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RED ALERT: **Tri-City Medical Center at risk of cuts, closure**

What's happening?

NNU's financial analysis shows that Tri-City Medical Center with its reliance on Medicaid and Medicare funding and financial patterns similar to recently closed hospitals, is financially vulnerable to service cuts or even eventual closure.

- Medicare and Medicaid are responsible for 64 percent of Tri-City's net patient revenue.

Who is hurt?

Tri-City serves a diverse population and provides essential services.

- In 2024, the last available year for this data, **Tri-City**:
 - Received 44,409 emergency room visits
 - Admitted 7,658 patients
 - Delivered 33 babies

Many low-income patients seek care at Tri-City Hospital. According to a [2025 community health assessment](#):

- 20.5 percent of adults live below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Of those, 38 percent report struggling to buy adequate food.
- Oceanside typically has one of the highest populations of unhoused people in San Diego's North County.

Where will patients go?

If Tri-City loses services or closes, Palomar Medical Center Escondido or Scripps Memorial Hospital Encinitas are the next closest hospitals, which are already busy.

Palomar had more than 76,880 ER visits in 2024, with the average wait time of nearly four hours. Scripps had some 62,000 ER visits with the average wait time of three and half hours, and had ambulances diverted for 18 hours.

Both hospitals are about a 20 minute drive away from Tri-City, and that extra time can put patients at risk in emergencies.

Tri-City has already shuttered services citing financial strains.

- In 2023, it closed its labor and delivery unit after more than 50 years with no plans to reopen.

Won't the Sharp Healthcare partnership secure the future of the hospital and the medical services?

In December 2025, Tri-City Medical Center's board unanimously voted to partner with San Diego-based Sharp HealthCare. The partnership still needs voter approval, which is anticipated for June. However, it may just be a band aid.

Tri-City relies heavily on Medicaid and Medicare, and pending Republican-led cuts to those programs will increase uncompensated care for uninsured and underinsured patients. That means Tri-City will continue to be a financially vulnerable hospital, even with Sharp's investment. It's unclear how Sharp management – which has promised some building upgrades and investment – will respond to Tri-City's unstable revenue situation.