

**HEALTH COMMISSION
City and County of San Francisco
Resolution No. 17-06**

Supporting Recommendations Contained in the Fiscal Year 2005 Charity Care Report

WHEREAS, in San Francisco, an estimated 83,000 people under the age of 65, or 12.5 percent of the non-elderly population, are uninsured; and,

WHEREAS, many of the uninsured rely on charity care services provided by hospitals to access needed primary and acute care services; and

WHEREAS, charity care is defined as the provision of health care services to those who cannot afford to pay and without expectation of reimbursement; and

WHEREAS, under California law, counties have an obligation to care for their most vulnerable residents; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, the Board of Supervisors passed Ordinance Number 163-01, the Charity Care Policy Reporting and Notice Requirement, (the Charity Care Ordinance), to enable the City to evaluate the need for charity care in the community and to plan for the continued fulfillment of its responsibility to provide care to indigents; and

WHEREAS, nonprofit hospitals provide charity care as part of their broader social obligation to provide community benefits in the public interest; and

WHEREAS, the Charity Care Ordinance requires hospitals to report to the Department of Public Health specific information related to the amount of charity care they provide and to notify patients of the hospital's charity care policies; and

WHEREAS, the charity care information provided by hospitals helps the San Francisco Health Commission evaluate the utilization of charity care services and health care needs of our City's low-income, uninsured and underinsured populations; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 the Health Commission recommended the formation of a charity care work group called the Charity Care Project which has met monthly the last three years; and

WHEREAS, the Charity Care Project consists of San Francisco hospitals, the Hospital Council, Operation Access, the San Francisco Community Clinic Consortium, Service Employees International Union Local 250, and Consumers' Union, worked collaboratively on the preparation of the Fiscal Year 2005 Charity Care Report Summary; and

WHEREAS, this past year the Charity Care Project was recognized by the National Association of Counties with a 2006 Achievement Award in recognition of an innovative program which contributes to and enhances county government in the United States; and

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WHEREAS, in addition to reporting the charity care data provided by hospitals, the Fiscal Year 2005 Charity Care Report Summary also incorporates information from a variety of sources, including the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, the 2000 Census, the 2003 California Health Interview Survey, the Building a Healthier San Francisco 2004 Community Health Assessment, the 2005 Saint Francis Memorial Hospital Community Needs Index, and the Public Health Institute's Advancing the State of the Art in Community Benefit Demonstration Project; and

WHEREAS, based upon data from these sources, the fiscal year 2005 Charity Care Report Summary finds that:

- Continued increases in outpatient charity care in specific locations will benefit San Francisco;
- Ongoing collaboration through the Charity Care Project with expanded discussion will increase access to health care;
- Standardized reporting of charity care and community benefits that serve those with disproportionate unmet health care needs will improve health care services in San Francisco; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that in accordance with these findings, the Fiscal Year 2005 Charity Care Report Summary recommends that:

- The Charity Care Project continue to meet in 2007 to further standardize the reporting of charity care and community benefits; and
- The Charity Care Project continue to expand its conversation and efforts to increase and improve the provision of charity care and other community benefits to populations with disproportionate unmet health care needs; and
- Hospitals continue to pursue creative approaches to increase outpatient charity care, including participation in the Health Access Program, especially for residents of the following high-risk neighborhoods: Bayview/Hunters Point, Potrero Hill; Tenderloin, Civic Center; and Bernal Heights, and the Mission; and
- DPH and San Francisco's hospitals continue to promote the institutional reforms and community benefits reporting recommended by the Public Health Institute in its ongoing demonstration project, Advancing the State of the Art in Community Benefit; and be it,

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FURTHER RESOLVED, that the San Francisco Health Commission recognizes the Charity Care Project for working together on the Fiscal Year 2005 Charity Care Report to create a more complete picture of charity care in San Francisco, and for engaging in the broader endeavor of improving access to needed health services for the City's underserved communities; and be it,

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the San Francisco Health Commission fully supports the recommendations put forth in the fiscal year 2005 Charity Care Report Summary and directs the Director of Health to work with San Francisco hospitals to implement these recommendations.

I hereby certify that the San Francisco Health Commission at its meeting of December 5, 2006 adopted the foregoing resolution.

Rebekah R. Varela
Acting Executive Secretary to the Health Commission