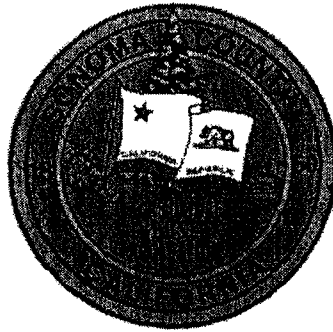


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October 1, 2008

TO: The Honorable Noel Owen  
Presiding Judge, Sonoma County Superior Court  
FROM: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
SUBJECT: **Response to Final Report of the 2007-2008 Grand Jury**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
RESPONSE TO THE 2007-2008 GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT**

**ASSIGNMENT OF HEALTH CARE ACCESS AGREEMENT: SUTTER & MEMORIAL HOSPITAL**

*R1: The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors should obtain guarantees from Sutter Medical Center and Santa Rosa Memorial to maintain the current high standard of care or an improved standard of care before the transfer of this or any comparable agreement. (Page 51)*

*Response:* This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.

The Grand Jury recommendation assumes an agreement was reached between Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa (Sutter) and Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital (Memorial) when it was not. On March 11, 2008 Sutter informed the County that negotiations with Memorial had terminated. The Board of Supervisors continues to ensure that the residents of our community have access to the wide range of health services guaranteed by the Health Care Access Agreement (HCAA) with Sutter. Under the terms of the HCAA, Sutter remains committed to provide a wide range of high quality health care services to our community. Sutter's commitment is reinforced by its parent corporation, Sutter Health, which has guaranteed full performance of the HCAA. Sutter's obligations under the HCAA extend through December 2021.

*R2: The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors should explore every option to provide women's reproductive health care in a secular and universally acceptable setting. The Board must not restrict the broader standard of care in the community, which the Ethical Directives for Catholic Healthcare limits. (Page 51)*

*Response:* This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.

The recommendation assumes Memorial will take over Sutter's responsibilities under the HCAA. This has not happened and the County has already addressed the Grand Jury concerns with the current HCAA. On March 11, 2008 Sutter informed the County that negotiations with Memorial had terminated. Under the terms of the HCAA, Sutter has and will continue to provide a full range of women's health services, including but not limited to, preventative care, birth control, sterilization, pregnancy termination

procedures, and labor and delivery services. Sutter's obligations under the HCAA extend through December 2021.

***R4: The Board of Supervisors should adopt a quality-of-care monitoring system to ensure existing standards are maintained and continuously improved. The monitoring of Health Employer Data Information Set (HEDIS) for outpatient care, and Core Measures required by the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Hospitals (JCAHO) is a baseline standard of performance. These performance measures, which are public information, are collected annually and should be reviewed by the Department of Health Services for compliance. (Page 51)***

***Response:*** This recommendation has been implemented.

The Department of Health Services (Department) continuously monitors Sutter's performance including emergency room services, women's health care services, charity care, employee turnover, financial metrics, and others. Under the terms of the HCAA, the County has the right to audit any issue related to the Sutter's compliance with the terms of the HCAA, including financial, administrative and quality of care issues. In addition to the performance data currently monitored, the Department reviews applicable quality performance standards (i.e., JCAHO). As needed, the Department will identify any additional measures available to assist the Department in monitoring Sutter's compliance with the terms of the HCAA. These reviews are ongoing.

***R5: The Board of Supervisors should explore options, negotiate a contract, and have formalized arrangement with an inpatient adult and adolescent psychiatric provider. (Page 51)***

***Response:*** This recommendation has been partially implemented.

The responsibility for the recommendation has been delegated to the Department of Health services who is currently exploring options for the provision of inpatient mental health services. The Board has made this a top priority.

In January 2007 the Board of Supervisors authorized the Department to terminate its Management Services Agreement with Sutter to operate the Sutter Inpatient Psychiatric Health Facility effective June 2007. At the time, the Department projected the IPU would incur losses of approximately \$3-4 million per year through the scheduled term of the MSA in December 2008. Failure to terminate the MSA would have severely impacted available resources for other core mental health services.

The development of an appropriate and sustainable solution for acute inpatient mental health services requires the collaboration of health care providers and community representatives and the creation of a public/private partnership. Over the past year, the Department of Health Services has met with Kaiser, Memorial Hospital, Sutter, District Hospitals, Southwest Community Health Center, Psychiatric Solutions, Inc., Telecare, PsychStrategies Inc., local mental health providers and others to discuss viable solutions. In addition, the Department has met with an ad hoc group of clients, NAMI representatives, Mental Health Board Chair and a member from the Crisis Intervention Team Advisory Committee and worked closely with the General Services Department as it researched the availability of an appropriate site in Sonoma County.

In spring 2008 the Department sponsored a Mental Health Inpatient Roundtable. The roundtable included open discussions of community need; the challenges facing any facility; and that any facility would require a collaborative effort to be successful. The Roundtable was followed by the Department meeting with local landlords, real estate entities and other interested parties to explore facility options. The Department will continue to explore available options and engage interested parties with the goal of realizing a solution that meets the inpatient mental health needs of our community.

***R6: The Board of Supervisors should make a concerted effort to guarantee a fair process for physicians who currently have hospital privileges only at Sutter Medical Center to apply and receive comparable privileges at Santa Rosa Memorial before any agreement is transferred***

**Response:** This recommendation will not be implemented as it is not warranted.

On March 11, 2008 Sutter informed the County that negotiations with Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital had terminated. All medical facilities and hospitals have a process, outside the authority of the County, to grant hospital staff privileges to physicians.