

January 5, 2009

Mivic Hirose, RN
Executive Administrator
Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center
375 Laguna Honda Boulevard
San Francisco, CA 94116

Dear Mivic,

I am writing on behalf of the 17 neighborhood associations who are members of the West of Twin Peaks Central Council.

It has been a long time since community members have been updated by LHH. I just learned that LHH announced to its staff on December 22 that it is postponing its move into the new hospital from April 20, 2010 until sometime in mid- to late-summer. The LHH website is still showing an April 20, 2010 move-in date. Although staff were told the opening has been moved until June or July, other sources are indicating that the delayed opening of the facility will more likely occur somewhere between August and October.

Various reasons being circulated regarding the delay include:

- LHH failed a required Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) inspection of the replacement facility's fire alarm system.
- LHH may have moved in furniture and equipment into the new facility without OSHPD permission prior to the fire alarm inspection.
- LHH may not have passed a separate "substantial completion" inspection by OSHPD.
- LHH may not have had its policies and procedures for the new facility completed for another OSHPD inspection.
- Plumbing problems.
- Rodent abatement.

Could you please confirm what has caused the move-in date to be delayed and how much this delay is anticipated to cost? I recall that at one point, the LHH Replacement Project Team advised the Health Commission that each month of delay opening the replacement hospital would cost an additional \$1.5 million per month. Will a five-month delay result in a new \$7.5 million increase to the Replacement Project? Will LHH start incurring additional fines if it does not move in to the new facilities by July 1?

Dr. Terry Palmer spoke at the November 23 meeting of the WOTPCC and was very concerned that LHH's move away from a medical model of care would result in the firing of LHH doctors. Is this true? She also stated that LHH's mission statement may be changed to include behavioral health patients. Is this true? Dr. Palmer cited the Ja report, and is worried that substance abuse and mental health patients will start to take away beds from the frail elderly and severely disabled. WOTPCC members are very concerned for LHH's current elderly patient population. What are your thoughts on this?

The only comment the Ja report made about the neighborhoods that surround LHH was that our concerns were outweighed by the greater need to help behavioral health patients. Do you believe that neighborhood concerns are secondary to LHH's potential new mission of focusing on behavioral health patients?

I noticed that Lumetra Healthcare Solutions was awarded the contract to perform organizational effectiveness consulting at LHH. What will Lumetra specifically be doing to help LHH and its residents?

Will Lumetra be instrumental in changing LHHs mission? How much will Lumetra receive in total compensation?

San Francisco's long-term ombudsman, Benson Nadell wrote an analysis about the Ja report. Mr. Nadell was concerned that San Francisco would be in violation of the Chambers settlement agreement if behavioral health patients who should be treated in the community will be sent to LHH for treatment, because the City has no other place to send them. He also felt that "rehabilitated" behavioral health patients may face longer than necessary stays at LHH because, once again, the City has no where to place these patients following treatment. Do you believe that Mr. Nadell's assessment is correct? Please explain. Since you are a prominent member of San Francisco's long term care community and a member of the Mayor's Long-Term Care Coordinating Council, do you believe that it is imperative that LHH only admit behavioral health patients who cannot be treated in community-based facilities?

I once heard you say boldly, that you will not let LHH be defined by its detractors. But given LHH's complete absence of outreach to the community, who is defining LHH? LHH appears to be hiding from the public, since it has:

- Held no community meetings for nearly two years;
- Not issued any reports for a long time, other than to the Citizen's General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee;
- Not had any media coverage, or issued any press releases, other than its announcement of your appointment as LHH's Executive Administrator; and
- Not performed the community outreach recommended by Wide Angle Communications in November, 2008.

The WOTPCC specifically requests that LHH re-establish communications with the local community. The surrounding neighborhoods care about LHH's residents and we have a right to know what LHH intends to do with the new facility that we overpaid so dearly for. We don't believe that hiding from the community is an intelligent way for LHH to define itself.

Specifically, please respond in writing to each question raised in this open letter, and also provide a date on which LHH intends to hold a meeting with the community to present both an update on the LHH Replacement Project and the City's plans for the patient populations to be served at LHH.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Best regards,

George Wooding
President
West of Twin Peaks Central Council

cc: Steve Kawa, Chief of Staff to Mayor Newsom
Mike Farrah, Director, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services
Supervisor Sean Elsbernd, District 7
Jim Illig, President, San Francisco Health Commission
Mitch Katz, MD, Director of Public Health
Hunter Stern, Chair, Citizen's General Bond Oversight Committee
Member Organizations, WOTPCC