

### **What is the Arctic Human Health Initiative Proposed Activity?**

The Arctic Human Health Initiative (AHHI) will advance the joint research agenda of the Arctic Council, an eight-nation intergovernmental forum for sustainable development and environmental protection, in the areas of infectious disease, the effects of anthropogenic pollution, UV radiation, and climate variability on human health, and telehealth innovations. Specifically, the leaders of these research programs will build on their years of circumpolar collaboration to extend the International Circumpolar Surveillance network of hospitals and public health facilities into Russia and include additional infectious diseases of concern, to continue monitoring contaminants in human blood and tissues to reveal temporal and spatial trends and to combine experiences from the rapidly expanding disciplines of biomarker research and molecular epidemiology with these monitoring programs, and to extend circumpolar cooperation on telehealth, particularly to Arctic regions in the Russian Federation. In addition, the AHHI will draw on the outstanding leadership of the Arctic Council member states' national and international research programs in the areas of human genomics, biomarkers, hypothermia, hibernation, mental health, and climate sensitive infectious diseases.

The AHHI steering group, led by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will work with the International Union for Circumpolar Health (IUCH), the Fogarty International Center of the U.S. National Institutes of Health, and other partners to develop a program of outreach and public education focused on the promotion of good health for Arctic residents and better integration of the findings of Arctic health research. The IUCH will make its triennial Congress in 2006 available to facilitate IPY health activities and its Congress in 2009 to underscore the health legacy of IPY.