

# Walker named Native health board director

Anne M. Walker has been named to the top administrative post at the Alaska Native Health Board, according to ANHB, and board members say the change marks the organization's entry into a new decade of advocacy on behalf of Alaska Natives statewide.

Walker has been selected by the board to replace outgoing Executive Director Dennis DeGross, who resigned in March.



Walker, an Inupiaq from Kotzebue, brings to the job diverse experience in health, management and consulting. She holds a master's degree in public health sciences and worked for the Norton Sound Health Corp. in Nome for seven years as director of community health service and a member of the organization's management team.

Walker's responsibilities at NSHC

included oversight of 15 village clinics, a residential alcohol treatment center, supervised living apartments for the chronically mentally ill and an ambulance service. She supervised 150 people, managing a budget of \$6 million.

She left NSHC in 1989 to start a business of her own, Arctic International Consulting and Management. As a consultant, she wrote grants and worked on projects, one of which was to assist the University of Alaska's Institute of Circumpolar Health Studies in coordinating travel for a medical exchange group to the Soviet Union.

She has visited the Soviet Union three times and has been to Greenland as a representative to the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, providing technical assistance on health issues on the IACC General Assembly.

Walker has served on the Governor's Mental Health Advisory Board and is also a member of the State Emergency Response Commission, which deals with hazardous materials management, including oil spill response.

In regard to her new position at ANHB, Walker stated that her first priorities will be internal organization, strategic planning with the board, whose membership comprises representatives from each of the 12 Native regions, and policy and advocacy for Native health issues,



Anne M. Walker

statewide and nationwide.

As executive director, Walker will be particularly concerned with implementation of policy, such as the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, which allows tribal entities to provide health care through contract with the Indian Health Service.

Walker identified important issues for Natives as being prevention of AIDS and other health problems related to lifestyle and cultural disruption, such as heart disease, diabetes, substance abuse, suicide and family

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community dysfunction.

Walker enjoys outdoor activities, reading, and gardening in her spare time, but describes her greatest personal interest as international conservation. She recently helped draft the Inuit Regional Conservation Strategy framework document for the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, which addresses such topics as subsistence, establishment of a centralized database for traditional plants and animals used by Eskimo people and a register of Inuit conservation experts.