

Integrated

The Other Doctor Unit --The NMA

By Arthur J. Snider
Daily News Science Editor

The door to integration now swings both ways in the National Medical Assn., the Negro doctors' organization.

Formed in 1895 to fight discrimination in medical societies, schools and hospitals, the NMA suddenly realized that integrating Negroes into white institutions was only half just.

White physicians were being denied admission to the Negro organization.

That policy was changed this year under the leadership of Dr. Leonidas Berry of Chicago, NMA president. More than 100 white physicians have been taken into membership.

Several white physicians members and guests, will be presenting scientific papers before the NMA's 71st convention in the Pick-Congress beginning Monday.

"We have had doctors join from faculties of such medical schools as Columbia, Yale, Harvard, Illinois, Chicago Medical and the University of California," Berry said in an interview.

"They include professors of surgery, ophthalmology, pathology, internal medicine, urology. One is an assistant dean. Another is an officer of the American Women's Medical Assn."

to break the solid medical organization front against medicare.

Some Negro physicians contend the lingering racial bars in medicine are an AMA retaliation even though the AMA has repeatedly adopted resolutions condemning discrimination. Negro doctors have been picketing the AMA convention for the last several years.

The two groups have resumed liaison committee meetings after almost three years.

Until 1939, the AMA directory of physician members inserted the abbreviation "Col." after the name of every Negro physician to indicate "colored."

"I used to get mail address-



DR. LEONIDAS BERRY
Long way to equality

The AMA labeling practice was discontinued after a strong continuing protest by the NMA.

THE LONG BATTLE for equality in medicine reached a major milestone when Edith Mae Irby became the first Negro to be admitted to a Southern medical school. She registered at the University of Arkansas 18 years ago.

Most significant gain, of course, was the passage of civil rights legislation.

Should the NMA achieve its long-sought goal of full integration, will the organization be disbanded?

"We are a long way from that day," Berry replied. "Much of the gain is still on paper."

ASSESSING the progress of integration in Chicago, Berry gave this rundown:

Medical Organizations: No discrimination except in some specialty societies where Negro doctors are taken in only as a "token."

Medical Schools: Doors have opened but many students are not aware of it because of a "cultural lag" that has followed the many years of resistance.

Hospitals: Still considerable resistance at the level of attending staff. Most appointments are made on the basis of "tokenism" or to the courtesy staff.

BERRY, a University of Chicago graduate, was the first Negro to be named to the attending staff of Michael Reese Hospital where he is a specialist in gastroenterology.

He is among the first physicians in the country to use the gastroscope, a tube device that permits inspecting the interior of the stomach and removing a snip of tissue for microscopic examination. He has performed 6,000 such procedures in the last 30