

March 17, 1950

Plans Speeded to Transfer Halloran Hospital Patients; Jobs Sought for Employees

Mary To Go State Employment, Says Hall

By S. S. McSHEEHY

Several hundred employes of Halloran VA Hospital who may lose their federal employment as a result of the government's decision to discontinue operation of that institution June 30 will be given an opportunity to retain their jobs under the State Department of Mental Hygiene, which is to take over the property, Borough President Hall reported today after communicating with state officials.

Gen. Carl Gray, head of the Veterans Administration in Washington, notified Congressman James J. Murphy early yesterday that the government had decided to return the hospital to the state.

Congressman Murphy and Borough President Hall immediately expressed regret at the government's decision but neither was too surprised at the action in view of the VA's unfavorable report a year ago on the congressman's bill which would have authorized the government to purchase the hospital from the state for \$24,000,000 and continue it as a permanent veteran's facility. Because of this report the bill died in committee.

Borough President Hall, concerned for the welfare of more than 1,500 persons now employed at the hospital, contacted Dr. Frederick MacCurdy, commissioner of the Department of Mental Hygiene, at Albany. He also contacted the Veterans Administration.



A change is being made. Two paraplegics at Halloran VA Hospital learn that they'll soon be transferred to another VA facility. Neither John Bermis, at left, nor Richard J. Sealskin look too happy about it.

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1,300 to Be Shifted From Institution By June 1

By LES TRAUTMANN

Transfer of patients from Halloran VA Hospital to other veterans facilities will begin "shortly," probably within a week, it was learned today.

All transfers are to be effected by June 1 and the leased property returned to the state on June 30.

Announcement of the close down of operations at Halloran was made yesterday by the Veterans Administration in Manhattan, almost two months to the day after Veterans Administrator Carl R. Gray Jr. had conferred with Governor Dewey in Manhattan on a two-year extension of the federal agency's lease. An agreement could not be reached.

News of the termination of operations came as a surprise to Halloran's staff, which had expected continuation of the borough's VA facility until a new hospital was built on Manhattan's East Side in 1952 or 1953.

Admissions to Halloran were halted yesterday. Applicants for medical care are now being referred to the Kingsbridge VA Hospital in Bronx or Fort Hamilton Hospital in Brooklyn.

1,300 Patients Involved

More than 1,300 patients must be discharged or transferred to other VA facilities before the June 1 deadline.

No arrangements have been made for caring for VA cases at any of the borough's voluntary or government hospitals.

Plans for the transfer of patients are already well under way. Dr. Paul B. Magnuson, chief of the medical division of the VA, conferred with Dr. Alfred P. Upshur, Halloran's manager, and Kenneth S. Covey, assistant manager, on Wednesday, it has been learned.