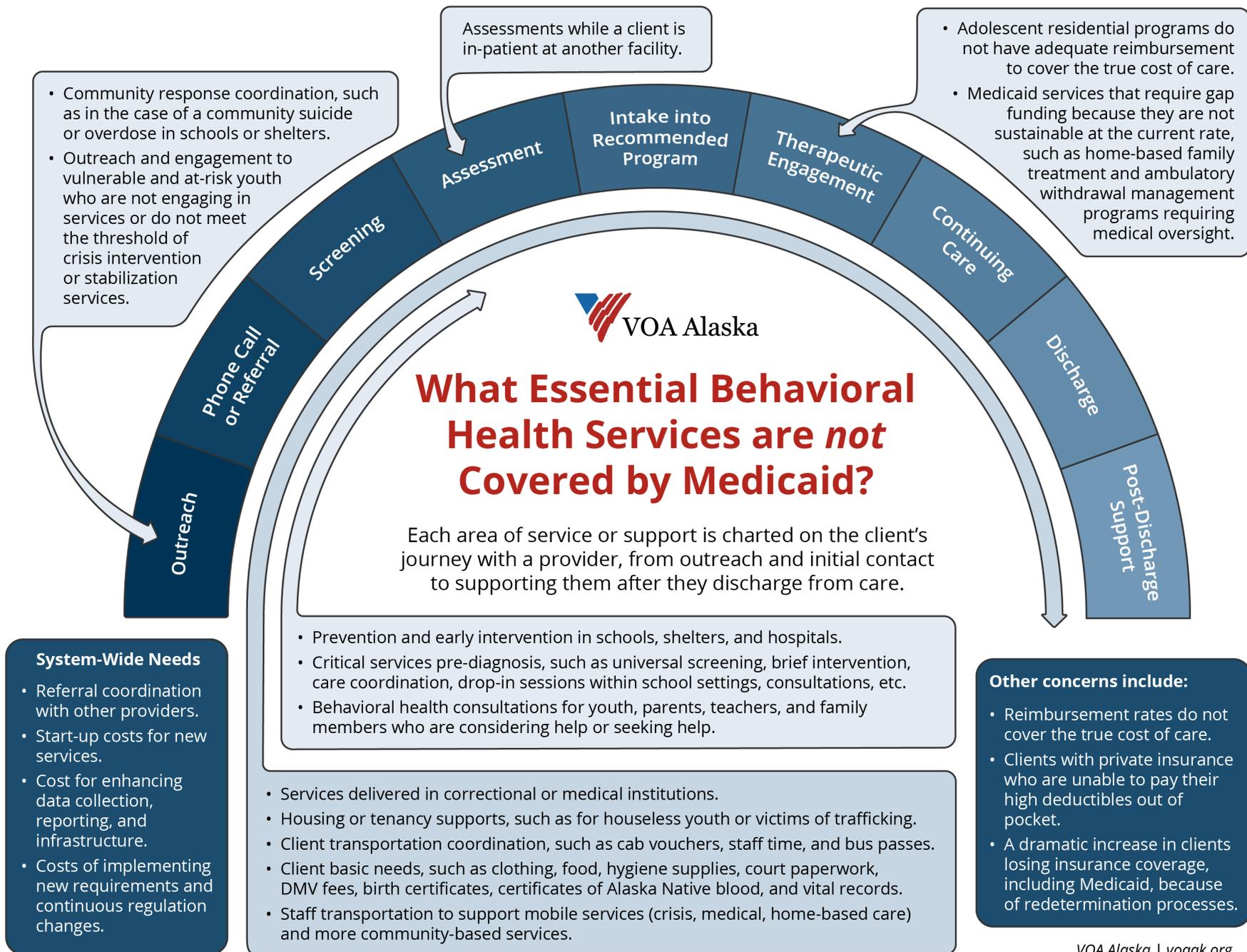


Xylazine urine drug test (UDT) positivity rate in fentanyl-positive specimens by U.S. Census Division (left) and state (right). Logistic generalized estimating equation (GEE) regression models were fit with xylazine detection via LC-MS/MS as the dependent variable. Sex, age (discrete variable), specialty of the referring clinician, payer group and U.S. Census Division (left) or state (right) were treated as model covariates. States listed on the right were restricted to those with 50 or more fentanyl-positive results for accurate xylazine positivity rate estimation. All data were derived from clinician-ordered testing for xylazine on specimens collected between April 12<sup>th</sup> and July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023.



## Medicaid Challenges

- Clients losing Medicaid coverage has doubled in the last month.
- Disparity between adult and youth services:
  - Current regulations are more fitting for adult populations.
  - Adolescent services often require twice the staffing.
  - With higher acute patients, we have residents on a 1 to 1 ratio.
- What should the client journey look like?
  - If we only provide what is sustainable and reimbursable TODAY, we'll never end the youth mental health crisis.
- ***See the handout for essential non-reimbursable services charted on the client journey.***





## Contact with VOA

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