



ALASKA FEDERAL HEALTH CARE PARTNERSHIP (AFHCP) - FY99

Background- Alaska has a population of 615,000 people, 40% of which are federally funded health care beneficiaries. Approximately 25% live in towns or villages that can only be reached by small planes or boats. These areas have minimal health and medical care available, often with the only trained medical staff is a village health aide.

In 1995, the Alaska Federal Health Care Partnership (AFHCP) was formed to increase the sharing of resources and to maximize the provision of health care services to all federal beneficiaries. It consists of DOD facilities, Coast Guard, Veterans Affairs and the Indian Health Service through the Alaska Native Medical Center. Through the use of a telecommunications infrastructure and digital imaging technology, timely primary and specialty care can be extended from the larger tertiary facilities to the smallest rural clinic.

Project Akamai has partnered with the AFHCP to participate in the establishment of such a Telemedicine network and to research and evaluate the efficacy of teleradiology and telemedicine in remote, underserved areas. The initial working meeting between Akamai and the AFHCP Executive Committee was held in October 1998. A follow-on meeting was held in March 1999 during which the Executive Committee and the senior leadership of Akamai discussed continued cooperation in the development and extension of Telemedicine in Alaska.

1. Organization

MS Susan Yeager, AFHCP
MS Gwen Obermiller, AFHCP
MR Denver Lodge, Alaska Native Medical Center
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1. **Mission Statement** – Establish a teleradiology / telemedicine network among the federal facilities in Alaska.

2. Goals and Objectives

Objectives – Install Telemedicine and Teleradiology capabilities in Alaska to connect the facilities of the Alaska Federal Health Care Partnership.

Goals: Establish large hubs in large medical facilities in Fairbanks and Anchorage.

Establish teleradiology / telemedicine capabilities in ten area hospitals.

Extend teleradiology support to the seventeen (17) clinics dispersed throughout the region.

6 Current Status

a) Primary Accomplishments -

1. Major Picture Archiving and Communications systems (PACS) have been established at Elmendorf, Bassett Army Community Hospital, Veterans Hospital and the Alaska Native Medical Center.
2. Teleradiology systems have been installed at Dillingham, Barrow, Bethel, Juneau, Nome, Kotzebue, Kodiak, Ketchikan and Sitka hospitals.
3. Teleradiology systems have been installed at the Kodiak and Ketchikan Coast Guard Clinics. The clinics will be supported by the 51st Medical Group, Elmendorf AFB. Clinical operations for Kodiak began in January 1999.

b) Project Timelines-

1. Connect the Ketchikan Coast Guard Clinic to the Composite Health Care Computer System (CHCS), at Elmendorf. The Hospital Information System (HIS) has to be connected before proper teleradiology operations can be implemented. CHCS training has been completed. The Elmendorf Radiology department personnel are waiting on the Coast Guard to improve the telecommunications infrastructure at Ketchikan before implementing the teleradiology capability.
2. Install teleradiology at the Chief Andrew Isaac clinic in Fairbanks by April 1999.
3. Install teleradiology spokes at the following clinics during FY99-FY2000:

Akutan - Aniak - Chignik - Cold Bay - Fort Yukon - Galena
Hoonah - Ketchikan - King Cove - Klawock - McGrath
Metlakatla - Saint George - Saint Paul - Sand Point - Tanana
Unalaklete

6. Strategic Direction

The primary focus of this installation is to continue the establishment of a large, filmless, "virtual radiology" department in the Alaska region consisting of the members

of the AFHCP. This will involve the establishment of a telecommunications network among the participating federal facilities in the Alaska Federal Health Care Partnership. Further networking can be accomplished by connecting with facilities in the lower 48 states, namely Madigan AMC and Tripler AMC. Central archiving or data warehousing is also an issue that needs to be studied because it is a central part of the eventual “virtual radiology” department.

As technology continues to improve, the extension of medical support through telemedicine to remote areas become possible. The Pacific Regional Program Office and the Akamai Project Office, partnering with the AFHCP will establish possibly the largest, in-state Telemedicine collaboration in the USA. Alaska, in its vastness also supports research in case management and establishing consulting and referral patterns among the many facilities distributed throughout.

7. Budget/Financial Status and Information

8. Business Associations

Corporate Partnerships:

GE Medical Systems Integrated Imaging Solutions Group
Dejarnette
Fuji Medical Systems U.S.A., INC.
Imation (3M)
MIS-LABS
MedWeb
ACCESS INC.,

Government Partnerships:

Alaska Native Medical Center
Veteran Hospital, Anchorage, Alaska
Elmendorf AFB Hospital, Elmendorf Alaska
Bassett ACH, Fairbanks, Alaska
Joint Information Technology Program Office (JITPO), FT Detrick, MD
Pacific Regional Program Office / AKAMAI Project Office, Hawaii
PACAF Surgeon, Hawaii

9. Project Security:

System Security- The system is doubly protected through usernames and passwords. The systems administrator maintains list of authorized users.

Standards compliance measures : Standards published or enforced by the Security Manager, Information Management Office are complied with.

10. **Summary**

In 1995, the Alaska Federal Health Care Partnership (AFHCP) was formed to increase the sharing of resources and to maximize the provision of health care services to all federal beneficiaries. It consists of DOD facilities, Coast Guard, Veterans Affairs and the Indian Health Service through the Alaska Native Medical Center. Project Akamai has partnered with the AFHCP to participate in the establishment of such a Telemedicine network and to research and evaluate the efficacy of teleradiology and telemedicine in remote, underserved areas. PACS systems have been established in large federal hospital in Anchorage. Other implementations are scheduled between FY99 and FY2000 to complete the establishment of this “virtual radiology” department in Alaska.