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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**MAYOR LONDON BREED ANNOUNCES CREATION OF
REAL-TIME BED INVENTORY TO IMPROVE BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH SYSTEM**

New online tool from the Department of Public Health will allow service providers and clients to see the number and location of treatment beds that are available at a given time

San Francisco, CA — Mayor London N. Breed, in partnership with Dr. Anton Nigusse Bland, Director of Mental Health Reform, and the San Francisco Department of Public Health, today announced the creation of a new real-time inventory to track the availability of behavioral health beds in San Francisco. This inventory is part of Mayor Breed's behavioral health reform initiative—Heal Our City—to help the approximately 4,000 homeless San Franciscans who have mental illness and substance use disorders.

The online inventory will allow potential clients and service providers to search for availability of San Francisco's short-term residential treatment beds, which people can request for themselves when they are ready for care. In addition to making it easier for people to get connected to care, the real-time inventory will inform DPH's targeted investments in new beds and improve the efficiency of the existing referral system.

"When someone is experiencing homelessness, mental illness, and a substance use disorder, the last thing we should be doing is making it more complicated for them to get the care they need," said Mayor Breed. "With this real-time data, we'll be able to connect people more efficiently with available treatment beds, make better use of our existing resources, and identify opportunities for improvement in our existing system of care."

This centralized, online resource will show how many of the City's 350 short-term behavioral health treatment beds are available on a daily basis. DPH works with several community-based organizations to provide substance use treatment and mental health services. These community-based organizations—starting with those that provide withdrawal management and substance use treatment—will populate the online bed inventory with their daily bed availability. These organizations include Community Forward SF, Friendship House, HealthRIGHT 360, The Latino Commission, Epiphany Center, PRC Baker Places, and Salvation Army.

This transparency will help potential clients more easily navigate to care and help providers fill beds in treatment programs. The web page will outline the steps to follow to receive care, and will provide quick links and phone numbers to other resources for people who are experiencing more urgent behavioral health crises.



Creating a real-time behavioral health bed database was one of the key recommendations in a September 12, 2019 research report from Tipping Point Community and the University of California, San Francisco. The full report, “Behavioral Health and Homelessness in San Francisco: Needs and Opportunities,” can be found [here](#). A generous donation from Tipping Point has allowed DPH to act quickly on this project, which echoes the Director of Mental Health Reform’s own recommendations.

“This is just one tool that can help more people get into care,” said Dr. Nigusse Bland. “We want to make the best possible use of the substance-use and mental health treatment resources that San Francisco already provides, and to make data-driven decisions about where we need to add services.”

“The San Francisco Department of Public Health and its community-based partners strive to offer high-quality care as soon as someone is ready for voluntary substance use or mental health treatment,” said Dr. Grant Colfax, Director of Health. “An online inventory can give clients, their loved ones and providers easier access to treatment.”

The real-time bed inventory of voluntary, self-referral treatment beds will launch in phases, with substance use beds added online first, followed by mental health beds. The first phase will be available to the public on DPH’s SF Health Network [website](#) in November.

First, DPH will display the availability of the approximately 200 voluntary, residential **substance use** treatment beds in the system. These beds include withdrawal management (“detox”) and 90-day programs.

Following the addition of the substance use treatment beds in the online inventory, DPH will display the availability of the approximately 150 short-term, residential **mental health** beds in the system. These are voluntary programs and include beds for people with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.

Concurrently, DPH is also beginning the planning for a new comprehensive bed management tool that will incorporate the entire behavioral health bed system within an integrated database. The new tool will allow the Department to better understand where vacancies exist, where there are extended wait times for beds, and where targeted investment will allow the entire system to function better for the patients under its care. The launch of this comprehensive bed management tool is anticipated within the next year.

The new online inventory will help address several of the challenges that people face when trying to get the behavioral health care they need. Currently, people who are ready for substance use and mental health treatment, their families, and their service providers have no single source of information to identify available beds. Potential clients may not be aware of the places where they can check themselves into treatment. Providers who want to refer clients to treatment often spend precious time calling individual programs to find out where beds are available, and do not always get immediate answers. Under the current system, specialty programs, such as those



designed to serve HIV-positive, pregnant, LGBTQ or Spanish-speaking clients, are not well advertised.

“San Francisco is always at the forefront of innovation for care,” said Nicole Ibarra, Managing Director of San Francisco Behavioral Health at HealthRIGHT 360. “We look forward to DPH’s online system that leverages technology to improve service delivery. We are especially happy to see the system takes into account the varying needs of diverse populations.”

The information on the online inventory will be presented in the City’s five threshold languages—Spanish, traditional Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, and Tagalog—in order to ensure equity in access to this resource. Treatment providers with multilingual capability will be highlighted, along with those emphasizing LGBTQ, pregnancy, HIV-positive and other specialized care.

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