



525 Veterans Blvd.  
Redwood City, CA 94063

650-421-2155 Phone  
650-421-2159 Fax

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

October 18, 2021

Janet Wagner  
CEO Sutter Health Mills-Peninsula  
1501 Trousdale Dr.  
Burlingame, CA 94010

Dear Ms. Wagner,

I'm reaching out on behalf of the Board of Directors of Sequoia Healthcare District and our district residents who are desperately trying to prevent the permanent closure of the Mack E. Mickelson therapeutic pool. We strongly encourage Sutter Health Care executive leadership to keep open the Pool located at the Mills Health Center in San Mateo. After hearing heart wrenching testimony from pool users at our October 6th public Board meeting and reviewing the significant number of community members inside and outside of our Health Care District who depend on access to the Pool, it is clear this is a necessary and beneficial service to those who have debilitating health conditions.

Disabled individuals and senior citizens are the primary users of this vital resource in San Mateo County. Many of those we heard from had painful co-morbidities limiting their mobility and quality of life. All reported pain relief as well as gains in strength and mobility after using the pool. Most notable was the therapeutic benefits derived from those suffering from arthritis; a condition that effects many and will continue to strike more. We've seen that seniors and disabled persons have been disproportionately affected, physically and emotionally, by the pool's closure during the past year and a half, leading many to become debilitated—some even bedridden—losing their ability to walk or live independently, and hundreds of senior citizens' plans to age in place are fading away. Disabled children and adults alike, whose experiences of normal, active living are also losing hope for ever feeling well again since there are no other similar therapy pools with this degree of handicapped access in close proximity to them.

While Sequoia Health Care District recognizes that the Pool is not a revenue producer for Sutter, the entire Peninsula has consistently utilized Sutter facilities and providers contributing to the success of the Sutter Health Care System. Older adults aged 55 and over are the fastest-growing demographic group in San Mateo County and as the State of California advises in its Master Plan for Aging that we plan for increased services to meet this growing demographic group, clearly now is not the time to be eliminating services.

Our Health Care District believes it will only strengthen Sutter's presence in the community if they recognize the value of keeping the Pool open. On the contrary, closing the pool will certainly compromise, if not cause irreparable harm, to the reputation, trust, and relationships Sutter has worked to build over its many years serving the community.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions regarding this consequential and urgent community issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Kurtzman', written in a cursive style.

Pamela Kurtzman  
CEO, Sequoia Healthcare District  
pkurtzman@seqhd.org

Cc:

Sequoia Healthcare District Board of Directors:  
Kim Griffin, RN  
Jerry Shefren, MD  
Aaron Nayfack, MD  
Art Faro  
Ivan Martinez