

## Alaskan 'Intentional' System Redesign Model for UK NHS?



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Southcentral Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation that is engaged in delivering primary, community and mental health services in Southcentral Alaska. It is regarded as one of the most efficient health systems both in the U.S. and internationally. Since the facility provides healthcare to a minority population with high need levels and limited funding, Southcentral redesigned its health system to establish itself as a "multispecialty community provider". As a result, it has been successful in providing expanded and integrated primary and community services.

In a case study, the achievements of Southcentral Foundation have been analysed in order to enable other healthcare systems such as the NHS to draw lessons from and to incorporate elements that would be relevant to its system. Some of the major findings are:

- Southcentral Foundation took responsibility for providing primary, community and mental health services to the Alaskan native people during the 1990s. At that time, its quality of care and outcomes were considered one of the worst in the country.
- The facility undertook an improvement journey. It was assigned a single budget and became responsible for a wide range of services. It did not disappoint and transformed its system internally as opposed to in response to external stimuli.
- The redesigning can be classified as an "intentional" whole system design where the goal was to engage with the community and to lead with a clear vision and principles based on an efficient model for services.
- Under this new model, Southcentral broke down all barriers between primary care, community services and mental health services as well as between these services and hospital specialists. It created multidisciplinary teams that were able to deliver coordinated, whole-person care.
- With the implementation of a new business model, Southcentral was able to forge strong links with the community and was able to create an environment where service users shared responsibility for their health and were actively engaged in the governance of the new system.
- Southcentral created a clear vision and invested in its workforce to create an infrastructure that was able to sustain high performance.

See also: [Key Quality Measures Top Performers](#)

All this effort paid off. Southcentral Foundation was able to eradicate waiting times for its services. Its health outcomes and performance is now considered to be one of the best in the U.S. The quality of care is up and the Foundation's cost are down. By reorganising its staff into multidisciplinary teams and by inviting other healthcare providers to support these teams, Southcentral was able to create a significant difference in its performance and quality of care.

Source: [The Kings Fund](#)

Image Credit: Southcentral Foundation

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