
Retirement of Diane Sliwka, MD — Chief Physician Experience Officer

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Date Tue 2026-03-10 11:25

To All physicians across UCSF Health <physicians_all@listsrv.ucsf.edu> <physicians_all@listsrv.ucsf.edu>; Managers' Weekly <Managers'Weekly@ucsf.edu>; ahp@listsrv.ucsf.edu <ahp@listsrv.ucsf.edu>; Herbert, Olivia <Olivia.Herbert@ucsf.edu>; King, Talmadge <Talmadge.King@ucsf.edu>; Chrisman, Maye <Maye.Chrisman@ucsf.edu>



I am writing to announce the retirement of Diane Sliwka, MD, Hospitalist, Clinical Professor of Medicine, and Chief Physician Experience Officer at UCSF Health.

Since 2014, Dr. Sliwka has led UCSF's organizational approach to clinician experience. She initiated UCSF's first physician experience survey and established the structural framework that now underpins our approach to clinician well-being: defined organizational goals; alignment of leader incentives; transparent annual measurement and reporting; and systematic action planning across departments and the health system.

Diane has not only advanced this work at UCSF—she has helped define the field of physician experience improvement nationally. At a time when clinician burnout was often framed as an individual resilience issue, she consistently articulated and operationalized a systems-based model grounded in organizational accountability. Through her national engagement with CHARM, PWAC, and the UC Physician Well-being Collaborative—and through frequent national speaking engagements—she has contributed meaningfully to shaping how academic medical centers approach culture, trust, and professional fulfillment.

Her leadership reframed clinician burnout from an individual problem to an institutional responsibility. Under her direction, UCSF implemented system-level interventions, including:

- Establishment of the UCSF Physician Experience Council (since 2020), uniting departmental, health system, and GME leaders
- Well-being-centered leadership development and the “Breathing Spaces” program
- Organizational norms such as breaks between meetings
- Inclusion of mental health-supportive language in medical staff applications
- *One Good Thing*, launched in May 2018 and continuing as a biweekly communication dedicated to clinician and faculty work experience
- Leadership of COVID-related clinical communications (2020–2022), during a period of significant uncertainty and strain

In 2025, UCSF received the Gold designation in the American Medical Association's Joy in Medicine™ program—recognition that reflects years of deliberate structural and cultural work.

Diane's impact has extended beyond strategy and infrastructure. She brings an uncommon ability to address difficult organizational realities with humility, clarity, and deeply caring honesty. In conversations about burnout, equity, trust, and accountability, she has modeled directness without defensiveness and compassion without avoidance. Her communication style has helped leaders and clinicians engage in challenging dialogue while preserving trust.

Prior to serving as Chief Physician Experience Officer, Dr. Sliwka was Executive Medical Director of Patient Experience (2014–2020), leading improvement efforts across UCSF Health. Her longstanding commitment to relationship-centered communication is reflected in her faculty role with the Academy of Communication in Healthcare and her leadership of the Center for Enhancement of Communication in Healthcare since 2015. Diane also served as Medical Service Director, Mount Zion Medical Service (2012–2015); Medical Service Director, Goldman Medical Service (2015–2017); and Co-Chair, Health Equity Council (2020–2022).

We will develop and communicate a comprehensive transition plan to ensure continuity and continued advancement of this critical work. Our commitment to clinician experience and organizational culture remains firm.

Diane's last day will be June 18, 2026. Please join me in thanking Diane for her exceptional service to UCSF.

Best regards,

Josh Adler, MD

Chief Clinical Officer, Vice Dean UCSF Health