



City and County of San Francisco  
Edwin M. Lee  
Mayor



San Francisco  
Health Network

SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

## **As National Health Care Policy Roils, San Francisco Reaffirms Commitment to High Quality Care and Access**

### ***San Francisco Health Network Helps Patients Navigate the City's Public Health Care System***

#### **"Health Care is Here"**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAN FRANCISCO (August 10, 2017) -- Last month the U.S. Congress ceased initial efforts to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA). A positive development that retains access to health care and coverage for thousands of San Franciscans, but it is clear that the story is not over yet.

"After failed attempts from Congress to strip millions of Americans of their health care, San Francisco is reaffirming our commitment to high quality care for all residents," said Mayor Ed Lee. "Our City's health care system is a partnership among providers, hospitals and community organizations, led by the Department of Public Health with a mission to protect and promote the health of all San Franciscans. Providing a strong public health care system lets our residents know that their health is important and that the City is here for them."

The foundation of the City's health care system is the [San Francisco Health Network](#), a community of top-rated clinics, hospitals and programs operated by the Department of Public Health. The Network serves more than 100,000 people in neighborhood clinics and hospitals, such as Castro Mission, Chinatown, and Southeast health centers, Zuckerberg San Francisco General and Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center. The Network welcomes patients with Medi-Cal, Healthy San Francisco, Healthy Kids and Healthy Workers plans. It cares for immigrants and uninsured patients as well, and provides enrollment services to help them access coverage.

"We provide world class care near you, for you, regardless of immigration status or lack of insurance," said Roland Pickens, Director of the Network.

The ACA has been good for San Francisco. Since it was implemented, 80,000 San Franciscans have been enrolled in Medi-Cal as expanded under the ACA, and 37,000 gained insurance through Covered California. The City has moved to stabilize these gains by making Covered California plans more affordable and by keeping Healthy San Francisco in place for those who

still need it. With only 4.8 percent of San Franciscans uninsured today, more members of our community have better health, increased access, and are protected from the financial devastation of medical bills.

“San Francisco has a long history of supporting and promoting access to high quality health care for all residents,” said Barbara Garcia, Director of Health. “We want to ensure that all San Franciscans know that the health care system has not changed and they should continue to use their health care services. In particular, immigrants, the uninsured, Medi-Cal and Healthy San Francisco members need to know that their benefits remain in place.”

Although San Francisco has one of the country’s oldest and most comprehensive public health systems, the Network was created just three years ago, uniting all our facilities and capabilities, in response to changes in the health care environment, including the ACA. Today, the Network serves more than 40 percent of the City’s Medi-Cal population, and more than 15 percent of San Franciscans.

The Health Department recently improved the experience of Network patients by solving some of the issues that made the system hard to navigate. For example, we established a Nurse Advice Line and Centralized Call Center. Working with San Francisco-based social innovation and design consultancy [Daylight Design](#), we used design thinking to articulate how the system works and to improve the language and visuals used to communicate with patients.

“We learned that while our patients loved their clinic, their provider or their health team, they didn’t know they were part of a Network,” Pickens said. “That meant they weren’t taking advantage of all of the services we have to offer. We set out to fix that by improving patient communications and supporting staff understanding of the new Network structure. The top priority is to improve patients’ navigation of the Network, their experience and health outcomes.”

The San Francisco Health Network marshals the full expertise of the City’s health system.

- Our staff and patients come from all over the world and we communicate in more than 50 languages.
- Our scores for the national Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) – quality and outcomes measures – are some of the highest in California.
- Our primary care clinics have podiatry, dental, pharmacists and mental health services on site.
- Specialty and hospital care is provided at Zuckerberg San Francisco General (ZSFG), where all the physicians are UCSF faculty.
- Laguna Honda Hospital earned four stars for excellence from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The healing environment features art, gardens, pools and a small farm for therapeutic recovery.
- Our care for mental health and substance use issues includes primary care access as well as a comprehensive system of treatment from prevention to crisis, acute and long-term care, with a goal of wellness and recovery for all clients.

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The San Francisco Health Network is a community of top-rated clinics, hospitals and programs operated by the Health Department. We connect San Franciscans to quality health care.

Every year we serve more than 100,000 people in our clinics and hospitals, such as Castro Mission, Chinatown, and Southeast health centers, Zuckerberg San Francisco General and Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center. We provide continuous care for people wherever they are – in clinics, hospitals, at home, in jail, in transitional housing or on the streets. As the city’s public health system we

also provide emergency, trauma, mental health and substance use care to any San Franciscan who needs it.

The Health Network celebrates the city's diversity, serving individuals and families of all backgrounds and identities, regardless of immigration status or lack of insurance. The Health Network is dedicated to empowering all San Franciscans, without exception, to live the healthiest lives possible.

For enrollment information, call 415 206-7800 or visit <http://www.sfhealthnetwork.org/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/San-Francisco-Health-Network-856575211038659/>