



San Francisco Department of Public Health

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Statement by Barbara Garcia, Director of Health, on the Orlando Shooting Tragedy

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All of us at the San Francisco Department of Public Health are profoundly saddened in the wake of another tragic mass shooting in our country. Our hearts are with the victims and their families and loved ones.

The attack at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida early Sunday morning is causing unimaginable grief to hundreds of people. Gun violence is a public health crisis that spares no one.

We don't know, and may never know, the reason for this horrible act of hate and terror. The fact that it took place at a gay nightclub that features Latin music causes concern for the LGBT and Latino populations, who have faced violence and discrimination for generations.

Around the country, people are responding with kindness and unity. Vigils, blood donations and offers of help are happening everywhere. Those responses show our strength as a national community and give us hope.

Now, we must pull together and care for ourselves and each other. During times of trauma and crisis, it is important to feel safe. I encourage City and County of San Francisco employees to make use of counseling services at CCSF Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 1-800-795-2351. San Francisco residents can access help at (888) 246-3333. The attached handout on coping with traumatic events can help us all to understand our own and other people's responses, and provides useful tips on self-care.

At the Health Department we will redouble our efforts to be compassionate and to keep our patients, clients and each other safe and healthy every day.