

✓ Dominican would bar birth-control procedure at AMI

By GUY LASNIER
Sentinel staff writer

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SANTA CRUZ — Dominican Hospital would not provide certain birth control alternatives now available at AMI Community Hospital if it buys its neighbor, Dominican President Sister Julie Hyer said Wednesday.

Specifically, the Catholic hospital would not perform tubal ligations, a surgical procedure closing a woman's fallopian tubes as means to prevent pregnancy, Hyer told members of the Santa Cruz County Public Health Commission.

Hyer was asked about whether the hospital would provide "full reproductive services" if it were to buy Community Hospital.

"We would not provide those services," she said. "It's not just our belief," she said, "but those services are available (elsewhere) in the county."

Tubal ligation, when desired, is frequently performed after childbirth by caesarian section. It is available at Community Hospital

and Watsonville Community Hospital.

Hyer addressed the commission to outline Dominican's intent regarding Community Hospital.

Dominican announced it was interested in buying Community after American Medical International put it and 11 other AMI hospitals up for sale last December.

Hyer stressed that Dominican has not submitted a bid. It is currently gathering information to provide its board of directors.

She was asked pointedly about the effects a purchase might have on health care for women.

"The Santa Cruz County Women's Commission is concerned about anything that affects women," said Sheila DeLany, a women's commission member who questioned Hyer about reproductive services.

Others asked whether Dominican would refer patients to other providers, for family planning or abortion counseling, if



Photos by Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

Sister Julie Hyer, left, spoke, Sheila Delany listened Wednesday.

philosophically opposed to those services.

Hyer said Dominican would re-

main a "community-based hospital" where "education is important."