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DOMINICAN HOSPITAL R.P.

P. 9

Dominican Hospital eases stand on performing tubal ligations

Dominican Santa Cruz Hospital announced today that it has "broadened" its position on performing tubal ligations, although it will continue its policy of not performing the procedure for contraception purposes only.

The hospital, which is operated by a Roman Catholic order, has in the past refused to perform tubal ligations, which preclude pregnancy, for any reason. That be-

came an issue when Dominican purchased the only other hospital in the Santa Cruz area, AMI/Community Hospital, more than two years ago. Tubal ligations had routinely been performed at Community Hospital.

Community groups have pressured Dominican to reverse its policy against tubal ligations on the grounds that, as the community's only hospital, it should not deny medical services for religious reasons.

Dominican's announcement today yielded to that pressure, but only slightly. It indicated that under certain conditions relating solely to the health of the individual involved, tubal ligations could be performed at the hospital. Said the announcement:

"... the hospital's position regarding tubal ligation will continue to follow the ethical guidelines

which pertain to all Catholic health facilities. Within these guidelines, physicians who provide obstetrical and gynecological surgical care at Dominican will make decisions concerning the performance of tubal ligations on a case-by-case basis when these decisions relate to curing, reducing or preventing a serious pathological condition.

"Tubal ligation solely for contraception does not fall within the guidelines and is primarily an outpatient procedure offered at other sites in the Santa Cruz community."

The new policy was made in consultation with the Most Rev. Sylvester D. Ryan, who was recently appointed bishop of the Diocese of Monterey. That post had been vacant for nearly a year following the death of Bishop Thaddeus Shubsda.