

Flower Fifth balks at plan for retarded

Attending physicians at Flower Fifth Ave. Hospital in Manhattan are reacting negatively to a proposal calling for the conversion of a portion of the fiscally strapped hospital into an institution for ex-Willowbrook patients.

The medical board of New York Medical College, which administers Flower Fifth, called an "emergency meeting" this week following published reports on the plan to transfer 160 multi-handicapped persons from the Gouverneur unit of Manhattan Developmental Center to the 105th St. facility.

Board members, a spokesman for the college said yesterday, "were in favor of upgrading care for the retarded but felt it more important to preserve the hospital in its

present form."

The spokesman, Ruth Oliver, said that the physicians would make their position known to the college's board of trustees, the body ultimately responsible for deciding the future of the 400-bed hospital.

State officials have said that they hope to move the patients from Gouverneur to Flower Fifth by April 1. Flower Fifth claims its board of trustees has not yet decided, calling the proposal, advanced by the college's Mental Retardation Institute, only a "feasibility study."

Flower Fifth, according to the state Health Department, is asking for about \$85,000 a patient per year to run the program, which state officials say would offer extensive therapy, counseling and diagnostic work-up.