

September 1, 2017

Dr. Edward Chow, Health Commission President
San Francisco Health Commission
101 Grove Street, Room 309
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear President Chow,

The San Francisco Post-Acute Care Collaborative (PACC), convened by the San Francisco Hospital Council of Northern and Central California, launched in March 2017 and is scheduled to run through December 2017. The PACC is meeting monthly to develop comprehensive and actionable solutions to the city's urgent post-acute care challenges for high-risk, vulnerable patients.

Since the PACC mandate addresses all post-acute issues and in connection with the hearing of the planned closure of St. Luke's subacute unit, the PACC held a special meeting on August 23, 2017. The goal of the meeting was to engage PACC members in a planning discussion regarding San Francisco's future subacute care needs. To guide the discussion and review of potential subacute care solutions for the city, PACC members and invited stakeholders drafted the following positional statement.

Subacute care is critical for the patients and their families who rely on it. Given a range of factors affecting the post-acute care landscape in San Francisco, such as multiple high-risk post-acute care populations, subacute care volume, and the geographic size and limited facility options in city, the PACC recommends a regional approach to meet future subacute care needs.

In addition, the PACC proposes that the proximity of subacute care placements be guided by measures that assess a patient support system's access to the facility (e.g., proximity, transportation), cultural and/or language needs, and financial resources.

Proposed Short-Term Subacute Care Options

Meeting attendees reviewed draft short- and long-term solutions to San Francisco's subacute care need and identified the following short-term options, ordered by priority, as the most financially sustainable and impactful.

1. Utilize Existing Bay Area Facilities to Provide Subacute Care

- Coordinate with neighboring counties Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara to purchase or lease subacute beds to support an expansion of existing freestanding or hospital-based subacute beds for San Francisco residents.

- Advocate for regional Medi-Cal enrollment and create Medi-Cal Health Plan letters of agreement that facilitate the timely transfer of Medi-Cal managed care benefits across counties.
- Create a formal governance structure to oversee regional placement practices and protocol.
- Establish a transportation fund for families/support systems experiencing economic hardship, so they can visit their loved ones placed in out-of-county subacute care facilities.

2. Utilize Existing Facilities to Provide Subacute Care in San Francisco

- Create a public-private partnership model that uses existing health care facilities to provide subacute care in San Francisco.
- Utilize unused space in hospitals, medical offices, and/or freestanding skilled nursing facilities to create a new subacute unit managed by freestanding SNF providers.
- Create a local transitional subacute unit (average length of stay three months) to manage patients with subacute care length of stay needs longer than the Long-Term Acute Care Hospital length of stay (25-30 days), but no longer than three months. Eligible patients include those who need several months to be stabilized or weaned off ventilators before discharge home or to a long-term care facility.

3. Fund a navigator/community liaison to work with San Francisco subacute care patients and their families/support systems

- Support a navigator/community liaison that will guide and assist subacute patients and their families pursuing the Home and Community-Based Alternatives Waiver (e.g. setting up and coordinating care for the patient at home in accordance with the requirements of the waiver, etc.).

The PACC is pleased to provide these recommendations on this important issue and looks forward to sharing the PACC final report later this year.

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