May 16, 2023

Media advisory

Warm Water Wellness CEO Lindsay Raike’s cell: (650) 400-8975

**Sutter Health Backpedaling on Commitment to Reopen Mickelson Therapy Pool**

***Stall tactics threaten to extend suffering for years***

SAN MATEO - In an informal meeting between Warm Water Wellness CEO Lindsay Raike and Sutter executives last week, the Sutter executives warned that it would take at least three years to reopen the Mickelson therapy pool, putting vulnerable former pool patrons and physical therapy patients at further risk after suffering already for three years without this invaluable medical resource.

This comes only one day after state and local elected leaders praised Sutter for their decision to reopen the Mickelson pool, pressing the not-for-profit healthcare giant for details and requesting a July 1, 2023 reopening.

“We write to commend Sutter on their decision to reopen the Mickelson Therapy Pool in San Mateo,” wrote Assemblymember Marc Berman, Assemblymember Diane Papan, Assemblymember Phil Ting, State Senator Josh Becker, State Senator Scott Wiener, San Mateo County Supervisor David Canepa, San Mateo County Supervisor Noelia Corzo, Peninsula Health Care District Director Dennis Zell, Esq, Sequoia Healthcare District CEO Pamela Kurtzman and Sequoia Healthcare District Director Kimberly Griffin, RN in a May 8 letter addressed to newly appointed Sutter Health CEO Warner L. Thomas. “We ask that you commit to reopening the pool … by a date certain (we desire to see the pool reopened by July 1), or else explain the medical, engineering, or financial reasons why not.”

The leaders also urged Sutter to ensure that the to-be-reopened Mickelson pool supports community access as well as traditional physical therapy. “Historically, the Mickelson therapy pool was used in two ways: for short term physician-prescribed physical therapy and, of equal importance, for “open access” self-directed therapy available (with a doctor’s release) to all community members for a monthly fee,” the letter states. “We write to ask that you commit to reopening the pool for both usage models with ample community access.”

CEO Raike is frustrated by Sutter’s lack of transparency. “First, they said they would reopen the therapy pool,” says Raike. “Now they are saying, ‘Well, it could take years,’ but have not given us detailed specifics as to why.”

Raike contrasted Sutter’s extended timeline with the speedy reopening of a comparable warm water therapy pool located in what is traditionally deemed a healthcare setting. “The Pomeroy Center therapy pool in San Francisco was able to complete required post-Covid closure structural renovations and reopen within months,” says Raike. “Sutter is stalling. Their claim that it will take three years to reopen the Mickelson pool is outrageous.”

The Mickelson Arthritis and Rehabilitation Center pool, located at the Mills Health Center in San Mateo, is the only fully accessible, ADA-compliant warm water facility of its kind in San Mateo County. Before its untimely closure in March 2020, the Mickelson therapy pool was a lifeline for seniors, adults and children with disabilities, chronic pain sufferers, pregnant women, and other patients throughout the county.

The letter elected officials sent to Sutter Health CEO Warner Thomas on May 8, 2023 and other sources on the issue are below:

[Joint letter to Sutter Health CEO Thomas](https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/256f373a-e8bc-4b98-b405-ad2ac2e2f08d/downloads/Joint%20letter%20to%20Sutter%20CEO%20Thomas%20re%20Mickelson.pdf?ver=1683780036956)

[Pomeroy Center CEO David Dubinsky’s letter to Sutter Health Mills-Peninsula Medical Center CEO Janet Wagner](https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/256f373a-e8bc-4b98-b405-ad2ac2e2f08d/downloads/follow%20up%20letter%20from%20Pomeroy%20therapy%20pool%20CEO.pdf?ver=1683780037403)

[warmwaterwellness.org](http://www.warmwaterwellness.org)

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