

FACT SHEET

COVID-19 Outbreak at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital

September 2020

Seven months into the COVID-19 pandemic, Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital (SRMH) has proven unable to safely contain the spread of COVID-19 among caregivers, threatening their safety, and that of their patients, families and communities. As of September 11, 2020, 26 caregivers and as many as 4 patients have tested positive.

While the Hospital believes the outbreak began on August 6, caregivers were not notified or tested until August 28. Many caregivers who routinely come into contact with patients and staff on the affected unit still have not been tested and are being denied N95s. Indeed, since the beginning of the pandemic, Memorial has refused to test symptomatic caregivers, instead directing staff to taxpayer-funded community testing sites. The hospital is failing to conduct comprehensive contact tracing for caregivers and patients and is not providing the PPE required to protect caregivers, in accordance with the Cal/OSHA Aerosol Transmissible Disease (ATD) standard.

The National Union of Healthcare Workers (NUHW) represents 740 caregivers at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital (SRMH), the sole Level II trauma center in the four-county region. In June 2019, prior to the pandemic, caregivers began bargaining a successor contract and conducted a 5-day strike from July 20 – July 24, 2020. NUHW caregivers have been confronting COVID-19 and chronic short staffing without a fair contract.

NUHW members at Petaluma Valley Hospital and Queen of the Valley Hospital in Napa, which are also owned by WA state-based Providence (formerly Providence St. Joseph Health), are also calling on the hospital system and local executives to create safer working conditions.

I. NUHW'S MEMBERS AT SANTA ROSA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

- 740 nursing, technical, and support staff in over 100 job classifications, including Nursing Assistants, Housekeepers, Dietary Aides, Radiologic Technologists, Pharmacy Technicians, Respiratory Therapists, and Registrars.
- Over half of NUHW members at SRMH live in Santa Rosa, and others are concentrated in Rohnert Park, Petaluma, Windsor, Sebastopol and Healdsburg.
- Many caregivers at the hospitals served Sonoma County during recent wildfire seasons, even as they were evacuated themselves.

II. WORKPLACE SAFETY PRIORITIES

Caregivers have been communicating their concerns about inadequate workplace safety protocols since March. They are calling on the hospital to immediately take the following steps to prevent another outbreak:

1. Provide N95s to all caregivers who are in the same room as a person suspected of having COVID-19 or a confirmed COVID-19 patient, in accordance with Cal/OSHA's Airborne Transmissible Disease (ATD) Standard.
2. Immediately test all caregivers who have been exposed to COVID-19 or show symptoms and provide paid leave for all caregivers who must self-quarantine.
3. Provide free, regularly scheduled COVID-19 testing to all caregivers, not only in response to an outbreak.
4. Enable comprehensive contact tracing by implementing room entry and transport logs for all patients who have COVID-19 or are suspected of having it. Promptly notify any exposed caregivers.
5. Treat all admitted patients as potentially having COVID-19 until they test negative.
6. Provide consistent and timely communication from hospital administration, Caregiver Health, and Infection Prevention regarding safety protocols to ensure transparency to all caregivers.

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III. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

In 2019, SRMH reported significant operating profits, and operating margins well over the California average for non-profit hospitals, which is just 1%. The hospital has been consistently profitable, reporting total operating profits of \$201.7 million over the last three fiscal years. The hospital has remained profitable during the pandemic to-date, reporting \$42.8 million in operating profits in the first 6 months of fiscal year 2020.¹

	Operating Profit	Operating Margin
2017	\$70,172,009	12.94%
2018	\$58,712,075	10.81%
2019	\$72,846,828	11.62%

Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital – Financial Performance, FY 2017-19

In 2019, Providence reported operating revenue of \$25 billion, an 8% increase since 2017. According to annual financial disclosures, Providence ended 2019 with net operating profits of \$373 million. The company has taken a short-term hit in the first 6-months of the pandemic, but rating agencies expect the company to recover and have not downgraded Providence. According to analysts, Providence’s financial and leverage profile will continue to improve over time, as the organization improves its annual cash flow in 2022. In the meantime, Providence has extraordinary reserves: over \$12.5 billion in unrestricted cash and cash equivalents, as of June 30, 2020.²

Providence spends considerably on executive compensation. Tax documents from 2019 indicate that CEO Rod Hochman received \$10.8 million in total compensation, and the company spent over \$2 million on bonus and incentive payments to 21 Northern California executives.

ABOUT SANTA ROSA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital is the largest general acute care hospital in Sonoma County, responsible for approximately 25% of all patient discharges in the service area. SRMH is the only designated Level II trauma center in the four-county region.

ABOUT NATIONAL UNION OF HEALTHCARE WORKERS

The National Union of Healthcare Workers represents more than 15,000 healthcare workers across facilities in California. Its members include registered nurses, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, opticians, certified nursing assistants, dietary aides, respiratory therapists, and housekeepers, among others. In addition to the Providence hospitals in Northern California, NUHW has a bargaining agreement with Providence Tarzana Cedars Sinai Hospital in Southern California.

1. Source: OSHPD Unaudited Hospital Annual Financial Data. Fiscal Years 2017, 2018 and 2019

2. Continuing Disclosure Quarterly Report, Q2 of Fiscal Year 2020. CUSIP 13033F7K0. Available at emma.msrb.org