Media Contact: Information Service
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Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay today announced that the Indian Bureau's School of Practical Nursing now located at Lawton, Okla., will be transferred in early February to Albuquerque, N. Mex., where much more extensive training facilities are available.

The school, established at Lawton in 1935, has been training about 40 Indian girls a year for practical nursing positions in Indian hospitals throughout the country. Approximately 28 percent of the graduates over the past 19 years have been Indian girls from Oklahoma as compared with 41 percent of the graduates who came from tribal groups in New Mexico and Arizona.

Recently the National Association for Practical Nurse Education, the national accrediting organization for schools of this type, announced that it would no longer approve the school in its present location because of the limited training facilities available for students. If the school should lose its accreditation, the graduates would no longer be eligible for Civil Service positions with the Bureau.

The Bureau's hospital at Lawton has an authorized capacity of 50 beds. Its operations will be unaffected by the transfer.

In the new location at Albuquerque, the students of the school will have access to the Bureau’s 108-bed Albuquerque Sanatorium, the 153-bed Bernalillo County Indian Hospital and the 208-bed Medical Center at Fort Defiance, Arizona.