City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Memorandum

Date: March 27, 2018

To: Patrick H. West, City Manager

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **MemorialCare's Response to the City of Long Beach's letter regarding diversion of advanced life support ambulances from Community Hospital**

The City of Long Beach (City) is in receipt of MemorialCare's response to our requests made of the hospital provider following the diversion of advanced life support (ALS) ambulances from Community Hospital on March 8, 2018. MemorialCare's responses to the City's requests are summarized below; both letters are attached for your information.

On March 8, 2018, the City requested:

1. MemorialCare to provide short-term and long-term plans to expand emergency room services at Long Beach Medical Center for ALS patients in order to adequately serve patients who can no longer use Community Hospital.
2. MemorialCare to provide assurances that a private inter-facility transport service will be available for walk-in patients or other patients at the hospital who are determined to need ALS care, and require transport to Memorial.
3. MemorialCare to explicitly confirm that the acute and psychiatric care licenses at Community Hospital will be renewed through April 28, 2019.

On March 16, 2018, MemorialCare responded to the City's request, respectively:

1. A description of changes made at Long Beach Medical Center since January 2018, as well as plans to expand the facility's emergency department.
2. A one-page transfer/transport plan.
3. Confirmation that the acute and psychiatric care licenses would be renewed through April 28, 2019.

For more information, please contact John Keisler, Director of Economic Development, at (562) 570-5282 or Diana Tang, Manager of Government Affairs, at (562) 570-6506.

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ATTACHMENTS

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
TOM MODICA, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
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MICHAEL DUREE, FIRE CHIEF
JOHN KEISLER, DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
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REBECCA GARNER, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER
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MemorialCare
Long Beach Medical Center
Community Medical Center Long Beach
Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach

2801 Atlantic Avenue
Long Beach, California 90806
memorialcare.org

March 16, 2018

Mr. Patrick West, City Manager
City of Long Beach
333 West Ocean Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re: Response to Emergency Department Services at Community Medical Center (Community)

Dr. Mr. West:

I wanted to follow up on our phone conversation. Again I apologize for not being able to give you advance notice to the Los Angeles County Emergency Medical Services (LACEMS) announcement on the diversion of Advanced Life Support (ALS) patients due to the rapid movement of activities. Moving forward, I look forward to improving our communications as we wind down hospital operations. Importantly, I want to reply to your letter dated March 8 in regards to some particular requests you had of MemorialCare. In the letter, you asked for the following:

(1) Detail MemorialCare's plan to expand emergency room services at Memorial Hospital for Advanced Life Support (ALS) patients in order to adequately serve patients who can no longer use Community Hospital due to your sudden closure of ALS/paramedic services. We are requesting both a short-term and long-term plan to address this critical community need.
(2) Immediately provide a private inter-facility transport for walk-in patients or other patients at the hospital who are determined to need ALS care, and require transport to Memorial. It is not acceptable to rely on the Long Beach Fire Department to transport these patients from Community to Memorial as a result of your decision. It is expected that you remedy this.
(3) Confirm explicitly that Community Hospital will extend the acute and psychiatric care licenses at Community Hospital through April 28, 2019.

Following are detailed responses for each of the items you've requested.

(1) Emergency Services at Long Beach Medical Center:
Conversations began with the Chief of the Long Beach Fire Department about the impact of closing Community's emergency department in November 2017 when Long Beach Medical Center announced to the City that Community could not meet seismic requirements. Since those meetings, Long Beach Medical Center has implemented the following:

Implemented January 2018:

- Implemented an action plan to ensure that paramedic wait time was no more than 45 minutes. To date the goal is being met for less than 45 minute wait time, with an average of 8.9 minutes for ALS patients and 44.4 minutes for Basic Life Support (BLS) patients.

- Opened additional observation beds in an overflow unit on an "as needed" basis to meet patient volume and to ensure emergency department patients needing additional testing and monitoring are seen before a physician decides if they need to be admitted to the hospital or discharged home. (*to date, census has not required the additional beds to be utilized*).

- Emergency Department physicians to perform rapid medical evaluation for downgrades to Fast Track program (*includes patients who are able to sit independently when removed from gurney*).

- Holding two hallway beds exclusively for Long Beach Fire Department for BLS patients when emergency department room is not available or wait time is not meeting agreed upon 45 minutes.

- Increasing emergency department staffing by four registered nurses for the weeks of March 18 through July 3 to assist with the transition process.

- Basic Life Support team to escalate to emergency department team leader when wait time is approaching the agreed upon 45 minutes (*this option will be accessed as needed but to date has not been needed as the goal time of 45 minutes has been met*).

Future Emergency Services Plans:

- Long Beach Medical Center emergency department will be expanded by 10 observation beds. The plan will be approved by the Office of Statewide Health Planning Department (OSHPD) and the additional beds are expected to be operational in November/December next year.

- Thirteen ICU beds within Long Beach Medical Center will come back on line by April 15, 2018, which will expand even more the number of available beds for critical care patients. These beds have been in suspension due to renovations in the hospital.

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(2) Inter-facility Transport Plan:
The Los Angeles County Emergency Medical Services (LACEMS) evaluated the circumstances at Community Medical Center and, in the interest of ensuring optimum patient safety and minimizing disruption to the emergency medical services transport system, made the decision to place Community on divert for ALS patients which average about six per day. A copy of our transfer/transport plan for critically ill patients who present at Community is attached.

(3) Acute Care License:
As indicated in our response to the City on March 5, pursuant to your request that we renew the annual licenses of the facility, we are confirming that we will renew the acute care license for Community upon its expiration on April 28, 2018. As a reminder, the licensure renewal is undertaken in the normal course of business and does not impact the need to cease operations at a date much earlier than the end of the next licensure term.

I look forward to our meeting on Thursday, March 22, to discuss the acute care services closure time line and milestones. I would be happy to answer any additional questions you have regarding LACEMS placing Community on diversion for ALS patients.

Regards,

John Bishop

John Bishop, Chief Executive Officer
MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center
MemorialCare Community Medical Center
MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach

CITY OF LONG BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

333 West Ocean Boulevard • Long Beach, CA 90802 • (562) 570-6711 FAX (562) 570-7650

March 8, 2018

Mr. John Bishop
Long Beach Memorial Medical Center
2801 Atlantic Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90806

Re: Decision by MemorialCare to suddenly reduce services at Community Hospital of Long Beach

Dear Mr. Bishop:

Your decision to divert Advanced Life Support paramedic ambulances from Community Hospital of Long Beach (Community Hospital) less than 24 hours after notifying the Long Beach Fire Department, but without advanced notifications to myself, Mayor Robert Garcia, the Long Beach City Council or our community is astounding and unexpected, and leaves the City without the ability to appropriately plan. Since your November 2017 presentation to the Long Beach City Council indicating hospital services would cease by June 30, 2019, the City of Long Beach has gone to incredible lengths to include MemorialCare, as a community partner, in our public outreach and transition process.

The City of Long Beach is committed to exploring every available opportunity to continue hospital operations at Community Hospital. To this end, you received a letter from the City of Long Beach on February 16, 2018 to formally: (1) decline MemorialCare's proposal to allow the General Acute Care Hospital License to expire and transition Community Hospital to an expanded acute care psychiatric hospital; (2) request MemorialCare to renew both the Acute Psychiatric Hospital and General Acute Care Hospital Licenses for the period of April 29, 2018-April 28, 2019 to provide time for the City to identify alternatives to keep the general acute care hospital operational; and (3) provide written approval for the City to engage with future partners including but not limited to buyers, developers and operators.

In response, the City received a 120-day lease termination notice from MemorialCare, which was compounded by today's diversion of paramedic ambulances from the facility. Additionally, MemorialCare does not clearly indicate whether or not the acute and psychiatric care licenses at Community Hospital will be renewed. The rashness and lack of clarity with which these decisions were communicated to and subsequently implemented in our city is alarming, and does not reflect the long and positive history the City of Long Beach and MemorialCare have cultivated over the years.

The City expects the following from MemorialCare:

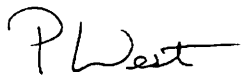
(1) Detail MemorialCare's plan to expand emergency room services at Memorial Hospital for Advanced Life Support (ALS) patients in order to adequately serve patients who can no longer use Community Hospital due to your sudden closure of ALS/paramedic services. We are requesting both a short-term and long-term plan to address this critical community need.
(2) Immediately provide a private inter-facility transport for walk-in patients or other patients at the hospital who are determined to need ALS care, and require transport to Memorial. It is

not acceptable to rely on the Long Beach Fire Department to transport these patients from Community to Memorial as a result of your decision. It is expected that you remedy this.

(3) Confirm explicitly that Community Hospital will extend the acute and psychiatric care licenses at Community Hospital through April 28, 2019.

It is my sincerest hope that as we move forward, MemorialCare can provide the City with additional notice and opportunity for discussion before major decisions such as the ones made this week are executed upon, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Patrick H. West
CITY MANAGER

cc: Long Beach Memorial Medical Center Board of Directors