



For Immediate Release

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Tribal Health Care Providers Recognized

Sarah Palin, Governor of Alaska, has proclaimed April 20-26, 2008 as Community Health Aide/ Community Health Practitioner/Dental Health Aide Week. This proclamation recognizes the history and roll approximately 600 health care providers who live and work in rural Alaska as part of the Alaska Tribal Health System.

The Community Health Aide Program is also celebration forty years of recognition by the U.S. Congress from 1968 to 2008

The Community Health Aide Program Directors will be sponsoring a CHAP Forum April 21-25 at the Coast International Inn in Anchorage. This is primarily a continuing education event, but an awards luncheon is scheduled for April 23 so that Community Health Aides, Community Health Practitioners, and Dental Health Aides can be recognized for their group and individual contributions to their communities.

See attachment for details.

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STATE OF ALASKA



Executive Proclamation by *Sarah Palin, Governor*

WHEREAS, the Community Health Aide Program was born during the tuberculosis epidemic of the 1950s. Village volunteers known as "Chemotherapy Aides" monitored the administration of TB medications in a village-based treatment program. These volunteers, predecessors to the Community Health Aides and Community Health Practitioners, helped to bring tuberculosis under control in rural Alaska. The role of these aides expanded during the ensuing years.

WHEREAS, the Community Health Aide Program was formally established by the Indian Health Service in 1968. It has grown to be a vital component of the rural health care system now managed by the tribal organizations throughout Alaska.

WHEREAS, rural Alaskans living in isolated communities depend on Community Health Aides and Community Health Practitioners for primary health care. Dental Health Aides are now included as part of the primary care team and Behavioral Health Aides will be added soon. The delivery of health care to these remote sites is a challenge of unparalleled dimensions.

WHEREAS, this unique system of health care is not found anywhere else in the United States. Other countries have modeled their rural health care after this program. It is the devotion and professionalism of the many individual Community Health Aides and Community Health Practitioners that have contributed to the overwhelming success of the health care model.

WHEREAS, Community Health Aides, Community Health Practitioners, and Dental Health Aides make a significant contribution to improving the health of village residents. They provide quality care for patients under very difficult and stressful working conditions. Their efforts are an inspiration to all Alaskans.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Sarah Palin, Governor of the state of Alaska, do hereby proclaim
April 20-26, 2008, as:

Community Health Aide/Community Health Practitioner Dental Health Aide Week

in Alaska, and encourage all citizens to join me in recognizing the valuable contributions of Community Health Aides, Community Health Practitioners, and Dental Health Aides, and thank them for their dedication and service to the people of Alaska.

Dated: March 28, 2008



Sarah Palin
Sarah Palin, Governor
who has also authorized the
seal of the State of Alaska to
be affixed to this proclamation.