

Setting the Standard in Health Care Excellence

February 28, 2023

Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93003**SUBJECT:****Ratification of the Waiver of the Sliding Fee Discount Program and Self Pay Discount Program Patient Charges for Office Visits Due to Respiratory or COVID-19 Related Symptoms, Effective January 01, 2023 through February 28, 2023.****RECOMMENDATION:**

That your Board ratify the Health Care Agency's (HCA) waiver of Sliding Fee Discount Program (SFDP) and Self Pay Discount Program (SPDP) patient charges for office visits due to respiratory or COVID-19 related symptoms from January 01, 2023 through February 28, 2023.

REASON FOR RATIFICATION:

There was not sufficient opportunity to return to your Board since the approval of the last waiver.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Mandatory:	No
Authority:	VCMC – Fund E500
Funding Match Required:	None
Impact on other Departments:	None

Summary of Annual Revenues and Costs:

	<u>FY 2022-23</u>	<u>FY 2023-24</u>
REVENUE	\$0	\$0
DIRECT COSTS:	\$0	\$0
INDIRECT COSTS:	\$0	\$0
Net revenue <cost>	\$0	\$0

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR BUDGET TABLE

Current FY 2022-23 Budget Projections for Ventura County Medical Center #3300				
	Adopted Budget	Adjusted Budget	Projected Actual	Estimated Savings/(Deficit)
Expenditures	\$597,277,305	\$627,489,238	\$620,091,297	\$7,397,941
Revenue	\$597,588,755	\$604,063,467	\$612,518,590	\$8,455,123
Operational Income/(Loss)	\$311,450	(\$23,425,771)	(\$7,572,707)	\$15,853,064

*The operational income includes "Operating Transfers-In" that are primarily attributed to County contributions. Sufficient revenue and appropriations are included in the FY 23-24 budget.

Self-pay patients represent about 3.72% of HCA's total patient revenue, or .92% of net patient revenue. The fiscal impact of this action is unknown at this time but is anticipated to be minimal. VCMC will absorb the costs in its operating budget.

DISCUSSION:

As of this writing, Ventura County has had a total of 217,404 COVID-19 cases and 1,649 deaths. COVID-19 is an extremely contagious disease. The symptoms include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. It is crucial that patients with these symptoms seek care and obtain screening and testing if criteria are met. HCA is committed to ensuring that all patients receive access to COVID-19 screening and testing without regard to their ability to pay. HCA understands that for our most vulnerable patient population that the SFDP and SPDP visit patient charges could be a barrier to care.

On March 31, 2020, your Board authorized the HCA Director or designee to waive SFDP and SPDP patient charges for clinic visits due to respiratory or COVID-19 related symptoms through June 30, 2020. On June 16, 2020, your Board authorized the waiving of co-pays through December 31, 2020. On December 15, 2020, your Board authorized the waiving of co-pays through June 30, 2021. On June 8, 2021 your Board authorized the waiving of co-pays through September 30, 2021. On March 01, 2022 your Board ratified the waiving of co-pays, from October 1, 2021 through February 28, 2022; and authorized the waiving of co-pays from March 1, 2022 through September 30, 2022. On September 20, 2022, your Board authorized the waiving of co-pays through December 31, 2022. Because only 56.5% of Ventura County residents have been fully vaccinated, combined with the recent variant surges, patients are expected to continue to seek treatment for these symptoms. Therefore, we are requesting that your Board ratify and extend that waiver authority through February 28, 2023 which is the end of the local health emergency.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, County Counsel, and Auditor-Controller's Office. If you have any questions regarding these recommendations, please contact Dee Pupa, HCA Deputy Director at 805-981-5006.



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