



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD  
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

# Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of October 1, 2024

*A current overview of issues affecting the state of public health in San Francisco*  
<https://sf.gov/departments/san-francisco-health-commission/past-meetings>

*In alignment with the California Department of Public Health, we will no longer report on COVID-19 case data. More people are now testing themselves at home for COVID-19 and we do not get data from at-home testing. This affects the accuracy of data on testing volume. We will continue to report on [test positivity](#) and will monitor other indicators including hospitalizations.*

### **NEW DPH REPORT SHOWS HIV DIAGNOSES IN SAN FRANCISCO DECLINE IN 2023**

DPH released its 2023 HIV Epidemiology Annual Report, which shows that the number of new HIV diagnoses have declined in San Francisco.

In 2023, there were 133 new HIV diagnoses, a 20% decrease from 2022 when 167 diagnoses were reported. Since 2014, the number of new HIV diagnoses in San Francisco has declined by 59%, while nationally, new HIV diagnoses have only declined by 3% in the past decade.

Declines in new diagnoses were specifically reported among Latino individuals living in the City. In 2023, there were 40 new HIV diagnoses among Latino individuals, a 46 % decrease from the previous year when 74 new diagnoses were reported, and a 59% decrease since 2014. Importantly, there has been an overall decline in the number of new HIV diagnoses for all racial and ethnic groups from 2014 through 2023.

Levels of linkage to care and viral suppression after diagnoses have returned to or exceeded the pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. In 2023, 95% of individuals diagnosed in San Francisco were linked to care within one month and 84% of people diagnosed the first nine months of 2023 were virally suppressed within six months.

DPH's expanded services in 2023 include the HIV/STI home testing program [Take Me Home](#), which reported an increase in participation from 533 HIV test kits ordered in 2022 compared to 843 in



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD  
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

2023. In a testament to the effectiveness of public awareness efforts through many years, an estimated 97% of people living with HIV in San Francisco are aware of their status, compared with 87% in the United States.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) also became more widely available, including an injectable form of PrEP. The medication's use among men who have sex with men (MSM) living without HIV has increased for all race/ethnicities from 2015 to 2023 among San Francisco City Clinic patients who were San Francisco residents. In 2015, PrEP use ranged from 22% to 27% among MSM living without HIV across all race/ethnicities; by 2023, it increased to between 71% to 78%.

While much progress has been made, challenges remain. Nationally and in San Francisco, Black/African American MSM have lower PrEP use compared with MSM of other race/ethnicities. A key priority of [Getting to Zero San Francisco](#), a consortium of over 300 members including DPH, is to scale-up efforts in providing access to HIV PrEP and to ensure linkage to and engagement in HIV care for Latino, and Black/African American communities, as well as to people experiencing homelessness (PEH) and people who use drugs.

PEH comprise an elevated proportion of new diagnoses each year, accounting for 23% of 2023 diagnoses. Among PEH who were last unhoused in San Francisco, only two-thirds were virally suppressed in 2023. Additionally, while people living with HIV continue to live longer, drug overdoses accounted for 19% of deaths among that population in between the years 2019 and 2022.

To address these challenges, DPH's Community Equity Health and Promotion Branch coordinated with community partners to open seven [Health Access Points](#) (HAPs). The HAPs provide equity-focused, stigma-free, and low barrier HIV prevention, care and treatment services, as well as for other sexually transmitted infections, Hepatitis C, and overdose prevention. While everyone is welcome at the HAPs, each HAP is designed to address the specific health needs of priority populations, including Latinos, people who use drugs, Trans Women, and Black/African Americans. In addition, DPH's renowned San Francisco City Clinic provides comprehensive prevention and care HIV services with bilingual staff.

DPH also manages a robust network of programs to help ensure that PEH get and remain connected with their care, such as LINC'S (Linkage, Integration, Navigation and Comprehensive Services),



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD  
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

Whole Person Integrated Care, and Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital's Ward 86 POP-UP clinic and new HAP, "The Lobby".

The 2023 HIV Epidemiology Report Annual and can be accessed [here](#).

### **ZSFG HOSTS NURSE HIRING EVENT**

On Saturday, September 14, more than 43 candidates interested in working at ZSFG attended a meet-and-greet with ZSFG leadership, nursing staff and medical departments. CEO Susan Ehrlich, Chief Nursing Officer Gillian Otway, and others partnered with DPH Human Resources to present an overview of ZSFG, its mission and its important role as the City's only Level 1 Trauma Center at the open house hosted by DPH. The recruits toured the campus, visiting the Emergency Department, Med-Surg, Critical Care, Psychiatry, Maternal Child Health, perioperative services, and specialty clinics for an up-close look at the hospital teams and environment. DPH aims to be the employer of choice for the best and brightest medical staff personnel and several offers of employment were made as a result of the event. Special thanks to Norlissa Cooper, RN for supporting this event by touring and answering questions that candidates posed.

### **DPH HOSTS FIRST SF PROMOTORES CONFERENCE**

DPH hosted the first City of San Francisco Community Health Worker Conference on Saturday, September 21, 2024, at the Mission Neighborhood Center. The event was the culmination of a joint effort of the Promotores Program Coordinators representing community-based organizations throughout San Francisco and DPH.

DPH's Dr. Berta Hernandez and Isela Ford co-led this full-day event that offered an opportunity for promotores who contributed to the City's COVID-19 pandemic response to come together and learn about the current state of promotores as a profession throughout the county and in the State of California as a whole. Mayor London N. Breed shared words of appreciation for the work that promotores did during the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to do today to support community wellness. Dr. Susan Philip, San Francisco Health Officer and Population Health Director, welcomed the participants and Amelia Martinez of the Human Rights Commission provided opening remarks.



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD  
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

The conference concluded with selecting a delegation to represent SF promotores at the Vision and Commitment (Vision y Compromiso) conference October 3-5 2024, in Los Angeles.

### **DPH LEADERS RECEIVE PSYCHIATRY AWARD**

Ana Gonzalez, DO, and Lisa Inman, MD, Co-Chief Medical Officers for DPH Behavioral Health Services, were recently honored for their commitment to serving the community by the UCSF School of Medicine through the [Dr. J Elliot Royer Award for Excellence in Community Psychiatry](#). Through the dedicated and compassionate leadership of doctors Gonzalez and Inman, the Department has rapidly evolved and scaled programs and services to address the evolving behavioral health needs of San Franciscans, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the fentanyl epidemic, and other challenges. Together, they have led or contributed to the successful implementation of critical initiatives such as Medi-Cal policy and documentation reform, CARE Court, SB43, and a new electronic health record. In the community, they are regarded as local experts who aim to provide the best care possible. Congratulations to them both on this recognition.

### **PROJECT REACH**

DPH Whole Person Integrated Care (WPIC) and ZSFG Surgery have received a \$100,000 Equity and Innovation Grant to support Project REACH (Reducing barriers to Equitable surgical Access for people experiencing Homelessness at ZSFG).

This project strengthens an existing collaboration between the ZSFG Division of Surgery, DPH WPIC, and The Better Lab (UCSF) to improve access to care, patient experience, and outcomes of people experiencing homelessness who need surgical and post-injury care at ZSFG using a human-centered design approach.

The interventions they have proposed are novel and creative for surgical teams, though they have been modeled successfully in other departments. The primary clinic-based interventions we will include a drop-in clinic, as-needed clinic appointments, as-needed telehealth via Street Medicine iPads, and a surgical team presence at Maria X Martinez Health Resource Center.

The potential impact of the project is significant. People experiencing homelessness comprise around 20% of ZSFG trauma activations (100-150 people) per year.



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD  
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

Measurements to evaluate the project include: clinic attendance and no-shows after referral or hospital discharge compared to pre-intervention historical controls; patient experience and clinical outcomes including emergency room visits, emergency operations, and/or hospital admissions; and early implementation outcomes (acceptability, appropriateness, and feasibility).

### **LATINE/X HERITAGE MONTH**

DPH honored the diverse cultural backgrounds of the Latine/x community at “Celebrating our Roots/Celebrando Nuestras Raíces,” an event held at Potrero del Sol/La Raza Park on September 25. The Latine/x Heritage Month celebration featured a dance group, a traditional Mesoamerican blessing, and remarks from keynote speaker Gloria Romero, Executive Director at Instituto Familiar de la Raza, Inc. To demonstrate inclusiveness, DPH is using the term “Latine/x” in Latine/x Heritage Month because it is gender neutral, while the terms “Latino” and “Latina” are gendered in Spanish. DPH continues to advance health equity by addressing systemic and institutional barriers such as language access, culturally responsive care and health care access.

### **ZSFG CELEBRATES WORLD PATIENT SAFETY DAY**

ZSFG recognized international World Patient Safety Day on September 17, a global event that recognizes the vital role played by healthcare providers and leaders in ensuring safe care. ZSFG’s teams are making significant progress on many fronts to keep patients safer. Using Lean principles, several taskforces and interdisciplinary teams, ZSFG is addressing Falls with Injury, Eliminating Pressure Injuries, and Reducing Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infections (CAUTI). ZSFG is making progress. For instance, for Falls with Injury improvements continue to be launched in Med Surg, Psychiatry, 4A, and the Emergency Department where over 80% of fall events occur. The staff on H76/78 limited falls with injury to just one event in the first six months of 2024.

Another example is the hospital’s work to eliminate pressure injuries. Using Lean principles, ZSFG studied staff workflows and used data to determine root causes of pressure injuries, developed measures to maintain bed equipment, enhance wound care training, and closely tracked patient conditions in EPIC. ZSFG has reached its performance targets, and the ICU has had just one reportable pressure injury since February 2023. And, last May the hospital met its target for the number of CAUTI cases for the first time in several years. This achievement is due to hard work by an interdisciplinary taskforce that includes Infection Control, ICU leadership, Med-Surg leadership, Patient Safety, and Performance Improvement analysts.



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD  
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

### **ZSFG RECOGNIZES EVS WEEK**

During Environmental Services Week (EVS Week)—September 8-14—ZSFG celebrated the team of nearly 200 EVS staff members who walk every inch of the hospital campus daily. Whether they're cleaning and disinfecting to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, collecting recyclables and trash, sweeping the hallways and hospital floors, polishing 10,000+ windows and hundreds of handrails, managing all the hospital linens, and more, ZSFG shines because of our EVS team that takes care of all the details. The Environmental Services team consistently provides a clean, safe and healthy environment to all patients, staff and visitors at the hospital. They take pride in the care they provide, and it shows in the work they do every day—prioritizing patient and staff safety and wellness. We are grateful to the team and the important care they provide.

### **COVID-19 UPDATE**

As of 09/26:

- San Francisco's 7-day rolling average of COVID test positivity is 4.1%.
- Twenty-six percent of SF residents are fully up to date on their COVID vaccinations and have received the updated vaccine.