



**MARIN HEALTHCARE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

REGULAR MEETING

**Tuesday, May 13, 2025
MarinHealth Medical Center
Conference Center**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Alfrey called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Board members present: Chair Edward Alfrey, MD; Vice Chair Ann Sparkman, RN/BSN, JD; Brian Su, MD; Samantha Ramirez, BSW

Staff present: David Klein, MD, CEO; Eric Brettner, CFO; Colin Leary, General Counsel; Jill Kinney, VP, Marketing & Communications; Tricia Lee, EA

Board members absent: Sectary Jennifer Rienks, PhD

2. General Public Comment

There was no public comment

3. Approve Agenda

Dr. Su moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Ramirez seconded. **Vote: all ayes.**

4. Approve Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 8, 2025

Dr. Su moved to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Ramirez seconded. **Vote: all ayes.**

5. Primary Care Access

Dr. Alfrey opened the discussion with remarks on the importance of primary care access and the deep commitment of all Marin Healthcare District Board members to healthcare equity and service. He provided background on each director's professional qualifications, community involvement, and demonstrated advocacy for primary care access, mental health, and underserved populations. Dr. Alfrey noted the board's collective capability to address the primary care access issue in Marin and proposed that board members explore possible local solutions despite broader statewide and national shortages.

He acknowledged current efforts by MarinHealth to recruit primary care physicians and highlighted the persistent gaps in access, referencing recent public comments and patient experiences. Dr. Alfrey proposed the creation of a task force that could collaborate with hospital leadership to address recruitment, retention, and equitable access.

Please see Attachment A for Dr. Alfrey's full prepared statement.

Ms. Sparkman agreed that primary care access is a critical issue and expressed support for exploring the proposed task force.

Dr. Su spoke to the evolution of primary care in Marin, including a shift toward concierge practices driven by lifestyle and economic factors. He reported significant community challenges in finding primary care providers, describing it as a public health crisis. Dr. Su supported forming a task force in collaboration with the hospital and volunteered to serve on it.

Ms. Ramirez echoed concerns raised in recent public comment and affirmed her support for any effort that could help community members access care.

Dr. Klein confirmed that primary care access is a top priority and acknowledged the need for ongoing recruitment, retention, and organization-level efforts. Dr. Klein supports and encourages the idea of a joint task force between the hospital and the district board to address primary care shortage.

Dr. Alfrey recommended that Ms. Rienks, who was absent, be given an opportunity to comment at the next meeting, given her long-standing commitment to mental health and primary care advocacy. This topic will be included as an agenda item at the next meeting.

6. Healthcare Advocacy and Emerging Challenges and Trends

Dr. Klein discussed ongoing advocacy to release funds tied to Proposition 35, which established a Managed Care Organization (MCO) tax to support Medi-Cal. While the proposition passed with 68% voter approval, disbursement has been delayed due to federal matching complications and the state's late submission of required paperwork. The funding (approximately \$725 million) at the state level is intended to increase payments to Medi-Cal providers and hospitals. The California Hospital Association and California Medical Association are actively advocating for release of the funds, even if only at the state level initially.

Dr. Klein reported at the federal level, attention is focused on development of the FY2026 federal budget. Congress is considering approximately \$900 billion in cuts, with Medicaid among the potential targets. Advocacy groups and elected officials are working to ensure that Medicaid and Medicare entitlements are protected. He noted A group of 13 Republican members of Congress, including several from California, signed a letter opposing any budget reconciliation bill that would reduce Medicaid coverage for vulnerable populations. Dr. Klein

noted that advocacy campaigns are ongoing, including letter-writing and outreach to California's congressional delegation.

Dr. Klein reported AB 1778 (E-Bike Safety), noting the Tiburon Town Council is scheduled to vote on the model ordinance on May 21 and may become the first in Marin to adopt it. Dr. Klein also reported Mill Valley passed the ordinance on first reading but has not implemented it.

The Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) issued a statement on the safety of e-bikes and scooters, inspired in part by cases in Marin and national incidents. Key recommendations include:

- Mandatory helmet use.
- Speed limits on micromobility devices.
- Safe riding practices to protect pedestrians (e.g., limiting use on sidewalks).
- Licensure and registration requirements.
- Prohibition of riding under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Dr. Klein reported Dr. Maa is also leading a local effort to introduce a soda tax targeting sugar-sweetened beverages in Marin County. Legislative activity is anticipated in connection with this initiative.

7. Committee Reports

A. Finance & Audit Committee (did not meet)
No report given.

B. Lease, Building, Education and Outreach Committee (met May 6th)
Lease, Building, Education and Outreach Committee did not meet. However, Ms. Ramirez the committee met to plan the Gardening Seminar and will be meeting in the near future with a Master Gardener to refine the event's focus.

8. Reports

A. Hospital and District CEO's Report

Dr. Klein reported this week is National Hospital Week. Celebrations were held across the entire enterprise, including the hospital and network clinics. These celebrations included many staff appreciation activities.

A highly attended Town Hall took place both in person and virtually, where leadership shared updates and survey results.

Dr. Klein shared the hospital will host its first-ever Family Fun Picnic on Sunday, May 18, at Piper Park, open to staff and their families, featuring games, food, bounce houses, face painting, and shuttle transportation from the hospital.

Dr. Klein reported continued exploration of campus expansions are under consideration, including a potential new parking structure. Dr. Klein discussed the path toward a new hospital building, emphasizing the importance of the upcoming Spring 2026 election for potential voter approval of funding. He noted that the project would also require a lease extension beyond the current 2045 expiration.

Dr. Klein shared recruitment and clinical program updates.

- New UCSF Cardiovascular Surgery Chair: Dr. Jason Smith, a Marin resident, has been appointed, strengthening collaborative ties.
- Cardiac Surgery Program continues to succeed, drawing patients nationally.
- Final selection underway for a new Vice President of Medical Affairs for the medical network.

Dr. Klein reported patient access initiatives remains the top operational focus across the medical network.

Dr. Klein reported the hospital continues operating near full capacity.

Dr. Klein reported patient satisfaction scores across all areas of the enterprise including inpatient care, clinics, surgery centers, and emergency services have shown significant year-over-year improvement, according to Press Ganey surveys. Dr. Klein noted modest gains were observed in the organization's annual SCORE survey focused on safety culture.

Dr. Klein also announced the implementation of bedside shift reporting across med-surg and cardiac units, a best practice that enhances communication, patient safety, and engagement.

Dr. Klein reported the ASPIRE Program (After School Program Interventions in Resiliency Education) has launched, offering intensive outpatient services for adolescents. The program, led by newly hired child and adolescent psychiatrist

Dr. Cheryl Quick, fills a critical gap in local mental health services and was made possible through philanthropic support.

Dr. Klein reported on facility and security updates:

- A new pediatric clinic opened in Petaluma.
- The Pediatric After-Hours Clinic relocated to Civic Center Drive in San Rafael with extended weekday and weekend hours.
- Improvements in peri-operative areas: room renovations, lighting, cooling, and video integration.
- The replacement MRI scanner on South Eliseo is nearing completion.
- Pharmacy compounding suite nearing completion by end of year.
- Cypress Pavilion emergency generator replacement underway.
- Bloom Energy renewable project progressing, to be completed by Fall 2026.
- Master fire alarm upgrades in progress across multiple pavilions.
- Cedar Pavilion refresh for cardiovascular rooms has begun.
- Main entrance and garden enhancements are in progress.
- New weapons detection system installed at ER entrance, pending full activation.
- Visitor badging system will provide direct access for District and Operating Board members without check-in.

Dr. Klein reported the Primary Stroke Program and Advanced Inpatient Diabetes Surveys were completed with excellent results.

Dr. Klein noted the Joint Commission Triennial Survey is anticipated within the next 3-4 months, preparations are underway and the team is confident in its readiness

B. Chair's and Board Members' Reports.

Ms. Ramirez expressed appreciation for the work of Ms. Kinney and her team, stating that many of the Board's ideas have been successfully implemented thanks to her efforts. She also thanked Anne for attending the recent committee meeting, noting how valuable her presence was. Ms. Ramirez reminded the Board that May is Mental Health Month and encouraged everyone to prioritize their mental well-being. She also shared that she will be hosting a journaling workshop at the upcoming Wellness Festival organized by the Youth Commission, taking place on Sunday.

Dr. Su echoed Ms. Ramirez's comments, acknowledging the impressive work led by Ms. Kinney and her team. He commented on the team's efficiency, noting that events are often underway almost immediately after suggestions.



Ms. Sparkman added support for the appreciation of Jill and also acknowledged Ms. Ramirez's contributions.

10. Agenda Suggestions for Future Meetings

Dr. Alfrey asked to add a follow-up discussion on primary care to the June agenda, allowing Ms. Rienks to review the related minutes and provide comments.

Dr. Alfrey suggested scheduling a closed session to conduct annual evaluation and review.

11. Adjournment of Regular Meeting

Chair Alfrey adjourned the meeting at 6:13 pm.

First I would like to re-introduce my colleagues on the District Board.

1. Director Rienks is the longest serving member of the Board. She is employed by UCSF. The Constituents that have elected and re-elected her are aware of her primary occupation and she has been supported by the voters in her district. She has devoted herself to healthcare for her entire career. She has been a strong advocate for mental health throughout her career and specifically as an elected public official on this board. She has advocated for programs to support mental health services and the relationship between primary care and mental health is obvious. She has frequently discussed the importance of primary care and has discussed the recruitment and retention of primary care physicians in Marin on many occasions.
2. Director Sparkman is the second longest serving member of the board. She is employed by UCSF. She began her career as a nurse in the Central Valley I believe and subsequently transitioned to law to continue advocating for health care. She was elected and re-elected by the constituents in her district and the voters are aware of her primary occupation. She has often discussed the importance of primary care, and in particular to how primary care relates to the aging population in Marin. She has discussed the recruitment and retention of primary care physicians in Marin on many occasions.
3. Director Ramirez is the newest member of the board. She is a well-known community activist and supporter of her district. She is very involved with the youths in Marin especially in the communities that represent her district. She has helped to organize and participated in the community fairs where patients with under diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions can be directed to primary care clinics and physicians. She has been an advocate for healthy eating.
4. Director Su has served on the board for more than six years. He has devoted his career to improving the health and well-being of patients in our community and other communities. He participates in Operation Access where patients without adequate insurance coverage can receive necessary care including operations without the need for medical insurance. He also Co-led the COVID task Force for the District Board and likely saved many lives with the response to the Pandemic. He has been elected by the constituents in his district with full disclosure of his affiliation with the hospital and local clinics. He was until recently the Chief Executive of California Orthopedics, the longest standing community based Orthopedics group in Marin.
5. I have been on the Board for just over 4 years. I was elected with full disclosure of my current affiliations with Prima Medical Group and the Hospital. I have served on the Board for PMG for several years and recently was asked to serve as an interim CEO while a search for a permanent CEO can be initiated. Prima Medical Group is the largest and longest standing community based medical group in Marin other than Kaiser. I too participate in the community health fairs and Operation Access. Approximately 25% of my patients have a first language which is not English.

All of the Directors are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest yearly and complete ethics training for elected public officials. All of the Directors have a vested interest in healthcare for the voters they represent. All of the Directors have demonstrated by their

actions the importance of healthcare, and for most of us it has been a lifelong commitment. And all of the Directors have a vested interest in the need for primary care access in Marin. We have heard on many occasions that there is an active recruitment process to help satisfy the needs of primary care in Marin and I know I can speak for the other members of the District Board when I applaud the efforts to help solve this problem. Despite these efforts there is still a need that is currently not being met. We heard from two different public speakers that they have trouble finding primary care physicians in Marin. From my own practice, rarely a week goes by where a patient doesn't say that they had to go to the ED or Urgent Care just to get a referral to a specialist, just as was described by one of the public speakers last month. And while we all acknowledge that it is a national problem as well as a local problem, I would propose that the five public servants on the District Board may be able to contribute to solving this problem locally. It would seem to me that it would be a dereliction of our responsibility to our constituents to just decide that there is nothing that we can do. And conversely, if after trying to look at the problem from a different perspective, then we cannot contribute, we have at least we tried. We are all smart, have diverse backgrounds, and have demonstrated our interest in the health care of our community. I cannot think of any reason why anyone would not welcome our input. And I also cannot think any reason why anyone would attempt to develop a distracting narrative as opposed to supporting an effort by elected public officials to help to solve an obvious problem. The members of the District Board are well aware of conflicts of interest and perfectly capable to recusing themselves from any discussions that could be perceived as a conflict of interest. So with that introduction I would like to yield the floor to the other members of the Board for any comments regarding the Board's participation in Primary care access in Marin.