

OFFICE OF STATEWIDE HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**

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HEART SURGERY PANEL TO HOLD FIRST MEETING

SACRAMENTO – A nine-member panel made up of medical professionals and consumer representatives has been named to advise the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) on how to report outcomes of coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery at California hospitals, OSHPD Director Dr. David Carlisle announced today. The panel will hold its first meeting at 9 a.m. on May 7 at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Sacramento.

“Public disclosure of CABG surgery outcomes reduces mortality, improves quality, and saves lives,” Dr. Carlisle said. “These reports inform consumers about facilities with higher than expected survival rates as well as those with lower than expected survival rates.” Over 30,000 Californians undergo heart bypass surgery each year. Death rates for CABG surgery fell by 41 percent in New York following adoption of an outcomes reporting program in that state.

The first report on CABG surgeries in California was issued last year and included voluntary participation by two-thirds of hospitals in the state that perform CABG surgeries. The voluntary outcomes reporting initiative was co-sponsored by OSHPD and the Pacific Business Group on Health, a nonprofit coalition of major California employers.

Governor Gray Davis signed SB 680 (Figueroa) in October 2001 requiring mandatory CABG outcome reports for approximately 120 California hospitals that perform CABG surgeries. The legislation was backed by the Consumers Union and supported by the California Medical Association and the California Chapter of the American College of Cardiology.

The first annual report will be issued in 2004. Starting in 2005 reports including specific death rates for individual surgeons will be issued every other year. Scores will be “risk-adjusted” through a process that credits hospitals and surgeons with sicker-than-average patients, and debits hospitals and surgeons with healthier-than-average patients. This allows patients and others to make apples-to-apples comparisons across providers listed in the reports.

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The California chapter of the American College of Cardiology, the California Medical Association, and consumer organizations nominated members to the California CABG Clinical Advisory Panel (CAP).

“We look forward to beginning work with our advisory panel as we monitor and continuously improve outcomes for future bypass graft patients in California hospitals,” Dr. Carlisle said.

Advisory panel members are:

- As chairman, Dr. Robert Brook, director of health science research for RAND Corp., Santa Monica and professor of medicine, UCLA School of Medicine.
- Dr. Andrew Bindman, physician, biostatistician and researcher at UC San Francisco and San Francisco General Hospital.
- Dr. Ralph Brindis, chief of cardiac services at Kaiser Foundation Hospital, San Francisco.
- Cheryl Damberg, Ph.D., director of research and quality at the Pacific Business Group on Health, San Francisco, and co-director of the voluntary California CABG Mortality Reporting Program.
- Dr. Timothy Denton, of the division of cardiothoracic surgery at Cedars Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles.
- Dr. Coyness Ennix, director of cardiac surgery at Alta Bates Medical Center, Berkeley.
- Dr. Keith Flachsbart, director of the division of cardiovascular surgery, Kaiser Foundation Hospital, San Francisco.
- Dr. Fred Grover, professor of surgery at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Denver, and chair of the Workforce on STS National Databases.
- Dr. James MacMillan, surgeon at Valley Heart Surgeons, Modesto.

The meeting, which is open to the public, will be at 9 a.m. May 7 at the Hyatt Regency, Sacramento.

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