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## **MEDICAL WARDS NOW FOR N.Y. ALCOHOLICS**

The recognition of alcoholics as sick people in need of medical care is the basis of a new policy being put into effect in the city hospitals this month by order of Dr. Edward M. Bernecker, Commissioner of Hospitals for New York City. At the same time Dr. Bernecker has requested the seventy-seven volunteer hospitals in the city to admit alcoholic patients to their medical wards. "If the voluntary hospitals refuse," he said, "they will be asked to send alcoholics to the nearest general hospital of the Department of Hospitals in their district."

The acceptance of alcoholics as medical cases by city hospitals means an enlightened and encouraging step forward in the treatment of alcoholism as a public health problem. Dr. Bernard Wortis, director of the Psychiatric Division of Bellevue Hospital, says, "Alcoholics are sick people and must be treated as sick people. The change will mean better care. Alcoholism will be treated in the medical wards like any other problem."

In the past alcoholic patients have been sent to the psychiatric ward at Bellevue Hospital on the premise that they were mental cases. Now, hospital care will begin immediately.