



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2006-07 Annual Report for the San Francisco Department of Public Health. As I enter my eleventh year as Director of Health I look back proudly at what we have achieved during my tenure and look forward to the exciting opportunities that lay ahead.

This has been an extraordinary year for the Department as we embarked on the historic roll out of Healthy San Francisco expanding healthcare coverage for San Francisco residents. For over a decade, San Francisco has been a leader in efforts to expand access to health care for its uninsured residents and workers and the Department has played a central role in these expansions. As stated in the Department's FY 2005-06 Annual Report both Mayor Newsom and Supervisor Ammiano have worked tirelessly on proposals to expand healthcare coverage in San Francisco. Their two parallel efforts resulted in a combined ordinance last year called the San Francisco Health Care Security Ordinance which was unanimously adopted by the Board of Supervisors and signed into law in August 2006. The new program was given the operative name of Healthy San Francisco (HSF). Healthy San Francisco relies on an access model and is not insurance.

Healthy San Francisco is redefining the way the Department provides services and much happened during the fiscal year toward implementation of this new and exciting program. Our goal is to use HSF as an opportunity to re-envision our entire health care delivery system. Currently, uninsured residents must navigate a fragmented safety net system to receive services; this can create barriers to care and inefficiency. Often times, uninsured residents have no idea where to go to obtain services and how much those services might cost. As a result, many uninsured residents simply go without having needed care. Healthy San Francisco is designed to make healthcare services accessible and affordable to uninsured San Francisco residents by strengthening the existing health care safety net (both public and non-profit providers). It will enable the safety net system to function as a coordinated whole and reduce the barriers that uninsured individuals experience when they try to obtain services. Besides expanding our network to increase capacity, we also wish to use this as an opportunity to provide all of our clients with primary care homes, to emphasize prevention, and to increase the use of self-management and support groups. Even our infrastructure, our financial and IT systems must change to accept point-of-service charges at our clinics and track expenditures and utilization in different ways.

Early feedback to the new program has been positive; one new member said, "I never went to the doctor before unless I was deadly sick, now I can get preventive care." Another new HSF member said she liked the program because, "It's not a hand-out, it's

not a free clinic it's a plan." The implementation of Healthy San Francisco offers the opportunity to fulfill our dream of providing an organized health care system for all the 82,000 uninsured in San Francisco.

In addition to all of the excitement around HSF we made progress on a number of other important fronts this year. DPH continues to focus a tremendous amount of effort on rebuilding our aging infrastructure.

- San Francisco General Hospital Medical Center must be rebuilt by 2013 to meet California seismic safety regulatory requirements for acute care hospitals. SFGH is the only Trauma Center (Level 1) in San Francisco and is vital to the provision of care for the indigent, uninsured and underinsured residents of the City. In FY 2006-07, a geotechnical engineering firm was retained to study the proposed rebuild site, the west lawn of SFGH existing campus. Preliminary geotechnical results were very favorable as were the results of an environmental hazards investigation.
- This year brought dramatic change with the Laguna Honda Hospital rebuild project as giant steel girders rose into the air changing the profile of the hospital forever. The new campus will have a full continuum of long-term healthcare services. Construction continues and we are rapidly approaching the opening of the first two new buildings in July 2009.
- Retrofitting the Primary Care Centers also advanced: the Curry Center was completed in November; Silver Avenue Health Center was completed in December; and Tom Waddell Health Center was completed in May.

A few other highlights of the year included:

- LHH passing California Department of Health Services survey on the first visit for the first time in nine years;
- SFGH receiving the prestigious international recognition as a Baby-Friendly hospital by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund;
- The 2005 California Health Interview Survey showing that more than 99 percent of children in San Francisco ages birth through 18 have health insurance coverage, indicating the success of Healthy Kids;
- The Department's Housing and Urban Health adding 133 units of housing during the fiscal year for a total of 860 units across 20; and
- The Adult Immunization and Travel Clinic located at 101 Grove Street was voted the "Best Place to Get Shots" by San Francisco Bay Guardian readers.

None of the Department's initiatives could have been achieved without the strength and commitment of the Department's staff. Our ability to meet the health needs of our community is dependent upon the caliber of our staff. I am appreciative of their knowledge, loyalty and courage.

My continued gratitude to the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, and the San Francisco Health Commission for their leadership, their support and their commitment to health. They have led San Francisco through significant expansions and innovations in health care and health care access. Although the Department's goals are an enormous undertaking, I am convinced that working together we will succeed. I look forward to our continued work to improve the health status of all San Franciscans.

Mitchell H. Katz, M.D.
October 2007