

First step taken to build new hospital

The first step has been taken in the process of building a new Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage, according to Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska.

Officials recently signed a contract for the architectural design of the new medical center.

Federal officials hope to build the new medical center by late 1995 or early 1996 to replace the current center which was built in the 1950s.

The new center will be about twice as large as the current one. It will have

150 beds, 55 examining rooms, a hostel and a Center for Disease Control laboratory.

The hostel will serve community health aide students, day surgery patients and other patients who travel to Anchorage for specialized treatment.

The current hospital was designed to serve patients with tuberculosis, which afflicted many Alaska Natives four decades ago. Health officials have nearly eradicated that affliction in Alaska, and the hospital now serves more than 100,000 outpatients a year.

The CDC lab, called the Arctic Investigations Laboratory, now specializes in infectious diseases that afflict rural Alaskans particularly, such as hepatitis, botulism, meningitis and pneumococcal disease. About 70 percent of the patients come from rural Alaska.

The new hospital is expected to employ about 760 full-time workers, 210 more than work in the ANMC today.

Arctic Slope Consulting Engineers,

a wholly owned subsidiary of the Arctic Slope Regional Corp. will perform the civil engineering for the architectural design.

Two other Anchorage firms working on the project are ECI/Hyer, the architects and Alaska Engineering Company, the mechanical engineers.

The prime contractor is the Seattle-based NBBJ, the 10th largest architectural firm in the country. The structural engineers are Anderson, Bjornstadd, Kane and Jacobs, with offices in Seattle and Anchorage.