Media Contact: Information Service
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Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay today announced that the Bureau of Indian Affairs will make a further study of the hospitalization of Indians of the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming next September if the Bureau is then still responsible for the Indian health program. Under the provisions of H.R. 303, now under active consideration by Congress, responsibilities for Indian health protection would be transferred from the Bureau to the United States Public Health Service.

The decision to restudy the Wind River hospital situation was made by Commissioner of Indian Affairs Glenn L. Emmons in response to requests made over the past several months by the late Senator Lester C. Hunt, Senator Frank A., Barrett, and Representative William Henry Harrison.

The Bureau's 38-bed hospital at Fort Washakie, serving the reservation, was closed in July 1953 because of a physician shortage and the availability of service and beds in local community facilities. Since that time hospitalization has been provided for the medically indigent Indians of the reservation at hospitals in Lander and Riverton under contracts with the Bureau. Reports from the area indicate that these hospitals and the local doctors have been providing the Indians with good service.