

# Policy addresses everyone in Arctic

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It is out! The first draft of the American Public Health Association (A.P.H.A.) Arctic Health Science Policy has been sent out to the committee members and will soon be sent to other A.P.H.A. members.

The Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), that was held on the same days as the APHA working meeting to develop this policy, has come out with its resolutions. The exciting part is that the APHA policy fits very closely to the ICC resolutions.

The APHA policy addresses everyone who lives in the Arctic of the United States of America. The ICC resolutions address all Inupiat. The overlapping population is the Inuit of the U.S. Arctic. For them, those two sets of documents should work "hand-in-glove" (or "hand-in-mitten" as the case may be).

The ICC has been invited to participate in the development of the APHA policy. Now, with its clearly worded resolutions, there should be ample time to assure that all



of its concerns as a non-governmental organization to the United Nations are addressed in the APHA policy. Such inter-workings are exciting as they can lead to coordinated and similar documents that will foster greater protection for Arctic residents and the environment.

Once these policies and resolutions go into action the Arctic within this country, and its residents, will be assured some modicum of health. Health, however, is related to far more than the political minds and current policies. Health comes from the people, from the individual.

If individuals want better health they can support their health aides. They can support their local emergency medical services volunteers. They can support their local village and community health boards.

The word "support" used in the last paragraph can be defined as broadly as health

is often defined. Health is not just the absence of disease. It is social, physical, and mental well-being.

Another way to look at it is that health is the slowest way in which to die. In other words health is having a long and happy life.

"Support" is not just helping out when asked or even donating time, energy, blood or money to help a program. "Support" is keeping yourself healthy. Avoid needing emergency medicine at all or needing the health aides in the middle of the night. Participate actively in your community to keep it safe from sewage and garbage spills, loose dogs or substance abuse. Keep your parties healthy and happy, not drunken and fighting.

Make your concerns known. If your health board knows, then this health agency should know. When we know, we can help. We can even help as far as having input to national and international agreements to help keep you healthy. Stay healthy and supportive. Help us help you to better health.

Naturally. . . . .