

Dentist doesn't understand realities of providing health care in Bush

Anchorage Daily News February 16, 2006

I live in Indiana but read the Daily News online every day because I am an Alaska Native. I want to keep in touch with issues of Alaska and with the Alaska Natives. I read with interest about the dental therapists and felt urged to write in ("Groups sue to stop rural dental aides," Feb. 1).

I spent time in a village and still have relatives living in rural Alaska. What a dentist in Minnesota, Dr. Brandjord, knows about rural Alaska is nothing. He doesn't know that many villages do without medical doctors but get their medical care from a village health aide. Without the dental therapists, many would not get basic dental service. It makes me wonder if Dr. Brandjord would be willing to give up some of his time and travel or stay in rural Alaska for a couple weeks every year to fill in?

---- Kiatcha Nyquist

Carmel, Ind.