Doctors begin surgeries at new Sutter hospital

3-20-96

SANTA CRUZ — Sutter Maternity and Surgery Center of Santa Cruz has received licensing as a general acute care hospital and performed its first eight out-patient surgeries Monday.

The first in-patient surgeries are scheduled for April 1 and the first perinatal services will be available April 8.

The general acute-care hospital license means everything is the same for contract insurance, so that virtually every insurance policy that covers hospital stays will cover a patient's stay at the Sutter center, said hospital administrator Iris Frank.

Surgeries to be performed at the new facility, located at 2900 Chanticleer Ave., include orthopedic, general, plastic, some neuro, podiatry, oral, urological, gynecological, eye and some ear, nose and throat.

To date 120 local physicians have been granted membership on the medical staff.

An estimated two-thirds of the surgeries done will be on an out-patient basis, according to Jeanette Shaw, director of surgical services.

Although there is no set length of time a patient can stay, it is anticipated that patients who remain overnight will have a short stay of two to four days. Those short stays allow Sutter to offer amenities at costs competitive with more complex hospitals, said Shaw.

"Because our hospital will deliver only specialized service lines, we can afford amenities,'" said Frank. "Our money doesn't have to be spread to cover services requiring more extensive resources."

Among the features promoted by Sutter in the new facility are large private rooms with balconies, bathrooms and pre-stocked refrigerators. Each room will have a television and VCR with a remote control that also controls the light over the bed, and a portable telephone. Family members will be able to stay on a sofa bed.

The food service is restaurant style, where patients and family members make their food choices right before the meal instead of a day in advance.

There are five operating rooms and a procedure room.