

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 7/31/03
Department Name: Public Health Department
Department No.: 041
Agenda Date: 8/26/03
Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 60 MIN.
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Roger E. Heroux, MPA, Director
Public Health Department
James L. Broderick, Ph.D, Director
Alcohol, Drug & Mental Health Services

STAFF CONTACT: Nancy A. Lapolla, Program Manager (681-5274)
Public Health Department Emergency Medical Services
Charles Nicholson, M.D. (681-5204)
Alcohol, Drug, & Mental Health Services

SUBJECT: Informational update on the impact of the closure of Saint Francis Medical Center.

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Accept the informational update from the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency, and Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services (ADMHS), in reference to the response by Cottage Health System to the recommendations made in the Impact Evaluation Study on the closure of Saint Francis Medical Center.
2. Direct James L. Broderick, Ph.D, Director of ADMHS, to formalize the current collaborative efforts in a project team focused on continuing to evaluate with Cottage and other local hospitals the feasibility of re-opening a geropsych inpatient unit in Santa Barbara County. The Project Team would update Your Board with written progress reports on a quarterly basis.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation is primarily aligned with Goal 2: A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

Saint Francis Medical Center closed on June 18, 2003. Prior to the closure, the EMS Agency prepared an Impact Evaluation study on the anticipated effects of the closure on the emergency medical services system, as required by Section 1300 of the California Health and Safety Code.

A Public Hearing was held on May 7, 2003, at which these findings were presented. Cottage Health System presented their plan to mitigate the issues identified in the draft report at the same meeting. Members of the

public were afforded the opportunity to present their concerns, and this input was included in the final Impact Evaluation Report, which was prepared on May 26, 2003.

Your Board will receive a presentation made jointly by the EMS Agency, ADMHS and Cottage Health System. These participants will present updated information to the Board on the current status of the issues identified in the Impact Evaluation process. The EMS Agency will provide the Board and the public with an update on the measures being taken by Cottage Health System to mitigate impacts on the EMS system. ADMHS will present information about the senior population of Santa Barbara County and the need for specialized hospital geriatric-psychiatric units to treat those with serious mental disorders. The presentation will cover the involuntary mental health commitment ("5150") procedures and the County's role in authorizing hospital care for mentally ill seniors. ADMHS will also report on the status of hospital psychiatric admissions since the closure of St. Francis Medical Center. Cottage Health System will address the issue of senior mental health, and will provide an update on their progress to date in mitigating the loss of the senior mental health unit at Saint Francis Medical Center.

It is recommended that Dr. Broderick be directed to impanel a project team to work cooperatively with the hospitals in Santa Barbara County, with the goal of re-opening a geriatric-psychiatric unit specializing in treatment of those with serious mental disorders. The project team would be comprised of the Directors/Department Heads from ADMHS, Public Guardian, Public Defender, County Counsel and others selected at the discretion of Dr. Broderick. The Project Team would update Your Board with written progress reports on a quarterly basis. The Project Team would work in concert with Cottage and other local hospitals.

The EMS Agency developed some recommendations for Cottage Health System to mitigate anticipated impacts on the EMS system. In addition, the State Attorney General imposed several conditions on Cottage Health System as a result of the findings of the EMS Agency, as well as their own findings. The recommendations of the EMS Agency as identified in the Impact Evaluation Report are attached (see Attachment A). Cottage Health System and the EMS Agency continue to negotiate the finer points of some of our recommendations, but the EMS Agency is satisfied that Cottage Health System is acting in good faith to comply with these recommendations. Some larger questions remain, such as the future of Goleta Valley Cottage Hospital, and the resolution of the senior mental health issue, but these are complex financial issues that Cottage Health System is continuing to explore.

It is anticipated that each agency will make a short presentation of approximately five to ten minutes, and will then take questions. The Board is not required to take any action other than accepting the informational update, but it is requested that Your Board create a project team to explore the options for re-opening a geriatric-psychiatric unit in Santa Barbara County.

Mandates and Service Levels:

As required by Section 1300 of the California Health and Safety Code, the EMS Agency held a public hearing on May 7, 2003, and then completed an Impact Evaluation Report on May 26, 2003, which was sent to the State and other interested parties.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

There are no fiscal or facilities impacts associated with accepting this informational update.

cc: James Egar, Public Defender
Stephen Shane Stark, County Counsel
Bernice James, Treasurer/Public Guardian

Roger E. Heroux, MPA *Director*
Peggy Langle, *Deputy Director*
Michele Micklewicz, MPH *Deputy Director*
Jane Overbaugh *Deputy Director*
Elliot Schulman, MD, MPH *Health Officer/Medical Director*

Nancy A Lapolla, MPH *Director*
Angelo Salvucci, MD, FACEP *Medical Director*

Attachment A:

EMS Agency's recommendations as described in the Impact Evaluation Report on the Closure of Saint Francis Medical Center, dated May 26, 2003.

1. Cottage Health System should identify and implement some means of informing the community of the closure of emergency medical services.
2. In addition to the general public information campaign, a special informational program should be directed toward the residents and caretakers of convalescent hospitals and assisted living facilities in the community who rely on Saint Francis Medical Center for emergency services.
3. Santa Barbara County EMS Agency and Cottage Health System will monitor the emergency department patient throughput times closely in order to avoid the need for Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital to go on diversion. Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital should take a leadership role in the hospital disaster preparedness arena.
4. Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital should clearly identify their plan for reducing patient waiting times in the emergency department.
5. Cottage Health System should clearly define their intentions for the future of Goleta Valley Cottage Hospital.
6. Cottage Health System should clearly state their plan for remaining at or above the ACEP minimum standards of one emergency treatment station per 2,000 patients.
7. Cottage Health System should identify local options for senior mental health patients.
8. A radio training program should be developed and implemented. Staff at Goleta Valley Cottage Hospital should be included in this training, and the training should include, at a minimum, radio procedures, familiarity with paramedic treatment protocols and Santa Barbara County EMS policies and procedures.
9. Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital should install a telephone line that paramedics can call that automatically rolls over to a second and third line if there are multiple calls being handled simultaneously.

10. Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital should create a full time Paramedic Liaison Nurse position.
11. The “Cottage 1” critical care transport ambulance currently has a permanent parking space outside the emergency department. Relocating this ambulance would provide another bay that 911 ambulances could utilize.
12. Suspects taken to Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital and Goleta Valley Cottage Hospital for medical clearance and/or legal blood draws should continue to receive priority attention.
13. In order to reduce the number of unintentional injuries in our community, Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital should reinstate the injury prevention nurse position.
14. Monthly Base Station meetings should be implemented at both Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital and Goleta Valley Cottage Hospital.