

Petaluma Health Care District Statement in Response to Providence's Intent to Close Petaluma Valley Hospital's Family Birthing Center

Providence has informed the Petaluma Health Care District (District) that it intends to close the Family Birthing Center at Petaluma Valley Hospital (PVH) due to lack of anesthesia coverage and low volume. At the January 18, 2023 District Board meeting, Providence's Regional Chief Executive Laureen Driscoll presented the reason for closure and the proposed plan to consolidate services at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital. The presentation was followed by public comments and questions from the PVH staff, including doctors and nurses, community members, and our District Board.

The Asset Purchase Agreement between NorCal HealthConnect (a Providence subsidiary) and the District effective January 1, 2021 requires NorCal HealthConnect to operate Petaluma Valley Hospital's Family Birthing Center for a minimum of five years from the sale date, unless a majority of the Directors of the District Board approves its closure.

Contrary to a statement issued by Driscoll that Providence is working with the District to ensure a smooth transition, the District Board has not agreed to this outcome or made a decision. The District expects Providence to focus on solutions to keep the Family Birthing Center open and honor the commitment they made to our community. Per the PVH sale agreement, the closure of the Family Birthing Center without the approval of the majority of the Directors of the District Board will be a default under the agreement. The District believes that the Family Birthing Center is a critical asset to Petaluma and our surrounding rural communities.

The District has a number of related questions for and requests of Providence, including financial information relating to PVH and the Family Birthing Center, Providence's efforts to attract and retain anesthesia coverage, and data around the patient volume at the Family Birthing Center, which we understand has not changed since PVH's sale.

The District Board is scheduled to discuss this matter at a special Board meeting on January 25, 2023 at 6 p.m., which is open to the public. More information on how to attend and/or submit a comment is available on our website at www.phcd.org. This matter will also be discussed at the District's regular board meeting scheduled for February 15, 2023.

Ramona Faith, CEO
Petaluma Health Care District