

# 'A nice place to go,' doctor tells drunks

By William Crawford Jr.

ONE OF NORTHEAST Community Hospital's most frequent patients is Michael Wadley, a resident of the Northmere Hotel, 4043 N. Kenmore Av., who was admitted to the hospital six times between October and May, according to state public aid records.

"I been in there eight or nine times in the past year and a half for my drinking problem," boasted Wadley, a pixie-faced man who looks half his 38 years. "Everyone in that hotel has been there at one time or another."

From October to May, Wadley spent 47 days in the hospital at the cost to the state Department of Public Aid of \$3,827.

"They treat me okay at the hospital. I got no complaints," he said in an interview with a Tribune reporter.

RECORDS SHOW that on his four most recent visits to Northeast at 6070 N. Clark St., Wadley's physician was Dr. Dan Stockhammer, who holds weekly office hours at the Northmere.

"Dr. Stockhammer suggested it would

be a nice place to go," he said. "Sometimes I call an ambulance; sometimes my friends call an ambulance. But mostly Mary Ann [Bilanzich, the hotel manager] calls an ambulance for me."

The records show that Wadley's most common ailment upon admission to Northeast was "gastritis and duodenitis," digestive tract disorders commonly associated with alcoholism.

"When I'm drunk and feeling no pain, I don't want to go back," he explained. "But when I'm sober and really feeling the pain, then I go. When you're really sick; you want to go to the hospital. It does me good to dry out now and then; it gets me back on my feet."

SOME OF Wadley's bills list a charge for "occupational therapy" while he's confined to the hospital. This is part of the counseling and therapy program the hospital claims to run for its patients.

"That Alcoholics Anonymous [at Northeast] doesn't do no good," Wadley said. "That stuff goes in one ear and out the other. I went to one A. A. meeting, and I couldn't wait to get out and get me another drink."