

MORE PATIENTS, WORKERS LEAVE HALLORAN HOSPITAL

Evacuation Plan Sends 60 Employees to Other Posts

By ERWIN ENDRESS

Having received no orders to the contrary, Halloran VA Hospital today continued to shift its "DPs"—displaced patients and personnel—in a move that can be halted only by a new decision by Governor Thomas E. Dewey on closing the big hospital.

Although the governor is reviewing a decision to return the facility to the State Department of Mental Hygiene as part of the Willowbrook State school June 30, Halloran officials are proceeding on the assumption there will be no change in plans. "Scattering" of the hospital's personnel staff—a focal point in debate over the move to close the hospital has begun, with 60 Halloran employees already transferred to other Veterans Administration facilities. Forty Halloran workers have been transferred to the new VA hospital at Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn, while



Journey begins for one of Halloran VA Hospital's patients being transferred to Fort Hamilton VA Hospital, Brooklyn. Assisting Alfred E. Walter, a patient from Ward 2A1, into an ambulance, is Miss Felixia Sulesky, assistant chief of nursing education, while driver William Hayes holds the door and Richard Mahler, an attendant, stands by.

to others have been shifted to the VA facility in Peckskill, Hudson, officials said.

400 Employees Requested
It was learned that these hospitals have requested up to 400 Halloran employees to care for the prospective influx of displaced patients to these places.

The transfer of patients continued today, with 30 general surgery cases being shifted to the Fort Hamilton hospital this morning. Six cardiac cases were transferred there yesterday afternoon, following a shift of 17 last week.

A study of the hospital's record showed that on March 16, when it was first made known that the closing of Halloran was imminent, there were 1,307 patients there. The total today is 997—a drop of 310.

Concurrently, the number of persons employed there has fallen off. While 1,632 persons were employed at Halloran on March 16, there are 1,523 today, a difference of 109.

Shifted Elsewhere

Several employees, the hospital said, have been shifted to other federal facilities, such as the U. S. Marine Hospital in Clifton, and the Brooklyn Naval Supply Depot.

Explaining the falling off of patients and personnel at Halloran, officials said there have been no new admissions and no rehiring since the prospective closing of Halloran was announced in mid-March.

While freely admitting the transfer of displaced patients caused by the state-federal situation, Halloran officials pointed out that a number of patients have been discharged following normal completion of care and treatment.

They said patients are being transferred to other hospitals at the "convenience" and "at the request" of such facilities.

Spokesman Explains

"The transfer is to be gradual," a VA spokesman said. "If there are beds open for six cardiac cases, for example, and if the hospital has the personnel to care for them, it is 'convenient' to make such transfers at this time."

In the case of personnel, transfers have been affected only in cases where the personnel is not needed for the care of patients at Halloran, and only at the request of the institution seeking such personnel.

Personnel displaced by the prospective closing of Halloran are to form the nucleus of enlarged staffs to be needed in other institutions once the shifting of patients reaches a peak, it was said.

CONFER ON DETAILS OF HALLORAN RETURN

Veterans administration, Halloran and site officials conferred at the hospital yesterday afternoon on details of restoring the institution to state control.

Involved was the question of whether the VA will restore facilities to their original condition when leased from the state, or whether it will pay the state a sum to cover alterations. It was the second such conference held since plans to shut down the hospital were announced.

No questions of policy on retaining Halloran were discussed, said Kenneth Covey, assistant manager, despite widespread rumors to the contrary.

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