



NEWS

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas ***L.A. County Board of Supervisors, 2nd District***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 17, 2009

Contact: James Bolden
213-200-5314

RIDLEY-THOMAS APPLAUDS TEAM EFFORT TO OPEN 'A NEW MLK HOSPITAL' BY 2012

LOS ANGELES COUNTY – Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today welcomed a report outlining the vision to open and establish “a new Martin Luther King Hospital” by late 2012.

The report is the culmination of eight months of discussion between L.A. County Chief Executive Officer William T Fujioka and officials of the University of California and the State of California to pursue the possibility of creating a new hospital that would serve residents of South Los Angeles.

The Supervisor praised the progress and thanked his colleagues for making the hospital a high priority.

“I take note of the fact that since my being here there has been a very strong and obvious desire to make something very positive happen with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Medical Center,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said. “It is clear that we have work to do, but there is a community broadly defined of consumers, providers, stakeholders, who see this as a significant engagement to continue to lend their levels of contribution, expertise and the like.”

The UC System will enter into a contractual agreement with the new non-profit entity to establish standards pertaining to quality assurance and the provision of physician services. Under the plan, the UC system will also lead the efforts to re-establish training programs at the facility.

Once details are worked out, the plan will be reviewed by the Board of Supervisors and UC Board of Regents. Additionally, the County and UC System will work with the Governor's Office, the California Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Medicine and Medicare Services to secure the legislation, regulatory and other necessary programmatic support. If these efforts are successful, inpatient services could be in operation in late 2012.

Immediately after the Board meeting, the Supervisor was scheduled to board a flight for San Francisco to attend an unprecedented gathering of national health information technology experts from academia, industry and government at a conference National Integrated Health Network.

The meeting -- convened by Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong, founder and chairman of Abraxis Boiscience Inc. -- is part of an effort to create a state of the art health information technology infrastructure that will enable the safe, confidential, and efficient exchange of electronic health information of patients in the Second District.

The National Integrated Health Network coalition includes representatives from every state and participation from leading universities such as Harvard, Yale, USC, UCLA and the University of Chicago.

"My goal is to advocate for a model that controls costs to ensure that residents get the best quality of care they need, when they need it, how they need it, without duplication of unnecessary tests," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said. "My strategy includes moving aggressively to seize any opportunities to leverage the roughly \$36 billion in outlays that the Obama Administration has made available over the next six years for health information technology."

The initiative would be a national model for addressing the clinic practice of medicine in large urban areas, such as South Los Angeles.

#