

Psychiatrist Named to Lead Hospital Quiz

By ROBERT H. PRALL,
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One of the foremost authorities in the field of psychiatry has been chosen to head a committee of experts who will investigate psychiatric services in all New York City municipal hospitals.

He is Dr. Lawrence C. Kolb, director of the New York State Psychiatric Institute and chairman of the department of psychiatry of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University.

His appointment was announced late yesterday by Dr. Ray E. Trussell, city hospitals commissioner. Dr. Trussell moved quickly to organize a blue-ribbon committee of experts in the field of mental health as a result of the World-Telegram's current series on conditions in the psychiatric wards of Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn.

To Begin Right Away.

Interviewed by telephone in New Orleans, where he is attending a professional meeting, Dr. Kolb said he plans to begin work on the probe as soon as he returns to New York Wednesday.

"As soon as possible," he said, "we will try to get together with Department of Hospitals officials and look over the situation in Kings County."

"There is, of course, a paucity of qualified personnel in mental hospitals," Dr. Kolb said. "What is needed, and what I have been devoting much attention to, is the development of more rapid processing of patients from one unit to another so that treatment can get under way faster."

The new psychiatric investigation team, it was learned, will look into all the areas in the treatment of the mentally ill that have broken down. Overcrowding in the psychiatric wards, lack of segregation of children and adults, inadequate staffing, unsanitary conditions and indignities complained of by both men and women patients.

Kolb Praised.

Dr. Trussell said the city was fortunate "in securing the services of so eminent an authority in the field of psy-



DR. L. C. KOLB.

Psychiatric Institute since July 1, 1954.

In recent years he has aided in the development of a community mental health project in the Washington Heights area in conjunction with the School of Public Health and Administrative Medicine of Columbia University.

Dr. Hoch was appointed state mental hygiene commissioner in charge of the nation's largest mental hospital system in July 1935. He had been the principal research psychiatrist at the New York State Psychiatric Institute and won national acclaim for his work.

chiatry as Dr. Kolb to head this committee, which will include state, city and community representatives. The committee will make such recommendations as are indicated to assure the best possible care for patients in our psychiatric facilities."

The hospitals commissioner added that he also had assurances from Dr. Paul H. Hoch, state commissioner of mental hygiene and one of the nation's leaders in this field, that he will assign a member of his department to serve on the committee. Other committee members, Dr. Trussell asserted, will be named in the next few days.

Elaborating, he said, he would secure representation on the committee from the New York City Community Mental Health Board, directors of psychiatric services in both municipal and voluntary hospitals and representatives of various health and welfare organizations.

Johns Hopkins Man.

A graduate of Johns Hopkins, Dr. Kolb was a consultant in psychiatry at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., from 1949 to 1954. He has been director of the New York State