

May 19, 2021

Elmhurst Neighborhood Association
c/o Cottage Mart, Box #125
2130 51st St.
Sacramento, CA 95817

Dear Elmhurst Neighborhood Association Board of Directors,

Thank you for your letter outlining your most recent concerns about helicopters flying over the neighborhood on the way to the UC Davis Medical Center. We are aware of the matter and the ongoing concerns that have been expressed by neighbors. While the hospital flights are needed to support the critical care needs of very sick or injured patients, we understand helicopter noise can be frustrating and is an ongoing concern for adjacent neighbors.

As we've discussed previously, UC Davis Health does not have regulatory authority over these helicopters, or the path air ambulances take when bringing patients to and from the hospital. We are happy to partner with the neighborhood and helicopter operators to do what we can to address the situation. Here are the steps we will take in the next few weeks:

- We will send a reminder letter to the air ambulance companies, with the neighborhood association's letter included. We will remind the companies to utilize the primary flight approach and departure routes and not over the residential neighborhood when possible. As we have discussed previously, final decisions about flight operations are made by the aircraft's pilot and are not subject to review by UC Davis Health.
- We will refresh the awareness posters about flight path information next to the pilot's logbook area on the helipad.
- We will provide a list of the most common air ambulance providers with contact information for the public to access.
- We will continue to study noise levels from helicopters as part of the upcoming Draft Environmental Impact Report for the California Tower Project.

While we hope these steps will help, we do not want to represent that we think this will completely resolve the concerns the neighborhood association has raised. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has confirmed the pilots have the sole discretion to determine their flight paths and flying over the neighborhood is neither illegal nor a violation of any kind.

In fact, the UC Davis Medical Center is a visual landmark used by low-flying aircraft on approach to Sacramento Executive Airport as part of their radio transmissions to other pilots and the airport tower indicating their airborne location. There is no special reporting or notice that is required when a pilot decides to approach or depart from the north (over the neighborhood), instead of on the primary approach.

We are committed to doing what we can to assist the neighborhood in addressing these issues. UC Davis provides helipads for the critical care needs of patients who are very sick or injured. The helicopter operations are a key part of life-saving treatment for people in our community. The UC Davis helipads are not used for tourism, employee transportation, or general aviation and are restricted solely to air ambulance operations. I have shared your concerns with the entire UC Davis executive leadership team to further highlight this as a key concern of our neighbors. We apologize that this issue remains a frustration for the adjacent neighbors and appreciate all efforts to discuss and collaborate on potential solutions. Thank you again for raising this issue to me.

Best Regards,



Brad Simmons

Chief Administrator – UC Davis Medical Center

Chief Operating Officer – UC Davis Health Hospital Division

Copy (via email):

City Council member Guerra, County Supervisor Serna, Assembly Member McCarty, Robin Kelly-Dunton, Mabel Salon, Laura Niznik Williams, Deborah Cregger, Maggie Coulter