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COUNTY OF ORANGE HEALTH CARE AGENCY

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October 10, 2008

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

TO: Supervisor John M. W. Moorlach, Second District, Chairman
Supervisor Patricia Bates, Fifth District, Vice-Chair
Supervisor Janet Nguyen, First District
Supervisor Bill Campbell, Third District
Supervisor Chris Norby, Fourth District

SUBJECT: Irvine Regional Hospital and Medical Center Closing

Tenet Healthcare Corporation has notified the County of Orange Health Care Agency (HCA)/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) of their intent to close Irvine Regional Hospital and Medical Center located at 16200 Sand Canyon Avenue in the City of Irvine (see attached). This closure will include its Emergency Department and be effective January 15, 2009.

Irvine Regional Hospital has not been a major provider of emergency services in the County since the Kaiser Foundation Irvine Hospital opened at the same intersection on May 14th of this year. The impact of this closure is likely to be limited as Kaiser has eighteen Emergency Room (ER) beds and can rapidly open an additional pod of eighteen beds. Irvine Regional has eleven ER beds, essentially yielding a net gain of seven beds in the last five months. Irvine Regional is one of twenty-five designated Paramedic Receiving Center Hospitals and one of thirteen designated Cardiovascular Receiving Center Hospitals with an Emergency Department in the County.

According to the most recent Office of Statewide Health Planning & Development (OSHPD) data from 2005, Irvine Regional Hospital and Medical Centers' ER treated 7,815 patients or 3.17% of the County's 714,325 ER visits. EMS data shows that the hospital provides care to a similar proportion of paramedic patients. In 2006, they treated 1,895 of the 52,905 paramedic-level patients in the County, equivalent to 3.58%. The initial assessment indicates that all of the displaced patients will be able to receive timely care at a neighboring hospital, most frequently the Kaiser Hospital across the street. Ambulance transport times will not increase at all, except for designated cardiac patients who will experience an increase of about ten minutes.

One item of concern is the public perception that Kaiser hospitals will not treat Kaiser insured patients. This mistaken perception could lead patients to detour from that facility for a more

Members, Board of Supervisors

Irvine Regional Hospital and Medical Center Closing

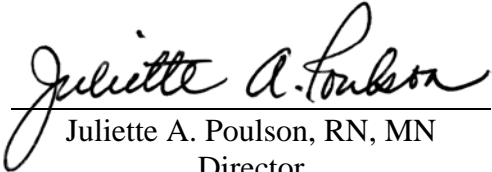
October 10, 2008

Page 2

distant hospital. Kaiser will treat and admit any emergency patient that walks in or is transported by ambulance. Kaiser ER management relates that the Irvine facility currently sees a very small percentage (1-2%) of non-Kaiser patients because Irvine Regional is so close. The Kaiser hospital in Anaheim sees about 10% non-Kaiser patients. EMS will address this concern in the impact analysis that will be completed according to state law.

Without the results a complete impact analysis, EMS believes that closing the hospital will have little immediate impact on access to and the delivery of emergency medical care. Based on population growth in the southern region of the county this closure could have implications in the future. With this in mind, EMS prefers that the facility reopen as a full service acute care hospital licensed for an emergency department. Administration at Hoag Hospital has stated publically and in closed meetings that Hoag Hospital Irvine will open in 2010 as an acute care general hospital with a spectrum of inpatient and outpatient services, as well as a fully staffed emergency room.

We will advise you of any additional developments. Please contact Greg Boswell, EMS Program Manager, at 714-834-2791 with any questions or concerns.


Juliette A. Poulson, RN, MN
Director

Attachment: Hoag Hospital Letter to the Community

cc: Thomas G. Mauk, County Executive Officer
Stephen Dunivent, Deputy CEO