



Signers of the new agreement between the Indian Health Service and the Alaska Native Health Board gather in Washington at signing ceremonies last month. Seated in front are Gerald H. Ivey, right, Ethel Gonzalez, and Dr. Emery Johnson. Standing in back from right to left are Congressman Don Young, Darryl Trigg, Ken Charlie, Julie Knagin, Agnes Nichols, Marlene Johnson, Mary Edwardson, Sophie Chase, June Boster, Alex Nick, and Senator Ted Stevens.

Health agreement signed

An agreement establishing a new partnership relationship between the Indian Health Service and the Alaska Native Health Board was signed in Washington, D.C., last month.

The agreement created a formalized advisory and monitoring role for the Health Board within the Indian Health Service. Federal programs will be reviewed on an annual basis to determine their effectiveness and efficiency.

The first of its kind, the agreement fulfills the goals of the Indian Self-Determination Act passed by Congress in 1975. The Act provides for greater participation in the federal decision-making process that

affects Native Americans.

There has been a recognized need for greater participation by Alaska Natives since 1969, when the Alaska Native Health Board was organized. The new agreement creates a new relationship between managers of federal health care delivery systems and Alaska's 70,000 Natives.

The signing ceremony was preceded by remarks from Congressman Don Young, Senator Ted Stevens, and a written letter from Senator Mike Gravel. Alaska Area Native Health Service Director Gerald H. Ivey; Ethel Gonzales, Chairperson, Alaska Native Health Board; and Dr. Emery Johnson, Director of the Indian Health Service, also addressed the gathering.