



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco  
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### **New HIV annual report shows San Francisco performing well on all measures**

**Heading toward zero new infections and deaths,  
improved linkage to care**

***Focus on disparities essential for success***

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SAN FRANCISCO (September 1, 2016) – New HIV infections in San Francisco are continuing to decline and people with HIV are getting linked to care more quickly, but significant disparities persist that must be overcome in order to end the epidemic and “get to zero,” a new report by the San Francisco Health Department shows.

New HIV diagnoses in San Francisco declined 17 percent from 309 in 2014 to 255 in 2015. Overall, 93 percent of the 17,198 people living with HIV are aware of their infection. They are being linked to care more quickly and showing improved outcomes. The amount of time between HIV diagnosis and suppression of the virus has dropped from 11 months in 2009 to three months in 2014. Deaths among people with HIV have continued to decline since 2013. That year, 39 percent of deaths were from HIV/AIDS related causes.

However, disparities persist that point the way toward more focused efforts. African Americans in particular are not seeing the same progress as other populations in the City. Latinos, transgender women and youth also experience disparities in some areas.

“The overall picture is very good, with San Francisco heading toward zero on every HIV measure,” said Barbara Garcia, Director of Health. “However, the data also show significant disparities, affirming our focus on efforts for groups who are not experiencing as much progress. Without improvements for these populations, we as a city will not reach zero.”

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San Francisco launched its “Getting to Zero” initiative in October 2015, pledging to become the first city to reach zero new HIV infections, deaths from HIV/AIDS and stigma. The Getting to Zero Coalition is a citywide public-private partnership including the Health Department, community members and organizations, service providers and academic partners like UCSF. (<http://www.gettingtozerosf.org/>)

In San Francisco today, African American men have the highest HIV infection rate, at 140 per 100,000 population, compared to a rate of 52 among white men. African American women have the highest HIV infection rate among all women, at 31 per 100,000. Overall, African Americans in San Francisco are the only racial or ethnic group where the new diagnoses are not declining, but have remained stable. Other groups experiencing disparities are Latinos, youth and transgender women, according to the 2015 Annual HIV report by the HIV Epidemiology Section of the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

<https://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/oprograms/HIVepiSec/HIVepiSecReports.asp>

"San Francisco has always been at the forefront of HIV/AIDS care and prevention and will continue to lead," said Mayor Ed Lee. "Our continued efforts to unite policy, science, healthcare and community will help us progress towards a goal of zero."

The City included \$3.1 million in new funding in this year's budget for Getting to Zero, bringing the total GTZ budget to \$4.3 million. With this infusion of additional GTZ funding, DPH's overall budget for HIV prevention and health services will reach \$57.5 million this coming fiscal year.

This year's Getting to Zero investment is focused largely on reducing disparities and includes programs to make prevention more accessible to Latino and African American men who have sex with men, transgender women and youth; community-based work to combat stigma, which may be a factor in seeking health services; intensive case management; addressing the needs of an aging population living with HIV and other programs.

There are several ongoing efforts underway to reduce disparities. The MAC AIDS Fund invested \$1 million over the past two years to help link HIV positive patients to care, which is key to long term survival and halting the spread of disease. The Health Department's current campaign, “Our Sexual Revolution,” supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, seeks to increase the use of PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) in the African American, Latino and transgender communities. ([www.oursexualrevolution.org](http://www.oursexualrevolution.org)) Currently, more than 6,000 San Franciscans are on PrEP.

“San Francisco's commitment to data gathering allows us to see where we are doing well and where to target intensive efforts to eliminate HIV/AIDS for everyone in the City,” said Dr. Susan Scheer, Director of the Health Department's HIV Epidemiology

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Section. “This report gives clear direction and affirms our strategy of focusing on disparities in order to reach zero.”

San Francisco has prioritized the fight against HIV/AIDS since the epidemic began. The country’s first dedicated AIDS ward opened at San Francisco General Hospital in 1983. The first antiretroviral drug was tested here in 1987. The City started syringe access and disposal programs to prevent the spread of HIV in 1992. In 2010, San Francisco became the first jurisdiction in the United States to recommend universal antiretroviral therapy (ART) to all patients at the time of diagnosis, regardless of CD4 cell count. The Mayor’s budget has back-filled federal HIV/AIDS funding cuts each year since 2012, totaling nearly \$15 million.

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