

Kodiak Health Meet

Wednesday night, January 15, may have been a bad time to get sick in Kodiak, depending on where you were. That evening, twenty health professionals met with the Executive Director of the Kodiak Area Native, Frank Peterson, and his health staff in the Koniag conference room.

The meeting was a step toward the Island's Native people's having input into the contracts Indian Health Service signs with the local hospital, pharmacy, physicians and dentists.

The first step was a meeting of the KANA Board of Directors with Indian Health Service representatives. Specifics of IHS programs affecting Kodiak Native people were discussed, as well as the contract health services, which in Kodiak amount to almost \$300,000. Information about the contracting process was also presented.

All over the state, Native regional health entities are forming to address themselves to the long-range goal of the "Alaska Native Health Care Policy Statement" — establish within the next 10 years Native ownership and management of the health care system serving Alaska Natives."

Health care professionals braving the slick roads and wet conditions to attend included John Shank, O.D.; Harry Brighton; Jeanne Berger, P.H.N.; Grechen Saupe, R.N.; Beth Ennis, P.H.N.; Betty Malay, P.H.N.; George Magnusen; Gary Eller; Knox Christie, DDS; John Eufemio, M.D.; Sister Josephine Patti, G.N.S.H.; Barbara Germino; Gregory Furin, DDS; Spencer Falcon, M.D.; Rud Wasson, M.D.; William McIver, PhD; Harold Sexton, M.D.; Barbara Busher, R.N.; Daniel Farrar, DDS; and a guest speaker from Anchorage, Eva M. Boyce, Director of Training, Community Health Aide Program, Alaska Area Native Health Service.

KANA staff appreciate the turnout of health care providers at the meeting. One of the participants commented: "I am interested to see what happens when Native people have more control and I am encouraged that KANA's Executive Director kept

talking about keeping things local." (Dr. Eufemio)

The next step will be for the KANA Board of Directors to meet with health care providers to identify more specifically concerns about contracts so that KANA staff can follow up by inserting provisions in future contracts to alleviate all or at least some of these concerns.

Mr. Peterson said: "I am impressed with the turnout. The deliberations about the problems in general regarding the IHS-provider contracts were interesting. The KANA Board and staff have a serious responsibility on behalf of the Native recipients of health care on the island."