



# NEWS RELEASE

## COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

**Contact:** William T Fujioka, CEO, County of Los Angeles  
(213) 974-1101

March 11, 2009

### Proposed Plan for New MLK Hospital Advances

**LOS ANGELES – Wednesday, March 11, 2009** – The L.A. County Board of Supervisors today announced the County of Los Angeles has made considerable progress on a proposed plan, involving the University of California (UC) and State of California, that would lead to the eventual opening of a new Martin Luther King, Jr., Hospital in Willowbrook in late 2012.

Over eight months ago, the Board of Supervisors directed L.A. County CEO William T Fujioka to enter into discussions and negotiations with UC and state officials to pursue the possibility of creating a new hospital that would serve residents of South Los Angeles.

Discussions with top officials from the State and UC – from Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to UC President Mark G. Yudof to their respective appointees and senior staff – have led to a series of new and positive developments. Everyone involved contributed their best thinking to come up with a proposed County-UC-State framework that, if executed successfully, would lead to the opening of a new, seismically safe 120-bed Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital.

The concept that has been discussed for a new MLK Hospital is a creative solution. If all the necessary local and state approvals can be obtained, the new MLK Hospital would be opened as a privately-owned and operated, independent, nonprofit hospital corporation.

The nonprofit corporation would have an appointed governing board. This new nonprofit hospital Board of Directors would be vested with full authority and accountability.

L.A. County would provide ongoing financial support to the new MLK Hospital to ensure its long-term viability. As proposed, UC would enter into a contractual agreement with the new non-profit entity to establish standards regarding quality assurance and to provide physician services.

Through these arrangements, UC would have a direct and substantial role in assuring that high quality standards for patient care are established and maintained. As planned, hospital staff would be hired and employed by the new non-profit entity.

The proposed new MLK Hospital would have an emergency room and all health services provided at the hospital would be integrated and coordinated with services provided by L.A. County at the hospital's MLK Multi-Service Ambulatory Care Center (MLK MACC) and at Hubert H. Humphrey Comprehensive Care Center located nearby.

The new MLK Hospital would be a private nonprofit hospital. It would be independent of the county. It would provide first-rate health care. This is a significant positive development for the county and the people of the South Los Angeles community.

Hospital services would be located in the new seismically-compliant patient tower at the MLK site. The County would make substantial capital investments to build out the patient tower, and construct a MACC and ancillary services building which would include an emergency department.

The L.A. County Board of Supervisors will review and consider the new MLK Hospital proposal shortly. The proposal will be presented to the UC Board of Regents for its review and consideration when it convenes for meetings later this month.

### **Statements from the L.A. County Board of Supervisors**

#### **Honorable Don Knabe Chair of the Board Supervisor, 4<sup>th</sup> District**

"The critical services provided by having a well-functioning hospital and emergency room in South Los Angeles are far too important to be lost forever. As private hospitals continue to close and we keep losing inpatient beds, having this public hospital open is critical to the safety net of our entire County Healthcare Network. This partnership with UC is an important first step in ensuring that we get MLK Hospital back on its feet and back open for business," Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe said.

#### **Honorable Gloria Molina Supervisor, 1<sup>st</sup> District**

"From the moment Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital closed its doors, my colleagues and I committed ourselves to reopening a hospital with critically needed inpatient beds and Emergency Services for the community of South Los Angeles," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina. "I am pleased and optimistic that our goal for a partnership with the UC System is one step closer to making that vision a reality," she added.

**Honorable Mark Ridley-Thomas**  
**Supervisor, 2<sup>nd</sup> District**

"The matter of health care in LA County is urgent. Therefore, the announcement of this proposal marks a significant step toward restoring quality patient care at the Martin Luther King Medical Center. The public-private partnership approach we are taking is prudent, feasible, scalable and potentially catalytic in ways that improve the health care outcomes in the region," Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas said. "I commend the governor, the UC and County CEO for their hard and diligent work, and the Board of Supervisors for their critical support. I am hopeful that any remaining details can be successfully resolved in a timely manner. Time is of the essence as communities with very deserving patients impatiently await the reopening of this important medical center," he added.

**Honorable Zev Yaroslavsky**  
**Supervisor, 3<sup>rd</sup> District**

"The reopening of MLK Hospital is the County's most important health care priority today. The partnership between the University of California and the County of Los Angeles is the best hope for restoring critically needed hospital and emergency room care at the high level of excellence our citizens deserve. I salute Governor Schwarzenegger, the University of California leadership and our own County team for their persistence toward getting this done. Since the UC/L.A. County relationship was first proposed last May [2008], we have come a long way. There is a lot of work yet to be done, but the finish line is now in sight," Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky said.

**Honorable Michael D. Antonovich**  
**Supervisor, 5<sup>th</sup> District**

"It is vital that a reestablished hospital serving this community is held to the highest standard of quality medical care," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Mike Antonovich. "While I have questions about the details of its proposed structure, I wholeheartedly support a cooperative partnership with the University of California and look forward to reviewing the proposed details," he said.

--lacounty.gov--