



JAMES MORRIS, MD

Chair of the Chiefs, Surgery
KP South San Francisco

2018
Cecil Cutting
Leadership Award

James Morris, MD, vividly remembers the remarks a physician leader made when he joined The Permanente Medical Group in 2001: “Change us. Make us the medical group you want us to be.”

He took these words to heart, and has been leading patient-centered advances ever since. As chief of Surgery at KP South San Francisco, Dr. Morris has leveraged the individual skill sets of his surgeon colleagues to create specialized programs in breast, gastric cancer, and burn surgeries.

In his new role as regional chair of Surgery, he has expanded this approach to transform surgical care across KP Northern California. Today TPMG surgeons with specific expertise, such as colorectal and thoracic surgery, operate as specialized teams in designated medical centers, instead of being spread throughout the region.

This shift has resulted in improved patient outcomes with shorter recovery times, greater efficiency, and more nimble adoption of the latest surgical techniques.

“Change can be difficult, as there’s often a lot at stake,” says Dr. Morris. “But coming together with a larger regional perspective in mind has enabled our physicians to spread their wings as experts and collectively raise our game for quality care.”

“Dr. Morris has demonstrated tremendous courage in leading this transformation in surgical care. He communicates his vision with patience and respect, while maintaining a surgeon’s sense of urgency to get us there quickly.”

– John Skerry, MD, physician-in-chief, KP South San Francisco