



Indian Health Service Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Indian Health Service and Navajo Nation Dedicate New Health Center



The Navajo Nation and the Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services, will hold a dedication ceremony on September 29, 2005, for the new Pinon Health Center in Pinon, Ariz., which is scheduled to open for service on October 3, 2005.

This new 68,288-square-foot health care center is a replacement for a 4,898-square-foot health station built in 1959 that had been operating on a part-time basis, with staff traveling three to four days per week from the Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility in Chinle, Ariz. The new health center will serve approximately 10,660 eligible American Indians residing in 16 communities in the center of the Navajo Nation, in a rural area where many roads are of unimproved dirt construction, and are often impassable in times of rain or snow, making travel for medical or other purposes difficult.

“The increased scope of health care services made possible by this new center can make a real difference in the health and wellness of the Navajo Tribal members living in this remote rural area,” stated Dr. Charles W. Grim, IHS Director. “The completion of this health center helps to address the need in Indian Country for new and replacement health care facilities with the capacity to provide up-to-date health care services.”

The nearly \$40-million health center includes 62 new units for staff housing, a sewage lagoon, and a helipad. The new staff quarters will help the recruitment and retention efforts for staffing this new remotely located health center. The center was planned for 20,292 primary care provider visits and 40,523 outpatient visits annually. With an initial staff level of approximately 125 positions, it will provide outpatient services, including basic medical, dental, optometry, radiology, laboratory, and pharmacy services, as well as part-time physical therapy and community health services (health promotion, public health nursing, public health nutrition, environmental health services, mental health services, and social services). The facility will also house the Navajo Nation emergency medical services for the Pinon region and other Navajo Nation community health programs.



NOTICE TO EDITORS: *For additional information on this subject, contact the IHS Public Affairs Office at 301-443-3593. Additional information about the IHS is available on the IHS website at <http://www.ihs.gov> and <http://info.ihs.gov>*

