

## Substance Abuse Providers Coming to Kodiak

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Erik Wander/KMXT

The 26th Annual Rural Providers Conference comes to Kodiak next week, providing an opportunity for members of rural communities to meet and learn from substance abuse service providers and experts from across the state.

The annual conference, sponsored by the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, or "Rural Cap," is being held in Kodiak for the first time. The conference provides a forum where people from rural communities can gather to celebrate the gains made in the statewide Native sobriety movement, while learning new skills to cope with addiction. Iver Malutin, an elders advocate at the Kodiak Area Native Association, which sponsors the conference locally, said real attention was first drawn to alcoholism and drug addiction in the Native community in Kodiak when KANA first began dealing with health care for Natives. He said that in spite of the strides that have been made, the substance abuse trend continues today, and that something needs to be done about it.

-- (Malutin  
1 28 sec. "That's when they started ... to be on the right track.")

The conference will include workshops, or "talking circles," on what elders and youth can learn from one another, the historical effects of substance abuse on Native and rural communities and the Alaska Sobriety Movement, among other topics. Malutin said roughly 400 substance abuse service providers from across the state will attend the conference, which will feature a number of prominent keynote speakers in the field.

-- (Malutin  
2 32 sec. "Doug Modig will be on ... the top  
keynote speakers.")

Maltuin

tied alcoholism and drug abuse to suicide, which he said is a problem that might be less prevalent in Kodiak than elsewhere in the state, but a problem that needs to be addressed in rural communities nonetheless. He said prevention is the key message of the conference.

-- (Malutin  
3 24 sec. "All we are trying to talk about  
... the other parts of Alaska.")

In addition to speeches, presentations and talking circles, the conference will also feature other events such as potlucks and dances, intended to give attendees the opportunity to have fun, network and discuss the related issues of recovery and prevention.

-- (Malutin  
4 33 sec. "There's going to be potlucks ...  
started on getting help.")

The Rural Providers' Conference takes place June 1st through June 5th at Kodiak High School. For more information or to register for the conference, contact KANA or visit the Rural Alaska Community Action Program's web site at [rural cap dot com](http://ruralcap.com).

I'm  
Erik Wander.

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