

Budget & Finance Committee
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlet Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

February 20, 2024

Re: File No. 231121

Honorable Supervisors:

The San Francisco-Marin Section of the Hospital Council—Northern & Central California (Hospital Council) represents San Francisco’s hospitals. These 15 hospitals deliver the acute care that saves lives and supports the health of our community.

The Hospital Council appreciates the Board’s efforts to assess the City’s current capacity to provide long-term residential care for those suffering from mental health and substance use disorders. This inquiry is an important step to accurately identify the needs for additional treatment beds, including for higher acuity levels of care. The Hospital Council would like to serve as a partner as the City expands treatment beds across the behavioral health system.

Acute care hospitals understand the importance of a proper system of care that enables medically stable patients to safely transition into care settings where they can receive the specialized services their doctors have ordered. [Without those post-acute care resources, patients can linger in acute care settings for days, weeks, and sometimes months](#) before they are transitioned to a more appropriate care environment.

Statewide, these delays are significant:

- California hospitals provide an estimated 1 million days of unnecessary inpatient care and 7.5 million hours of emergency department care annually due to discharge delays.
- These delays result in at least \$3.25 billion in avoidable hospital costs every year.
- Patients enrolled in managed care plans — especially those covered by Medi-Cal — are more likely to experience delays than those who have fee-for-service insurance coverage.

This means worse health outcomes for patients and drains already limited resources, including staffing and bed availability for others.

As hospitals continue to navigate increased demand for health services, maintaining preparedness for seasonal illness cycles, and potential emergencies, it is essential to ensure acute care resources are available and used appropriately.

The challenges facing hospitals and the patients they serve are significant. Not only must hospitals maintain access to high quality care, but they must do so in a way that delivers care as efficiently as possible, so *all* patients can be assured their needs will be met. With these shared goals, Hospital

Council truly appreciates the working relationship we have built with the city, Department of Health and community health providers.

We look forward to continued collaboration to ensure the health and wellness of our San Francisco community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michon A. Coleman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michon Coleman
Regional Vice President
San Francisco-Marin Section
Hospital Council—Northern & Central California

Cc: Supervisor Rafael Mandelman
Supervisor Connie Chan
Supervisor Myrna Melgar
Clerk of the Board