

Forum asks more black doctors here

By Clarence Petersen,

A CALL FOR more black doctors in Chicago and especially in the Cook County Hospitals system was issued at a weekend forum on health care sponsored by churches affiliated with the African Methodist Episcopal Ministerial Alliance.

"Young people need to relate to black doctors," said State Sen. Richard Newhouse [D., Chicago], who spoke at the meeting in Grant Memorial AME Church, 4017 S. Drexel Blvd.

Another speaker, Cecil Partee, city commissioner of human services, urged blacks who need medical care to seek out black physicians, encouraging their success and thus encouraging other blacks to take up medical careers.

IN THE 1930s, WHEN there were only 300,000 blacks living in Chicago, there were 250 black doctors practicing here, said the Rev. Dr. Basil Foley, president of the alliance and pastor of the Woodlawn AME Church. Now, with a black population of one million, he said, there are only 256 black doctors.

Other speakers, including Dr. James A. Haughton, executive director of the Cook County Health and Hospitals Governing Commission, deplored County Hospital budget cuts by the Cook County Board.

Haughton suggested that concerned citizens confront county board members before the Nov. 7 election to ask what each plans to do about the County Hospital budget. He emphasized he was not advising citizens to vote against incum-

bent board members.

DR. MORRIS H. Tynes, pastor of Greater Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, said in defending the controversial Haughton: "We of the church community believe that some people would respect and appreciate Dr. Haughton more if only he had another paint job. The same applies to the indigent ill; if only they had another color.

"If I were a practicing attorney—and I'm speaking satirically—I think I might bring a class-action suit against God for disturbing the peace. In my brief, my primary allegation might charge 'superimposed pathological pigmentation neurosis syndrome.'"

Leon Finney, leader of The Woodlawn Organization [TWO], told the meeting of 40 clergymen and several hundred members of their congregations Friday night that staff cuts at County Hospital not only affect patient services but also cut into the economy of the black community.

THE COUNTY Hospital complex, he said, has been one of the city's biggest employers of blacks.

The Rev. Charles Spivey, pastor of Quinn Chapel AME Church, said the planned closing of the hospital's nursing school would reduce the number of black nurses in the city. Most of the students are black, and private nursing schools, he said, enroll only token numbers of blacks.

The hospital commission Wednesday discussed a plan to transfer the nursing program to the Chicago City Colleges system, with County Hospital clinical facilities continuing to be used.