

Northwest Area Seeks Advantages of Satellite TV

NOME — A Work Committee of Health Aides from the Nome and Kotzebue area met in Nome during the last week of February to do preliminary work on a personnel policy for the Community Health aides in Northwest Alaska.

The committee was composed of Health Aides Mildred Foster of Selawik, Arlene Ongtowsruk of Wales, Katherine Kobuk of St. Michael, Sally Harvey of Noorvik and Willa Ashenfelter of White Mountain.

Mrs. Ashenfelter is the Northwest Community Health official resident.

Other business accomplished by the committee was preliminary planning for the Spring Workshop for all health aides, Health Aide Association correspondence, personal relations work for the Health Aide Association, and technical advice to the N.S.H.C. H.A.T. program.

During the week, the commit-

tee met with the Health Aide pay contractors, Robert Curran and Darryl Trigg of the Arctic Native Brotherhood; and Ernest Norton of Mauneluk.

Richard E. Blackwell of Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corp. was a consultant for the committee.

Tentative plans are currently being made for discussions between the Health Aide Work Committee and Councils in villages to continue to work out the Health Aides' job description and personnel policies. These discussions will be held in small groups in the villages.

These groups will consist of council representatives from surrounding villages, several NSHC staff members and Health Aides from the Work Committee.

The actual villages where the meetings will be held have not yet been decided. The meetings will take place in March, April and May, possibly one a month.

Indian Health Service physicians will be consulting on Native Health Problems via satellite TV by June 1974, according to Dr. John Lee, director, Alaska Area Native Health Service.

The satellite, to be launched from Point Magu, Calif. in April of this year, will enable physicians at Fairbanks, Galena, Tanana and Ft. Yukon to "hold clinic" with their colleagues at the Alaska Native Medical Center here in Anchorage on a daily basis.

X-rays, electrocardiograms and body sounds will be instantly available for diagnosis through the new system.

"The new satellite TV system will enable field medical people to discuss a case with the specialists here in the Alaska Native Medical Center," said Dr. Lee, "while viewing the patient on the video screen."

Cameras at each field installation will have telescopic to wide-

angle lenses. This will also permit joint lectures and conferences with numbers of people in attendance.

The program, while experimental in nature, gives great promise for improved communications between Anchorage and

the field service units, according to Dr. Lee.

Initially, air time will be limited to three hours per week for each service unit. Its early application will be towards specialty clinics and post medical center and hospital care follow-up.