



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Immediate Release: Jan. 10, 2025

Media Contact: Matt Carle, [searhcnewsroom@searhc.org](mailto:searhcnewsroom@searhc.org), 907.903.8210

### SEARHC Announces Launch of Opioid Treatment Services at the Ketchikan RISE Wellness Center

**KETCHIKAN, Alaska** – SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) is proud to announce the expansion of its Comprehensive Addiction Services to Ketchikan with the launch of evidence-based Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) services at the Recovery In SouthEast (RISE) Wellness Center. Beginning Jan. 13, 2025, these vital services will be available to all patients as part of SEARHC’s initiative to combat substance use disorders in Southeast Alaska communities.

The launch of SEARHC Comprehensive Addiction Services in Ketchikan is part of an innovative collaboration with the Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC) and the Ketchikan Tribal Business Corporation (KTBC), [first announced in Feb. 2024](#). The services available at the Ketchikan RISE Wellness Center will complement SEARHC’s OTP locations in Juneau, Klawock and Sitka.

“SEARHC’s partnership with KIC and KTBC reflects our shared commitment to addressing substance use disorders with compassion and evidence-based care,” said Eric Gettis, SEARHC Senior Vice President, Chief of Behavioral Health. “By offering OTP services in Ketchikan, we are supporting recovery journeys and improving quality of life for individuals and families in this community.”

“Through the collaborative partnership between Ketchikan Indian Community, RISE and SEARHC, the residents of Ketchikan will soon benefit from the services provided through the RISE Wellness Center. We are committed to fostering a strong relationship with SEARHC as they deliver essential outpatient substance abuse and opioid treatment services. Together, we look forward to promoting and supporting the health and well-being of the entire Ketchikan community,” stated Charles Peele, RISE Board Chair.

SEARHC’s OTP program combines Food & Drug Administration (FDA)-approved medications with counseling and behavioral therapies to provide a whole-person approach to recovery.

#### Addressing the Opioid Crisis

SEARHC recognizes the urgency of addressing the opioid epidemic head-on. The new OTP service line in Ketchikan will bring specialized, evidence-based treatment options to the community that effectively treat Opioid Use Disorder. Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) has been proven to reduce the risk of overdose, prevent harm from substance use and decrease hospitalization and deaths caused by opioid addiction.



In response to this urgent need, SEARHC partnered with CBC Construction to renovate and create a state-of-the-art clinic space in just six months. This rapid development reflects SEARHC's commitment to providing the highest quality of care for the Ketchikan area and surrounding communities.

"We've witnessed the devastation and the impacts of the opioid epidemic. In 2023, Southeast Alaska, including Ketchikan, experienced the highest rates of overdose on record," said Dr. Corey Cox, SEARHC Medical Director of Addiction Services. "These numbers are alarming and underscore the urgent need for comprehensive, accessible treatment options. Our mission is to ensure that everyone affected has the opportunity to recover and reclaim their lives."

"Nationally speaking, Alaska Native/American Indian individuals experience overdose at a significantly higher rate than other demographic groups," said Dr. Theresa Shelley, SEARHC Director of Substance Use Treatment Services. "In the state of Alaska, the overdose risk for the Alaska Native population is triple that of other identified groups, further magnifying the need for these services." For more information, see the Alaska Department of Health's report on drug overdose mortality: [Drug Overdose Mortality Update](#).

Since July 2024, SEARHC's Comprehensive Addiction Services team has been engaging with the Ketchikan community to understand local needs. "Ketchikan community members are deeply compassionate and concerned about addressing addiction issues in the community, including the opioid crisis," said Dr. Shelley. "SEARHC is proud to partner with KIC and KTBC to offer these life-saving services."

### **How to Access Services**

Patients interested in the OTP services will undergo an admission process to identify the best treatment options for their needs. To explore treatment options or make a referral, call 907.228.2410.

### **Community Outreach Open House**

SEARHC invites the Ketchikan community to an Open House

**When:** Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2025, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

**Where:** Ketchikan RISE Wellness Center, 3050 5th Avenue, Suite 100

This event will introduce SEARHC's Comprehensive Addiction Services in a state-of-the-art clinic and is a great opportunity to learn more about our Outpatient Treatment Services and our Opioid Treatment Program.



### **About SEARHC**

Established in 1975, SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) is one of the largest Native-run healthcare organizations in the United States. Operating as an independent and nonprofit health Consortium, SEARHC provides a comprehensive range of health-related services, including primary, urgent and specialty medical care, dental services, behavioral health support, wellness programs, optometry services and more. We proudly serve 26 communities across the diverse region of Southeast Alaska, and are dedicated to improving the health, well-being and quality of life for all people in these communities. For more information about our services and community health initiatives, visit [searhc.org](http://searhc.org).

### **About RISE**

RISE is dedicated to providing compassionate addiction treatment services tailored to the unique needs of individuals in our community. Our evidence-based programs are designed to support individuals on their journey to recovery, empowering them to overcome addiction and reclaim their lives. For more information about services, visit [ketchikantribalbusiness.com](http://ketchikantribalbusiness.com).