

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Committee to Save Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center

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*** PRESS RELEASE ***

LAGUNA HONDA HOSPITAL MISSION CHANGE

Healthcare advocates are concerned public policy regarding Laguna Honda Hospital's mission statement may subsequently affect Laguna Honda's admission policies and who will be served.

San Francisco, CA — In preparation for opening the Laguna Honda Hospital replacement facility in 2009, San Francisco's Health Commission is introducing a resolution on June 5 to change Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center's mission and vision statements. The changing mission may affect who will be served at Laguna Honda as early as in coming months.

In 2004, the Department of Public Health unilaterally changed Laguna Honda's admission policy. Following a public outcry — and a year-long policy fight mounted by healthcare advocates and San Francisco residents — Mayor Gavin Newsom eventually ordered Director of Public Health Mitch Katz in 2005 to return the changed admission policy back to its pre-2004 version.

The language of the Health Commission's proposed resolution has not been released to the public prior to its June 5 meeting. However, a draft report released to the public on Tuesday, May 29 during the Health Commission's Laguna Honda Hospital Joint Conference Committee, included the language of the proposed mission and vision changes.

Current Mission Statement: As part of the Department of Public Health safety net, the mission of Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center is to provide high-quality, culturally competent rehabilitation and skilled nursing services to the diverse population of San Francisco. Skilled nursing service includes long-term care for residents who cannot be cared for in the community and/or short-term care for those who can be rehabilitated and discharged to a lower level of care within the community.

Proposed Mission Statement: To provide high quality, culturally competent rehabilitation and skilled nursing services to the diverse population of San Francisco.

Current Vision Statement: Laguna Honda Hospital will be a center of excellence in providing a continuum of care that integrates residents in the least restrictive setting, thereby supporting their highest level of independence.

Proposed Vision Statement: To be an innovative world-class center of excellence in long-term care and rehabilitation.

Notably, the definition that skilled nursing care includes both long-term care and short-term care is being removed entirely. The provision to provide long-term care to those who can't be cared for in the community is being watered down and moved from the mission statement to the vision statement. It is not known how these changes may then be used in the future to change Laguna Honda's admission policies regarding who will be served in the replacement facility when it opens in 2009.

It is also unclear whether the Health Commission can unilaterally change Laguna Honda's mission without having to obtain Board of Supervisors approval, or whether the Health Commission's resolution must be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for a formal change to official City public policy.

The Health Commission will introduce its proposed resolution on Tuesday, June 5 in Laguna Honda's Gerald Simon Auditorium on the first floor at 3:00 p.m. Laguna Honda is located at 375 Laguna Honda Boulevard; parking on campus is problematic during the weekdays due to construction of the replacement facility.

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