

\$5 million grant announced for new Nome hospital

WASHINGTON—Sen. Mike Gravel, D-Alaska, this week announced a new \$5 million grant for the Maynard McDougall Memorial Hospital, currently under construction in Nome.

The grant for the Norton Sound Health Corp. comes from the Public Health Service (Department of Health, Education and Welfare.) It is to cover increasing costs in the construction of the new facility.

The new McDougall Hospital is to open in June, 1978, with some 20 beds and auxilliary facilities for in-patient and out-patient care. It will be operated by the Norton Sound Health Corp. under contract with the Indian Health Service.

The grant comes just a week after Gravel asked for increases in the funds to be available for contract health work like that of the Norton Sound Corp. The Alaska Democrat, in testimony before the Senate Appropriations Committee, said IHS should receive \$58,057,000 to pay for health care performed by contractors. The figure represents an increase of \$4,530,000 over the amount currently proposed for IHS contracting.

A large share of the contract work takes place in Alaska. In the same testimony, Gravel asked for a \$1.4 million increase for the community health aid program. At the present time, 205 health aids work in 171 Alaska villages. The proposed 1978 budget figure for the CHA program is \$3 million. Gravel maintained that 4.4 million was necessary, including an additional \$800,000 for salaries and \$600,000 for training.