

# DISTRICT HEALTH NEWS

WINTER 2010/SPRING 2011

## A letter from Marin Healthcare District Board Chair, Dr. Larry Bedard

Dear Fellow Citizens of Marin,

It is with great enthusiasm that I share this update on Marin General Hospital's successful transfer to local control. In terms of speed and efficiency, the transfer has exceeded all expectations. The atmosphere at the hospital is overwhelmingly positive. The staff turnover some had predicted never happened. Instead, the staff is finding the hospital to be a more open, collaborative and vibrant work environment.

This new era in the history of Marin General Hospital brings an unprecedented transparency, and the reports that the Marin Healthcare District Board is getting from the hospital are consistently encouraging. The hospital is financially stable, and projections are even better for the future. Now that Marin General is locally owned and administered, we look forward to reinvesting net revenue right back into the hospital, and the health of this community.

The Marin Healthcare District Board has worked hard to maintain open communication with the community, and we believe the people of Marin are in support of the direction the hospital is going. Right now, our top priorities are the seismic safety bond issue and refining the plans for the new hospital building, starting with a new parking garage, which we hope to break ground on next year. We also look forward to the results of a Hospital Needs Assessment, to be delivered in March.

At the beginning of 2011, we will reevaluate both our strategic plan and our mission as District Board. Beyond our work with the hospital, we will look into a variety of initiatives that could benefit the health of the community. As always, our top priority will be the health and well-being of our families, friends and neighbors, right here in Marin County.

Wishing you happy holidays and a wonderful new year,



Larry Bedard, MD, Chairman of the Marin Healthcare District Board



“We had a 14-month discussion to build the bylaws. We overcame our differences and every single decision was unanimous. Unanimous decisions in the best interest of the Hospital and the community.”

– LARRY BEDARD, MD  
CHAIRMAN OF THE MHD BOARD

## We want to keep the community informed

Marin General Hospital is an essential community resource, delivering our babies, protecting our health, and providing us with emergency care, 24/7. Not surprisingly, “What’s happening with the hospital?” has been a frequently asked question over the past couple of years. People want reassurance that their hospital will continue to be there for them in the event of an earthquake or other disaster.

Serving as a conduit for information about the hospital is a critical function of the Marin Healthcare District. To this end, the District and Hospital leadership have established an unprecedented degree of transparency. This starts with a new openness between the Hospital staff and management, which in turn works closely with the Hospital’s Operating Board. Hospital news and Operating Board decisions are then conveyed to the District in an in-depth briefing, delivered by Hospital and Marin Healthcare District CEO Leo Domanico at the Marin Healthcare District’s Board meetings.

Reporting criteria put in place by the Marin Healthcare District ensure that the District has a real-time, high-level understanding of the Hospital’s performance, quality ratings, patient satisfaction, and financial situation. Mr. Domanico’s updates provide the District with information, in writing, about everything from patient satisfaction by service to the number of surgeries, admissions, and emergencies.

Keep up with our latest news by visiting our Web site at [www.marinhealthcare.org](http://www.marinhealthcare.org). There you can:

- Download the minutes of MHD Board meetings
- Listen to audiotapes of the meetings
- Sign up to receive e-mails regarding MHD Board and Committee meetings and to download newsletters

You can also attend the public Marin Healthcare District Board meetings, which take place at the Hospital on the second Tuesday of every month.

## A YEAR IN THE HEALTH OF MARIN

The Marin Healthcare District Board has accomplished much in the past year. Highlights include:

- Paying back the county loan that was secured to help with the Hospital transfer.
- Adopting bylaws to ensure openness and accountability between the Hospital, the Hospital Board, the District Board, and the public.
- Setting up an organizational and reporting structure to ensure that Marin General Hospital is meeting community needs thoroughly and efficiently.
- Developing checks/balances with the Hospital for transparency. Now, the Marin community can easily find out about new developments and future plans for their hospital.
- Hiring an exceptional MGH executive team. This team has a deep knowledge base, extensive expertise, a proven track record, and a long-term vision for the Hospital.
- Attending professional conferences to build skills and enhance the Board’s collective understanding of the healthcare challenges currently facing our nation, state, and community.
- Appointing a stellar Board of Directors for Marin General Hospital. This team has a rich and diverse combination of skill sets and experience that complements the needs of the Hospital. Team members are locally based and have a vested interest in the success of the Hospital.
- Commissioning a Physician’s Needs Assessment to identify any unmet demand for primary and specialty medical care in Marin County.
- Launching a plan to recruit and retain much-needed doctors to Marin.
- Hiring an architect and approving the design of the new Hospital. The Board is already looking at infrastructure and environmental impact issues pertaining to the new building, and construction on a new parking lot should begin in 2011.
- Preparing the plans for the Marin General Seismic Upgrade. Plans for this critical upgrade will be submitted to the County in the near future.

## Meet our Board Members



### LARRY BEDARD, MD

Dr. Bedard, the Chairman of the Marin Healthcare District Board, has been practicing emergency medicine for more than 30 years, including a 12-year stint at Marin General Hospital. He is an active advocate on issues related to medicine at the local, state, and national levels. Dr. Bedard was elected and served as President of

the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), President of the California Chapter of the ACEP, Trustee of the California Medical Association, and President of the Marin Medical Society. He is a father to two daughters and enjoys photography and travel with his family. His lifelong ambition is to be in the Oval Office when the United States President signs the bill bringing universal healthcare to the nation.



### JENNIFER RIENKS, PHD

Dr. Rienks currently serves as Board Secretary, and as Chair of the Lease and Building Committee. She has her master's degree and her PhD in social psychology, and since 1996 has worked for the Family Health Outcomes Project at UCSF. Dr. Rienks has served as research director for projects to prevent HIV

and reduce black infant mortality disparities, evaluated programs to prevent cancer and diabetes, and is currently conducting a needs assessment for the California Department of Health Services' California Children's Services program. She also conducts training for staff from local public health departments throughout California on topics ranging from community needs assessments and intervention development to interpreting trends in health outcomes. Dr. Rienks has lived in Marin since 1986, and she and her husband have a 15-year-old daughter. During what little free time she has, she likes to garden and hike the spectacular trails of Marin.



### SHARON JACKSON, MBA

Marin Healthcare District Board Vice Chair Sharon Jackson has more than 25 years of experience as a healthcare business consultant, providing strategic planning and change management services to hospitals, clinics, and rehab facilities. She chaired the MHD Board from 2007 to 2008, and has served on the

Marin Mental Health Board, the Marin Women's Commission, the Healthy Marin Partnership, and the California Association of Local Mental Health Boards. She has four adult children and five grandchildren with whom she spends as much time as possible.



### JAMES CLEVER, MD

Dr. Clever has lived in Marin since 1968 when he came to be an Air Force physician at Hamilton AFB. He was elected to the Marin Healthcare District Board in 2006 and has served as Chair of the Management, Finance and Audit Committee since then. He received his undergraduate and medical degrees at Stanford

University, and served his residency there, finishing as Chief Resident in Medicine. Dr. Clever practiced Internal Medicine – Primary Care in San Francisco for 35 years, served for three years as Chief of Staff at what has become California Pacific Medical Center, and taught at UCSF School of Medicine for more than 30 years. His wife and daughter are also physicians. He ran in the Dipsea Race 31 consecutive years, finishing "in the shirts" seven times.



### HARRIS "HANK" SIMMONDS, MD

Before his retirement in 2006, Dr. Simmonds spent 35 years helping the Marin community grow as an OBGYN. He served as Chief of Staff at MGH from 1983 to 1985. Dr. Simmonds has two wonderful children: Gail, who is in women's apparel, and Raymond, a PhD in Physics, who works for NIST. Their

mother, Alyce Simmonds, died in 2006. While enjoying his retirement, Dr. Simmonds was asked to run for the Marin Healthcare District Board in 2008. He won.

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“I was active at the Hospital for 35 years, so it is really a part of me. I want to see it succeed.”

– HANK SIMMONDS, MD  
MHD BOARD MEMBER

# Meeting the medical needs of Marin

In June of 2009, the Marin Healthcare District Board announced the results of a study the Board had commissioned to evaluate healthcare provider needs in Marin. The study documented an unmet demand for both primary care physicians and specialists. It can be challenging for people to obtain medical appointments and services on a timely basis, and some are seeking care outside of the county. In addition, the Marin Healthcare District has a responsibility to provide a healthcare safety net to the uninsured and economically vulnerable population. In order to meet the need for more physicians in Marin County, the Healthcare District is taking a multi-pronged approach:

- In collaboration with the Prima Medical Group and the Marin Independent Physician Association (MIPA), the MHD Board has formed a Medical Foundation. The Prima Medical Foundation manages practices, provides IT and financial services, and recruits physicians to the area. Through the Prima Medical Foundation, the District hopes to attract more experts in such key areas as stroke, cancer, cardiovascular, and primary care.
- The Board has formed a 1206(B) Government Clinic to ensure that Marin's residents have access to high-quality primary care. Our 1206(B) clinics are primary care clinics directly maintained by the Marin Healthcare District. The District currently operates two 1206(B) clinics in Point Reyes and one in Sausalito.

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“People need primary care physicians and access to specialists so they don't have to go to hospital emergency rooms. Our goal is to attract young doctors who will settle in and get to know the community.”

– SHARON JACKSON, MBA  
MHD BOARD MEMBER

## CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE MARIN HEALTHCARE DISTRICT

Part of the Marin Healthcare District's job is to pay attention to changing county demographics and their effect on community needs.

- In 2000, 18% of Marin's existing population was over 60 years old. By 2030, that figure will have climbed to 35%.
- Considered “a wealthy county” by many, Marin is actually at about 18% poverty level, and that figure may increase to as much as 25% within the next decade.
- 22.9% of the Marin population speaks a language other than English at home.



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