

Meeting Date: March 3, 2026
Agenda Item No. 17
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Subject: [External] Sharp HealthCare: Item 17 - SUPPORT | March 3, 2026 Board Agenda
Date: Monday, March 2, 2026 4:06:58 PM
Attachments: [Outlook-bhcyx1cf.png](#)
[2026-03-03 Sharp Support - County Medical Services.pdf](#)

Dear Honorable Members of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors,

Attached, please find a letter from Chris Howard, President and CEO of Sharp HealthCare regarding Item 17 on tomorrow's (March 3, 2026) Board agenda.

Sharp appreciates your leadership in advancing this item. Sharp is proud to be San Diego County's largest health care provider, serving more than one million residents each year. As a major provider in the region, we see firsthand how critical the health care safety net is for our communities.

At its core, this item is about protecting patients. A significant wave of coverage losses is approaching, and now is the time to act. This initiative creates an important opportunity to better align County Medical Services with Medi-Cal, Covered California, and other coverage pathways, helping keep residents connected to care.

Sharp HealthCare strongly supports this proactive effort and stands ready to be a partner in strengthening the County's health care safety net.

Respectfully,
Pam

Pamela Ison

Director, Government Relations
Sharp HealthCare
8695 Spectrum Boulevard
San Diego, CA 92123






March 2, 2026

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Rm. 335
San Diego, CA 92101

**SUBJECT: Agenda Item 17 – Exploring Reforms to County Medical Services
– SHARP SUPPORT**

Dear Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors,

Sharp HealthCare (“Sharp”) is proud to support the initiative led by Supervisors Terra Lawson-Remer and Monica Montgomery Steppe to reform County Medical Services (CMS).

Sharp is San Diego County’s largest health care provider, serving nearly one-third of all County residents—more than one million individuals—across the Sharp system each year. As a cornerstone of the region’s health care delivery system, Sharp is deeply committed to ensuring access to high-quality care for all residents, particularly those who rely on the health care safety net.

When individuals lose health coverage or lack affordable access to primary and specialty care, they often delay or forgo treatment altogether. Conditions that could have been effectively managed in outpatient settings frequently worsen, resulting in more complex, resource-intensive care delivered through emergency departments and inpatient units.

Because San Diego County does not operate a public hospital, hospitals across the region serve as the backbone of the safety net, providing 24/7 emergency, inpatient, surgical, and specialty care to all who seek treatment, regardless of their ability to pay. This responsibility places significant and growing demands on hospitals as coverage losses and access barriers increase.

Emergency departments throughout the region are already experiencing record-high volumes. Additional coverage losses and gaps in access will further exacerbate overcrowding, longer wait times, and delays in care. These impacts are felt by all patients, including those with commercial insurance, Medicare, or Medi-Cal, as system congestion reduces timely access to emergency, inpatient, and specialty services across the continuum of care.

At its core, this initiative is about protecting patients. A significant wave of health coverage losses is approaching as a result of H.R. 1, and it is essential that action be taken now to safeguard the stability of the County’s health care system.

This effort presents an important opportunity to thoughtfully redesign County Medical Services so it aligns more effectively with Medi-Cal, Covered California, and other coverage pathways. Strengthening CMS will help keep residents connected to appropriate care earlier, reduce avoidable emergency department utilization, and mitigate downstream impacts that affect all patients and providers. At a time of constrained resources, it is critical to deploy every available tool strategically to maximize impact and preserve access for those who need it most.

Sharp strongly supports this proactive effort to strengthen County Medical Services and appreciates the Board's leadership in advancing this evaluation at a critical moment. By acting now, San Diego County is positioning itself as a statewide leader in strengthening the health care safety net. Sharp stands ready to partner with the County in this important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Howard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Howard
President & CEO
Sharp HealthCare