



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

Dr. Grant Colfax  
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

### **Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of February 19, 2019**

*A current overview of issues affecting the state of public health in San Francisco*  
<https://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/aboutdph/insideDept/dirRpts/default.asp>

#### **Adult Urgent Care Center relocates**

On February 12<sup>th</sup>, Mayor London Breed led a ribbon-cutting ceremony to preview the opening of the Adult Urgent Care Center's new clinic space and to celebrate the capital project completion and relocation. The center is relocating to the first floor in Building 5, Unit 1E on the Zuckerberg San Francisco General (ZSFG) campus. Adult Urgent Care officially opens for patients in the new location on February 21<sup>st</sup>.

In addition to the ZSFG community, the Health department (DPH) and Public Works department's (DPW) leaders and staff, and Patient Advisory Committee members participated and toured the clinic. The expanded clinic has 12 patient rooms – 3 additional rooms than the current space. The \$1.8 million capital project was partially funded by the 2016 Public Health and Safety Bond (Prop A) and the City's Capital Budget. The project used design services from DPW, and pre-construction and optimization work from DPH Facilities Services. Adult Urgent Care will be the first clinic to relocate to Building 5 as part of a campus-wide effort to improve patient safety and care by centralizing outpatient clinics on the ZSFG campus. Building 5 is undergoing a seismic retrofit to strengthen the building in the event of an earthquake. Once complete, safety will be further enhanced for outpatient clinics at ZSFG.

#### **Methamphetamine Task Force**

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, Mayor London N. Breed and Supervisor Rafael Mandelman announced the formation of a Methamphetamine Task Force to address the rise in methamphetamine use in San Francisco. The Department of Public Health will take lead and coordinate the Task Force alongside with Mayor Breed and Supervisor Mandelman.

The Task Force will examine the methamphetamine landscape, impacts on residents, and opportunities and challenges for increasing rehabilitation and treatment options, including expanding



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existing prevention and law enforcement programs. The Task Force will be multi-disciplinary and multi-sector, with members including medical and public health professionals, researchers, substance use disorder treatment providers, emergency responders, criminal justice and law enforcement officials, drug policy experts, and current and/or former substance users.

The Task Force will release a comprehensive report with recommendations on harm reduction strategies to decrease and manage methamphetamine use, identify best practices for treatment and service options for current users, and develop policy recommendations to reduce the medical and social impacts of methamphetamine use on San Franciscans. The Task Force is an opportunity to further support cross-departmental collaboration, increase public awareness of substance use and abuse, and examine cost-effective strategies to better manage the impacts of methamphetamine use on the City's systems and its residents.

### **Heroes & Hearts 2019**

On February 13<sup>th</sup>, Hearts in SF took place at Pier 48, a vibrant evening event honoring and highlighting the community and mental health care programs at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center (ZSFG). San Francisco General Hospital Foundation (the Foundation) invited Patrick J. Kennedy, former Congressman and national mental health advocate, as the special keynote speaker at Hearts in SF. During a seated community dinner, guests heard the inspirational views on the state of mental health and addiction care in America from former Congressman Kennedy, as well as San Francisco civic leaders including the Honorable Mayor London Breed.

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, the Foundation has revealed a new Transform Mental and Behavioral Health Fund which is receiving record-breaking financial support from the community and San Francisco businesses, including an early \$1 million grant from Bank of America, the fund's largest contribution so far. This fund will bring experts together, connect disparate resources, invest in systemic infrastructure, and test "not yet scaled" solutions. Funding will be directed towards projects that integrate and address the physical location of care and clinic, the technological coordination of care system-wide, and the programmatic social and behavioral health care needs of ZSFG's patient population. Examples of programs that will benefit from this fund include Mental and Behavioral Health Innovation, Renovation of Patient Care Areas Dedicated to Behavior Health, Social and Behavioral Health Integration, Substance Misuse and Opioid Treatment, Social Medicine, and Solid Start.

### **National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**



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On February 7<sup>th</sup> the San Francisco Department of Public Health – Community Health Equity & Promotion and Interdivisional Initiative in partnership with Community Based Organization, Hope SF and community members held an annual event for National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAD) at the Community Space in Sunnydale. This event provided an opportunity for the people in the neighborhood to get tested for HIV and other STD's. The program began with a community member from the neighborhood speaking their truth around the importance of Black History and the impact it had on them. This followed up with participants singing the Black National Anthem. Several youth spoke about a few of the many amazing Black leaders and recited poems around HIV. Finally, it ended with a powerful skit with a daughter disclosing her HIV status to her mom and an incredible dance performance from the youth in the community.

### **The Lancet health journal features Getting to Zero**

The February issue of The Lancet highlights the Department of Public Health's efforts to end the city's HIV epidemic. The mission of the Getting to Zero San Francisco consortium, formed in 2014, which draws together multiple organizations and agencies to drive down HIV infections and HIV-related deaths by 90% by 2020.

Currently, Getting to Zero has a volunteer membership roster of 250, and a much greater number doing the work of its five committees: PrEP, RAPID, Retention and Re-Engagement, Stigma, and Adolescents/Young Adults. These committees are each charged with developing annual strategic plans, metrics, and milestones, and they combine multiple strategies to improve care for people with or at risk of HIV infection and prevent new infections from occurring.

Overall, data coming from San Francisco suggest the Getting to Zero efforts are paying off. In 2013, before the program began, there were 394 new HIV diagnoses. By 2017, this had fallen to 221, a 44% decrease. The rate of decrease slowed from 2016–17, with a fall of just 6%; however, early data from the first half of 2018 show there were 81 new diagnoses to the end of June. Should this trend hold, the new diagnoses for 2018 could drop below 200, the first time this landmark will have been reached since the start of the HIV epidemic in San Francisco. Viral suppression is 77% overall, an increase from 65% in 2013. HIV associated deaths have also fallen by more than 50% over the past 10 years.

### **Healthy SF serves as model for health care program**



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Over the last decade, the program called “Healthy San Francisco” (HSF), working in tandem with the Affordable Care Act and other state and city programs, has ensured that nobody inside city borders has to go without care. Since then, HSF has, in part at least, served as a model for local health initiatives in other parts of the country, including Los Angeles County and the city of New York. Several other cities have also expressed an interest in HSF such as New Orleans, Denver, Pittsburgh and Miami.

HSF offers access to healthcare to city residents who are 18 years and older, earn up to 500 percent of the federal poverty level, and have no other healthcare options. It is offered to qualified residents regardless of employment, immigration, or health status. Supporters saw the program as a way to better coordinate the services of the health facilities already in place in San Francisco, rather than starting from scratch. One key to the success of the program is that one clinic coordinates all aspects of a participant’s medical care. San Francisco patients enroll in a “home clinic” where their clinic doctor then decides with the patients when they need any specialty care at a hospital.

### **San Francisco’s Measles Vaccination Rate**

Since Washington state declared a state of emergency due to a measles outbreak, health officials in San Francisco uses this as an opportunity to remind adults to immunize their children with a vaccination. Measles is highly contagious and viral and is a vaccine-preventable disease. Tightened state vaccination requirements have largely reduced the risk of such an outbreak here. When vaccination rates are high, the community is better protected from the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases

Since 2015, when California moved to eliminate ‘personal belief’ exemptions that allowed parents to avoid immunizing their children, San Francisco schools report the number of students with all required immunizations has increased 2.4 percent. The change has left the city at a safe and comfortable overall 94.9 percent vaccination rate.

### **Mayor Breed and Supervisor Peskin announce halt to balance billing at ZSFG until plan to improve long-term billing practice is implemented**

On February 1<sup>st</sup>, Mayor London N. Breed, Supervisor Aaron Peskin, the Department of Public Health and Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center (ZSFG) announced immediate steps to improve billing practices at ZSFG for patients who have gotten stuck in the



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middle of disputes between the hospital and their insurance provider, including a temporary halt to the practice of balance billing.

Greg Wagner, Acting Director of Health, and Dr. Susan Ehrlich, CEO of ZSFG, outlined a set of immediate actions and elements of a comprehensive plan for improvement that will be developed within 90 days. This includes making changes to billing practices, financial assistance and patient communications. In addition, DPH and ZSFG are exploring policy solutions in coordination with local and state elected officials. DPH and ZSFG have continued to address the problem of insurance payment shortfalls. DPH's patient financial services department works with individuals year-round to help them with billing issues, including financial assistance and appeals to insurance plans.

### **DPH in the News (Feb 1 – Feb 13)**

SF Weekly, Feb 13 2019, Mission bodywork businesses may receive reprieve from new law

<http://www.sfweekly.com/news/mission-bodywork-businesses-may-receive-reprieve-from-new-law/>

SF Examiner, Feb 13 2019, San Francisco's immune system is stronger than ever

<http://www.sfexaminer.com/san-franciscos-immune-system-stronger-ever/>

SF Bay, Feb 13 2019, SF General hospital shifts adult urgent care center to new building

<https://sfbay.ca/2019/02/13/sf-general-hospital-shifts-adult-urgent-care-center-to-new-building/>

KQED, Feb 13 2019, San Francisco Struggles to Respond to Methamphetamine Epidemic

<https://www.kqed.org/forum/2010101869630/san-francisco-struggles-to-respond-to-methamphetamine-epidemic>

PBS, Feb 13 2019, Democrat-led cities and states move toward universal health care on their own terms

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/democrat-led-cities-and-states-move-toward-universal-health-care-on-their-own-terms>

SF Examiner, Feb 12 2019, New urgent care unit set to open at ZSFGH next week

<http://www.sfexaminer.com/new-urgent-care-unit-set-open-zsfgh-next-week/>

<http://www.sfexaminer.com/sf-general-hospital-celebrates-relocation-urgent-care-center/>

BCN, Feb 12 2019, Public health officials unveil new Urgent Care unit set to open next week

<https://www.sfgate.com/news/bayarea/article/Public-Health-Officials-Unveil-New-Urgent-Care-13611444.php>



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SF Examiner, Feb 11 2019, Impact of homeless conservatorship plan more limited than expected  
<http://www.sfexaminer.com/impact-homeless-conservatorship-plan-limited-expected/>

Salon, Feb 10 2019, Cities are blazing the trail toward healthcare for all

[https://www.salon.com/2019/02/10/cities-are-blazing-the-trail-toward-healthcare-for-all\\_partner/](https://www.salon.com/2019/02/10/cities-are-blazing-the-trail-toward-healthcare-for-all_partner/)

SF Chronicle, Feb 8 2019, Meth deaths and ER visits climb sharply in SF, as leaders look for solutions

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/Meth-deaths-and-ER-visits-climb-sharply-in-SF-as-13599681.php>

KQED, Feb 8 2019, Meth's Comeback: A New Speed Epidemic Takes Its Toll on San Francisco

<https://www.kqed.org/news/11724407/meths-comeback-a-new-speed-epidemic-takes-its-toll-on-san-francisco>

SF Bay Times, Feb 7 2019, Grant Colfax, Former Obama AIDS Policymaker, Appointed Director of SF Department of Public Health

<http://sfbaytimes.com/grant-colfax-former-obama-aids-policymaker-appointed-director-sf-department-public-health/>

BAR, Feb 6 2019, Supervised injection bill reintroduced

[https://www.ebar.com/news/news/271890/supervised\\_injection\\_bill\\_reintroduced](https://www.ebar.com/news/news/271890/supervised_injection_bill_reintroduced)

Washington Post, Feb 5 2019, So far, the deadly fentanyl epidemic hasn't hit California.

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2019/02/05/so-far-california-has-avoided-fentanyl-epidemic-plaguing-many-areas-of-us/>

MedPage, Feb 4 2019, Methodology Fixes Coming for Calif. Death Certificate Project

<https://www.medpagetoday.com/painmanagement/opioids/77811>

BAR, Feb 4 2019, Reaction Positive to Breed's Hiring Colfax to Lead SF DPH

[https://sanfrancisco.edgemedianetwork.com/news/news/271674/reaction\\_positive\\_to\\_breeds\\_hiring\\_colfax\\_to\\_lead\\_sf\\_dph](https://sanfrancisco.edgemedianetwork.com/news/news/271674/reaction_positive_to_breeds_hiring_colfax_to_lead_sf_dph)