



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence

County Manager's Office

DATE: August 28, 2008
BOARD MEETING DATE: September 16, 2008
SPECIAL NOTICE: None
VOTE REQUIRED: None

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: John L. Maltbie, County Manager
SUBJECT: 2007-08 Grand Jury Response

RECOMMENDATION

Accept this report containing the County's responses to the following 2007-08 Grand Jury report: Funding Health Care for Uninsured Adults.

VISION ALIGNMENT:

Commitment: Responsive, effective and collaborative government.

Goal 20: Government decisions are based on careful consideration of future impact, rather than temporary relief or immediate gain.

This activity contributes to the goal by ensuring that all Grand Jury findings and recommendations are thoroughly reviewed by the appropriate County departments and that when appropriate, process improvements are made to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided to the public and other agencies.

DISCUSSION

The County is mandated to respond to the Grand Jury within 90 days from the date that reports are filed with the County Clerk and Elected Officials are mandated to respond within 60 days. To that end, attached is the County's response to the Grand Jury report on Funding Health Care for Uninsured Adults, issued on June 30, 2008.

San Mateo County Funding Health Care for Uninsured Adults

Findings:

Staff is in general agreement with the Grand Jury's findings regarding the County and Health Plan of San Mateo (HPSM). However, as outlined below, the County and HPSM's resources are influenced by Federal and State action, which affect issues such as provider reimbursement levels.

Recommendations:

1. The Board of Supervisors should encourage the Health Plan of San Mateo to:

A. Continue to pay fees at current levels in order to retain and attract providers. If funds are limited, consider paying higher rates to providers in critically needed specialties.

Response: Concur. The Health Plan of San Mateo (HPSM), which includes two members of the Board of Supervisors, as part of its governing commission, consistently reviews provider reimbursement levels. HPSM is committed to sustaining provider reimbursement levels to attract and retain providers, in order to ensure appropriate access to healthcare. HPSM has also implemented a robust "Pay for Performance" program that provides incentives for providers to deliver evidence-based services that enhance and promote healthcare quality. HPSM also considers varying payment arrangements for specific areas of client need. HPSM will continue to consider differential reimbursement and other incentives it can provide to encourage participation of critically needed specialties.

Because HPSM resources derive from a mix of federal, state and local funding, it is not always able to maintain payment levels when the State or Federal government passes on reductions in provider payment to HPSM.

B. Use all available options (County resolution, support of state and federal legislation) to encourage the six private non-profit hospitals in San Mateo County (Kaiser-Permanente Redwood City and South San Francisco, Seton Daly City and Moss Beach, Mills Peninsula Burlingame, Sequoia Hospital Redwood City) to give significant and ongoing financial contribution and operational support to the San Mateo Access and Care for Everyone (ACE) Program.

Response: Concur. The County and HPSM are engaged in Health System Redesign initiative that includes engagement of the six nonprofit hospitals in supporting the healthcare needs of the ACE and broader underserved populations. Our initial steps in the development of a "Community Health Network for the Underserved" (CHNU) that includes targeted roles for every

nonprofit hospital in San Mateo County in meeting the needs of the publicly insured and uninsured populations have been well received. The overall goal for the CHNU is to meet the needs of San Mateo County's underserved population with roles that maximize the effectiveness of each delivery system partner and best direct the community's local tax resources devoted to healthcare. Through the development of the CHNU during the 2008-09 fiscal year, the County and HPSM will be better positioned to support underserved populations covered by ACE, Medi-Cal, WELL, Healthy Families, Healthy Kids, and the uninsured.