

# Hospital in Santa Cruz still wants heart unit

Community Hospital of Santa Cruz is continuing its efforts to establish the first open heart surgery unit in the Monterey Bay area, despite negative comments from state officials.

The staff of the Statewide Office of Health Planning and Development has reviewed the hospital's application and recommended denial. The staff report, like a report issued earlier this year by the staff of the Mid-Coast Health Systems Agency, outlines the reasons for recommending denial of the project.

Derek Pogson, information officer for the state health office, said the staff has recommended denial of the application because Community Hospital failed to prove that:

—There is a need for a cardiovascular unit in the area.

—A heart unit in Santa Cruz would not have a negative impact on the three hospitals in Santa Clara County (Good Samaritan, O'Connor and San Jose) that provide heart surgery.

—The hospital could meet its projected patient rate within three years. State officials say the hospital used erroneous data in making its projections.

—Heart surgery would cost less at Community Hospital than it costs at other hospitals offering the same service.

The staff report also says the hospital failed to demonstrate community support of the hospital, using as evidence the number of people who use the hospital.

The public hearing will be held at 10:30 a.m. Nov. 7 at Monterey City Hall.