

Against the Growing Tide of Closures, One L.A. Hospital Fights to Keep its Maternity Ward Open

Health Equity

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During the past ten years, many California hospitals – 17 in L.A. County alone – have been shuttering their labor and delivery programs because of devastating financial losses compared to other service lines. In L.A., however, [nonprofit Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital is defying the odds](#) by continuing to offer these desperately needed services to the largely non-White community it serves in furtherance of its charitable mission. Although some of these closures are attributed to large national for-profit hospital systems concerned about their bottom line being negatively impacted, low Medi-Cal reimbursement rates have definitely been a culprit as well. The consensus among California hospital administrators appears to be that the labor and delivery crisis will continue, jeopardizing access to maternal care in many already underserved communities, until Medi-Cal reimbursement for these services at least enables hospitals to break even.