

# Future of Laguna Honda Hospital's Skilled Nursing Home Services At Risk

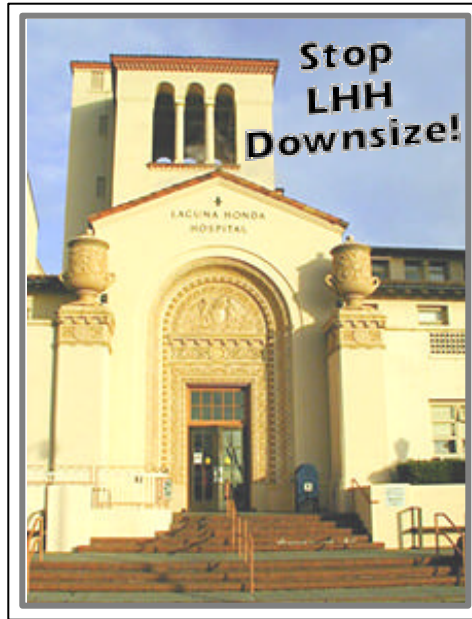
Gleaned from public records and public records requests, conflicting smoke signals are occurring about the true amount of cost overruns of the Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center (LHH) replacement facility, and how cost overruns will affect the eventual downsizing of LHH. For over 50 years, LHH has provided skilled nursing facility (SNF) and rehabilitation services to San Francisco's elderly and people with disabilities in a compassionate, *safe* environment.

**Now, LHH's future is in dire jeopardy, and irreversible decisions about its future will be made by November 3!**

There is good reason to believe that the new LHH may open with 300 to 400 fewer beds than voters who passed Proposition A were promised in 1999. Should that occur, losing 300 to 400 SNF beds in one fell swoop, and another 180 beds converted for "locked units," could increase San Francisco's SNF-bed shortage in the year 2020 (just 16 years from now) to between 1,588 and 2,880 beds short.

## Downsizing of Laguna Honda Hospital Replacement Facility

- As of May 27, 2004, the cost overrun for the replacement facility was reported to be "\$30 million."
- On June 1, 2004, it was reported that up to 240 beds may be eliminated from the new hospital.
- As of September 7, 2004, the cost overrun may have grown by an additional \$10 million between the end of May and September 2004 to \$40 million.
- When asked on September 7 whether the additional cost overrun might require cutting another 60 beds, bringing the total to 300 beds to be cut from the new hospital, the rebuild project manager indicated that might be a possibility.
- On September 29, 2004, material submitted by the Replacement Facility project manager to the Board of Supervisors' Finance and Audits Committee revealed that in Spring 2004 the general manager of the project, Turner Construction Company, prepared an estimate that reveals the cost overrun for the replacement project stands at a staggering \$43.984 million.
- The LHH Replacement Project will provide "300 fully secured [locked] units, which will begin coming on line in FY 07-08"; they represent 180 more locked units than in the current facility, and are intended to be used for younger, combative patients who are behaviorally disruptive and unsafe along side of frail, elderly San Franciscans.
- Between the 300 beds likely not to be built, and the extra 180 "locked units," the new facility will probably open with nearly 500 fewer skilled nursing beds than voters were promised in 1999.



An Ordinance passed by the Board of Supervisors on October 5, 2004 was designed to "quickly" reduce the "scope" (size) of the LHH Replacement Project. Bids due in mid-October to the City by subcontractors may eliminate FOUR, OR MORE, floors from the new facility.

## \$25 Million in Tobacco Settlement Funds Have Been Diverted — Twice

- In June 2003, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously approved "diverting" \$25 million from the tobacco settlement fund to balance the City's FY 03-04 budget.
- In January 2004, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved settling an unlitigated claim by former City Attorney Louise Renne, et al., further diverting the \$25 million into furniture, fixtures and equipment, which was not authorized under provisions of Proposition A.

**Tell the Board of Supervisors to Return the \$25 Million and Build All 1,200 Beds Promised Voters!**

*The proposed downsizing of the final LHH replacement project must be considered a direct result of \$43.9 million in cost overruns estimated by Turner Construction Company in Spring 2004.*

## Changing Patient Population(s) to Be Served Already Underway

The LHH admissions policy regarding who can be safely admitted deals with the changing populations who will be served at either the current, or the replacement, LHH facility.

- The "compromise" LHH admission policy returns first priority to people at home with *urgent* needs, but places *non-urgent* home referrals as the second priority *below* patients awaiting transfer to LHH from SFGH.
- *The new "LHH will offer ... the same kind of services as offered at the MHRF [Mental Health Rehabilitation Facility] ..."*

— Mitch Katz, MD  
Director of Public Health  
Minutes, MHRF Blue Ribbon Committee

- The DPH Strategic Plan, which is in the process of being updated, will [change] the role of Laguna Honda. *"While there are process problems, the structure of service [delivered at the new and current LHH] is going to change."*

— Jim Illig, Health Commissioner  
Minutes, LHH Joint Conference Committee

**The Board of Supervisors, the Health Commission, and Mayor Newsom must be quickly and repeatedly lobbied — before October 31 — when a final decision to downsize LHH will likely be made.** For further information and updates, call Committee to Save LHH media contact, Patrick Monette-Shaw, at (415) 292-6969, or visit:

[www.stopLHHdownsize.com](http://www.stopLHHdownsize.com)



**How Can You Help?**

**See Back ...**



## *The Committee to Save LHH Urgently Needs Your Help!*

### Attend Upcoming Hearings to Oppose Changing LHH's Mission and Its Downsizing

- October 20:** **Date To Be Determined.** Board of Supervisor's City Services Committee. Location: Room 263, City Hall; Time: 9:30 a.m. **Possible** agenda: Follow-up hearing to the June 24, 2004 City Services Committee hearing on the change in LHH admissions policy. (check agenda at [http://www.sfgov.org/bdsupvrs\\_index.asp](http://www.sfgov.org/bdsupvrs_index.asp)).
- October 26:** Full Health Commission Meeting, rescheduled from October 19. Location: 101 Grove, Room 300; Time: 3:00 p.m. **Possible** agenda: Based on project bids due back in mid-October, the LHH Rebuild Project Team may present recommendations concerning the number of beds to be eliminated from the LHH replacement facility (check agenda on Internet three days prior to meeting at <http://www.dph.sf.ca.us/Meetings/meetings.htm>).
- October 28:** LHH- Joint Conference Committee Meeting. Location: Laguna Honda Hospital, Room B-102; Time: 9:00 a.m. **Probable** agenda: Progress report from the LHH Executive Committee and a "thorough discussion" regarding the future direction of LHH (check agenda three days prior at <http://www.dph.sf.ca.us/Meetings/meetings.htm>).
- October 28:** Citizen's General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee. Location: City Hall, Room 416, Time: 9:30 a.m. **Unknown** agenda. Voters passed Proposition F on March 5, 2002 to establish this oversight committee. Prop F established this committee for the purpose of informing the public concerning the expenditure of general obligation bond proceeds through active review and publishing of regular reports. Consider writing to the Committee<sup>1</sup> to express concerns about the \$25 million diverted from tobacco settlement funds that were intended to rebuild LHH. (Check agenda prior to meeting at [www.sfgov.org/site/controller\\_index.asp?id=5846](http://www.sfgov.org/site/controller_index.asp?id=5846)).
- November 2:** Full Health Commission Meeting. Location: 101 Grove, Third Floor; Time: 3:00 p.m. **Possible** agenda: Discussion about the role of LHH and its future direction within DPH. Also, if the discussion does not occur before the full Health Commission at its October 26 meeting, the LHH Replacement Project Team may present recommendations concerning the number of beds to be eliminated (check agenda prior to meeting at <http://www.dph.sf.ca.us/Meetings/meetings.htm>).
- November 3:** LHH Rebuild Project Town Hall Meeting. Location: Laguna Honda Hospital, Gerald Simon Auditorium; Time: 4:00 p.m. **Possible** agenda: Downsizing of the LHH replacement facility during which the public may first learn of the last-minute plans for the size of the final facility and the changing patient population(s) based on LHH's new "role."
- November 16:** Annual Full Health Commission Meeting at LHH. **Note Probable** Location: Laguna Honda Hospital, Gerald Simon Auditorium; Time: 3:00 p.m. **Possible** agenda: Discussion of program proposals for FY 05-06 budget request and a discussion about the future direction of LHH and the role and mission of LHH (check agenda on Internet three days prior to meeting at <http://www.dph.sf.ca.us/Meetings/meetings.htm>).

To preserve a paper trail of testimony presented during hearings, written testimony is desperately needed in order to document that despite public concerns, the Health Commission, the Board of Supervisors, the Mayor, and other policy bodies may ignore valid concerns of the community. It is especially important that people both attend the meetings listed above, and present both oral testimony of no more than two to three minutes, **and** written testimony. Per San Francisco's Sunshine Ordinance, written testimony consisting of no more than 150 words must be included in the Health Commission's published minutes, but not in the published minutes of the Board of Supervisors.

### Who to Contact ... and Why

Contact the following City officials **repeatedly** between now and November, since they are unlikely to act without sustained community input. Remind those seeking re-election in odd-numbered Districts and D2 you'll vote Nov. 2 on their LHH record. Demand hearings!

Supervisor	District	Phone	Fax	E-mail
Jake McGoldrick	District 1	554-7410	554-7415	Jake.McGoldrick@sfgov.org
Michela Alioto-Pier	District 2	554-7752	554-7843	Michela.Alioto-Pier@sfgov.org
Aaron Peskin	District 3	554-7450	554-7454	Aaron.Peskin@sfgov.org
Fiona Ma	District 4	554-7460	554-7432	Fiona.Ma@sfgov.org
Matt Gonzalez, Board President	District 5	554-7630	554-7634	Matt.Gonzalez@sfgov.org
Chris Daly	District 6	554-7970	554-7974	Chris.Daly@sfgov.org
Sean Elsbernd	District 7	554-6516	554-6546	Sean.Elsbernd@sfgov.org
Bevan Dufty	District 8	554-6968	554-6909	Bevan.Dufty@sfgov.org
Tom Ammiano	District 9	554-5144	554-6255	Tom.Ammiano@sfgov.org
Sophie Maxwell	District 10	554-7670	554-7674	Sophie.Maxwell@sfgov.org
Gerardo Sandoval	District 11	554-6975	554-6979	Gerardo.Sandoval@sfgov.org
The Honorable Gavin Newsom	Mayor	554-6141	554-6160	Gavin.Newsom@sfgov.org
Edward Chow, MD	President, SF Health Commission			c/o Michele.Olson@sfgov.org

<sup>1</sup> Pamela S. Jue, Chair; Citizen's General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee; c/o Office of the Controller, City Hall, Room 316; 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place; San Francisco, CA 94102-4694. Also send a courtesy copy to Arlene Singer, since she is a member of the Civil Grand Jury appointed to the Bond Oversight Committee; her address is: Arlene Singer; Civil Grand Jury; San Francisco Superior Court; 400 McAllister Street; San Francisco, CA 94102-4512.