



**Health Services**  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

February 15, 2008

Los Angeles County  
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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Bruce A. Chernof, M.D.  
Director and Chief Medical Officer

SUBJECT: **STATUS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
CONTINGENCY SERVICES PLAN AT MARTIN LUTHER  
KING, JR. – HARBOR HOSPITAL**

This is to provide your Board with the monthly report on the status of the Martin Luther King, Jr. - Multi-Service Ambulatory Care Center (MLK MACC), the impact of the closure of MLK-Harbor Hospital, and the progress of the plan to reopen MLK Hospital.

Bruce A. Chernof, M.D.  
Director and Chief Medical Officer

John F. Schunhoff, Ph.D.  
Chief Deputy Director

Robert G. Splawn, M.D.  
Senior Medical Director

**MLK MACC Service Indicators**

Urgent Care

There were 2,611 urgent care visits (adult and pediatric) provided in January 2008 (Attachment I). This is a 33% increase from December 2007 when 1,967 visits were provided and a 32% increase from January 2007 when 1,974 visits were provided.

There were 217 patients transferred out of the urgent care center to hospitals (primarily Harbor-UCLA Medical Center) during January 2008 compared to 144 in December 2007. Twelve of these transfers were initiated through a call to 9-1-1. The increase in the number of patients transferred is likely due to the overall increase in the number of urgent care visits provided.

Outpatient Primary and Specialty Care Visits

The number of outpatient primary and specialty care visits provided in January 2008 was 10,972 (Attachment I). This is a 15% increase from December 2007 when 9,004 visits were provided and a 6% increase from January 2007 when 10,312 visits were provided.

Patient Transportation for Scheduled Appointments

Patient transportation services are available between the MLK MACC, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Hubert H. Humphrey Comprehensive Health Center, and Dollarhide Health Center. Patients can arrange for door-to-door transportation from home for scheduled appointments. Transportation services are provided Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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In January 2008, MLK provided transportation to 470 patients and companions. This compares to 354 patients and companions who were provided transportation in December 2007.

### 2-1-1 Call Volume

In January 2008 there were 282 calls to 2-1-1 related to MLK. This compares to 162 calls in December 2007. Callers to 2-1-1 have the option of receiving recorded information on MLK, speaking to a call center operator, or being transferred directly to the MLK MACC.

### **Impacted Hospitals – Emergency Department Volume and 9-1-1 Transports**

As reported previously, the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency in collaboration with EMS field providers and surrounding hospitals redrew the ambulance service areas to redirect 9-1-1 ambulances in an effective manner while limiting disruption to the EMS system to the greatest degree possible. The EMS Agency continues to monitor the EMS system and work with field personnel and fire departments to ensure that all pre-hospital care personnel understand the new service area rules. Nurses from the EMS Agency have been working with St. Francis Medical Center to ensure the appropriate utilization of the Round Robin process. On January 17, 2008, LA Metropolitan Medical Center's new four-bed Emergency Department (ED) was approved for 9-1-1 traffic.

The EMS Agency continues to closely monitor redirected ambulance traffic. The average daily number of patients registered in the EDs of the impacted hospitals and the average daily number of 9-1-1 transports has generally remained level since shortly after the closure of MLK-Harbor Hospital. All impacted hospitals continue to report a sustained increase in ambulance traffic, ED volume, and demand for inpatient beds. Hospital diversion hours have increased and the EMS Agency has received verbal reports that all EDs have been busy, which is typical for the time of year.

On January 17, 2008, DHS issued a joint press release together with the Department of Public Health, requesting the public to seek medical care for minor respiratory complaints with their personal physician or clinics, seek the flu vaccine, and advising of the long wait times at the emergency rooms.

Nine private "impacted" hospitals were offered an agreement including reimbursement for uninsured 9-1-1 patients from MLK's geographical area and priority for transfers into the County and MetroCare contract facilities. Additional funding was also allocated for physician reimbursement of 9-1-1 and walk-in patients. Seven of the nine hospitals signed the agreement. The EMS Agency hosts a bi-weekly conference call with the impacted hospitals to answer questions and concerns regarding the Impacted Hospital Program (IHP) Contract and patient transfers into the County system.

The ED volume and 9-1-1 transport data provided below are self-reported by the hospitals. The nine impacted private hospitals did not report ED or 9-1-1 transport data to DHS prior to DHS requesting this information at the time MLK-Harbor Hospital closed. For this reason DHS has not been able to compare data for the period before and after the closure of the Hospital.

The Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) captures data on the utilization of health care services including emergency department visits. This data can be used to analyze trends over time. There is a significant lag between the end of the reporting period and the time the data become available. As soon as it becomes available, DHS will analyze the OSHPD data and prepare a report for your Board.

### Emergency Department Volume

During January 2008, a daily average of 1,483 patients registered in the EDs of the nine impacted hospitals (Attachment II). This reflects a 9% increase from the daily average of 1,356 patients during December 2007. Harbor-UCLA Medical Center registered a daily average of 298 ED patients during January 2008, compared to 262 the prior month.

LAC+USC Medical Center registered a daily average of 447 ED patients during January 2008, compared to 390 the prior month. This data is self-reported by the hospitals.

To alleviate overcrowding at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center's ED, staff from the Medical Alert Center has been assigned to Harbor to assist in transferring patients requiring admission to other facilities with the capacity to treat them. An average of 3 to 5 patients per day is being transferred through this process.

In addition, staff from Rancho Los Amigos Hospital and Medical Alert Center met with MLK Urgent Care administration and physicians to identify patients requiring admission who may be transferred to Rancho Los Amigos or private hospitals instead of to Harbor. Medical Alert Center staff also met with administration and the Medical Director of Humphrey Comprehensive Health Center to establish processes to transfer patients requiring admission to available hospitals other than Harbor. Since the time of implementation of this process on January 29, through February 14, 2008, there have been 83 patients transferred from the MLK urgent care center to inpatient care. Of these 83 transfers, 41 patients (49%) have been sent to private or County hospitals other than Harbor-UCLA Medical Center.

### 9-1-1 Transports

During January 2008, there was a daily average of 283 9-1-1 transports to the nine impacted hospitals (Attachment II). This reflects a 3% increase from the daily average of 274 9-1-1 transports during December 2007. Harbor-UCLA Medical Center had a daily average of 31 9-1-1 transports during January 2008, compared to 28 the prior month. LAC+USC Medical Center had a daily average of 48 9-1-1 transports during January 2008, which is the same as the prior month. This data is also self-reported by the hospitals.

### Impacted Hospital Transfer Program

During January 2008, the impacted hospitals referred 121 eligible patients to the EMS Agency for transfer into DHS and other hospitals. This compares to 85 eligible patients in December 2007. Of the 121 eligible patients referred in January 2008, 43 were accepted for transfer. The main reasons why eligible patients were not accepted for transfer were: the patient was discharged (27), there was no capacity (12), the patient no longer had an acute care need (10), and the referral was cancelled by the sending facility (8).

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The 43 patients that were transferred went to the following hospitals: Harbor-UCLA Medical Center (13), LAC+USC Medical Center (13), City of Angels Medical Center (7), St. Vincent's Medical Center (4), Olive View-UCLA Medical Center (4), Los Angeles Community Hospital of Norwalk (1), and Torrance Memorial Medical Center (1).

### **Progress to Re-open MLK-Harbor Hospital**

Work is actively continuing with the previously identified potential outside operators. The Department has provided the potential operators with due diligence information including seismic and financial data. The Department intends to bring recommendations to your Board by the end of February 2008, and the outside contractors are preparing specific proposals for consideration.

### **Conclusion**

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

BAC:cb  
708:004

### **Attachments**

c: Chief Executive Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

**Los Angeles County Department of Health Services  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - MULTI-SERVICE AMBULATORY CARE CENTER  
Urgent, Primary and Specialty Care Visits**

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
<b>Urgent Care<sup>1</sup></b>												
2007	1,974	2,021	2,097	1,826	1,965	1,537	1,430	1,328	1,794	2,176	2,037	1,967
2008	2,611											
% Change from 2007	32.3%											
<b>Primary and Specialty Care</b>												
2007	10,312	9,391	10,774	10,586	10,971	9,723	8,471	9,143	7,712	9,565	9,367	9,004
2008	10,972											
% Change from 2007	6.4%											

<sup>1</sup> Urgent care visits include pediatric and adult urgent care visits.

**Los Angeles County Department of Health Services**  
**SELF-REPORTED POLL OF HOSPITALS IMPACTED BY CLOSURE OF MLK-HARBOR HOSPITAL**  
Average Daily Emergency Department (ED) Volume

Hospital	AUG 2007: <sup>1</sup>	SEP 2007	% CHG FROM AUG '07	OCT.2007	% CHG FROM SEPT '07	NOV.2007	% CHG FROM OCT '07	DEC 2007	% CHG FROM NOV '07	JAN 2008	% CHG FROM DEC '07
<b>California Hospital Medical Center: 26 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	172	169	(1.7%)	166	(1.8%)	156	(6.0%)	155	(0.6%)	172	11.0%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	56	56	0.0%	51	(8.9%)	50	(2.0%)	46	(8.0%)	48	4.3%
<b>Centinela Freeman Regional Medical Center: 36 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	166	168	1.2%	169	0.6%	171	1.2%	175	2.3%	175	0.0%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	52	58	11.5%	57	(1.7%)	58	1.8%	55	(5.2%)	61	10.9%
<b>Downey Regional Medical Center: 22 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	140	132	(5.7%)	129	(2.3%)	130	0.8%	124	(4.6%)	137	10.5%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	26	23	(11.5%)	23	0.0%	22	(4.3%)	23	4.5%	23	0.0%
<b>Lakewood Regional Medical Center: 14 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	94	93	(1.1%)	96	3.2%	95	(1.0%)	94	(1.1%)	104	10.6%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	16	15	(6.3%)	14	(6.7%)	17	21.4%	19	11.8%	21	10.5%
<b>Kaiser Foundation - Bellflower: 45 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	232	230	(0.9%)	236	2.6%	228	(3.4%)	223	(2.2%)	250	12.1%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	26	27	3.8%	24	(11.1%)	23	(4.2%)	25	8.7%	24	(4.0%)
<b>Long Beach Memorial Medical Center: 53 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	228	238	4.4%	243	2.1%	235	(3.3%)	239	1.7%	271	13.4%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	55	*	*	40	*	37	(7.5%)	39	5.4%	41	5.1%
<b>Memorial Hospital of Gardena: 10 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	81	83	2.5%	83	0.0%	77	(7.2%)	71	(7.8%)	77	8.5%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	15	15	0.0%	17	13.3%	15	(11.8%)	14	(6.7%)	15	7.1%
<b>St. Francis Medical Center: 39 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	173	175	1.2%	173	(1.1%)	167	(3.5%)	171	2.4%	180	5.3%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	34	34	0.0%	30	(11.8%)	31	3.3%	36	16.1%	34	(5.6%)
<b>White Memorial Medical Center: 28 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	112	115	2.7%	113	(1.7%)	110	(2.7%)	104	(5.5%)	117	12.5%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	13	16	23.1%	17	6.3%	16	(5.9%)	17	6.3%	16	(5.9%)
<b>TOTAL</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	1,398	1,403	0.4%	1,408	0.4%	1,369	(2.8%)	1,356	(0.9%)	1,483	9.4%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	293	244	(16.7%)	273	11.9%	269	(1.5%)	274	1.9%	283	3.3%
<b>Harbor/UCLA Medical Center: 55 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	208	210	1.0%	219	4.3%	243	11.0%	262	7.8%	298	13.7%
# of 9-1-1 Transports <sup>2</sup>	10	12	20.0%	27	125.0%	27	0.0%	28	3.7%	31	10.7%
<b>LAC+USC Medical Center: 72 ED Treatment Stations</b>											
# of Patients Registered in the ED	429	411	(4.2%)	430	4.6%	409	(4.9%)	390	(4.6%)	447	14.6%
# of 9-1-1 Transports	45	51	13.3%	50	(2.0%)	48	(4.0%)	48	0.0%	48	0.0%

All figures are based on data submitted by each hospital - updates are made as they are received.

\* Not reported/available

<sup>1</sup> The month of August 2007 contains data starting 8/16/07.

<sup>2</sup> Beginning the week of 9/30/07, Harbor/UCLA Medical Center began reporting all ambulance transports (Medical, Trauma, Advanced Life Support (ALS), and Basic Life Support (BLS)). Prior to the week of 9/30/07 BLS transports were not included in the total.