



**The Union for
POSTDOCS**

Representing over 6,000
Postdoctoral Researchers at
the University of California

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***** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE *****

UC POSTDOCS MAY LOSE ACCESS TO MAJOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Postdocs Are Petitioning UC Administrators to Protect Access to the Health Network

Berkeley, CA – Thousands of Postdoctoral Scholars at University of California are at risk of losing access to the doctors and facilities they depend on. Health Net, the Postdocs' health care plan provider, must reach agreement with Sutter Medical Group by December 31, in order to avoid major disruptions in health care in 2017 for Postdocs at UC Davis, UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz, UCSF and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

In response to learning this news, UC Postdocs launched a [petition](#) that was signed by nearly 1,000 Postdocs in just a few hours. Many signers left comments describing how losing Sutter would result in harm to their medical care. The petition calls upon Vice President of Human Resources Dwaine Duckett and Executive Director of Labor Relations Peter Chester to use UC's bargaining power, as one of Health Net's largest customers, to insist that the Sutter network of doctors and hospitals remains part of the Postdoctoral Scholar Benefits Plan.

"Hundreds of Postdoc families like mine will experience great hardship – not to mention serious disruptions in care – if access to these doctors and facilities are cut off," said Rosemary Malfi, a Postdoc at UC Davis in the Department of Entomology and Nematology. "My son, who is two and a half, was diagnosed this year with a rare chromosomal disorder. To lose coverage would require us to rebuild his care network from scratch."

"This would remove access to the hospital I will be giving birth at, which is used by most expectant Postdoc mothers at UC Berkeley. It is unacceptable to make basic medical services unavailable. Many Postdocs chose to work at UC because of the health care options which are so important to our families, and UC must take the appropriate action to ensure access to this network is not lost," said Lydia Majure, a Postdoc at UC Berkeley in the Helen Wills Neuroscience Institute.

Postdocs would lose access to major Sutter hospitals and facilities in Berkeley, San Francisco, Davis and Santa Cruz, forcing many to travel long distances for care, such as maternity services. UC did not provide notice to Postdocs of this impending change, other than [a letter posted on a seldom-used website in late November](#), and did not notify Postdocs during the most recent open enrollment period that concluded on November 22.

UAW Local 5810 represents 7,000 Postdoctoral Scholars at all ten campuses of the University of California and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

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