



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 September 17, 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.

PHD AWARDED FIVE-YEAR GRANT TO CONTINUE OFFERING NATIONAL HIV-FOCUSED CAPACITY BUILDING ASSISTANCE (CBA) THROUGH ITS GETSFCBA PROGRAM

Over the past 10 years, the Center for Learning & Innovation (CLI) has hosted a CDC-funded HIV prevention-focused capacity building assistance program (CBA) to provide training and technical assistance to the HIV prevention workforce at health departments and community-based organizations across the U.S. Under CDC's latest five-year notice of funding opportunity, PS-24-020, the getSFcba program (getSFcba.org) successfully re-competed so it could continue leveraging PHD's expertise to address high priority needs identified by CDC-funded jurisdictions and agencies spanning the four Ending the HIV Epidemic pillars (diagnose, treat, prevent and respond). getSFcba will tackle inequities in outcomes by helping partners navigate key social determinants of health while focusing on syndemics such as sexually transmitted infections, hepatitis, and substance use disorders. In addition to providing technical assistance, getSFcba will create new opportunities to mentor early career managers at health departments nationwide and host Public Health Detailing Institutes to help departments engage clinical providers to increase the uptake of evidence-based HIV prevention practices.

PHD COLLABORATION IN COMMUNICABLE DISEASE RESPONSE

Last month, teams from across DPH's Population Health Division rapidly responded to an outbreak of Shigella that helped prevent further spread of infection. Shigella is a bacteria that causes a gastrointestinal infection called shigellosis. It can spread easily from person to person or by eating



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foods contaminated by infected people.

On August 28, DPH's Communicable Disease (CD) Branch identified that at least ten San Francisco residents who had Shigella, and who during interviews with CD staff, reported eating at the same restaurant less than a week earlier. CD immediately notified the Environmental Health Branch (EHB) and Public Health Lab (PHL) to conduct a coordinated investigation and response that same day.

Working closely with the restaurant management, the team inspected the restaurant, tested restaurant employees to identify anyone with Shigella, and excluded them from work to prevent the further spread of illness. They also worked to ensure that the facility was in compliance with all public health codes before reopening on August 30. Thank you to the CD, EHB, and PHL teams for putting public health into action and protecting our community.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH RETAIL TOBACCO AND SMOKING PROGRAM ORDINANCE

Tobacco use continues to be among the leading causes of preventable deaths in San Francisco and reducing tobacco use continues to be a priority for the Department of Public Health. The Environmental Health Branch's Retail Tobacco and Smoking Program is responsible for enforcing all tobacco related provisions of the San Francisco Health Code. In 2014, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously passed the Tobacco Permit Density Reduction Ordinance. The goal of the ordinance was to reduce the number of permitted tobacco retail stores to no more than 45 per supervisorial district. Specifically, the ordinance prevents any new retail tobacco permits from being issued in any supervisorial district with more than 45 existing permits.

Since 2018, the Environmental Health Branch's Retail Tobacco and Smoking Program has seen a 21% decrease in the number of permitted retail tobacco establishments in San Francisco. During this time, San Francisco's retail tobacco permits have gone from 738 permits to 585. This year the city reached a milestone where, for the first time, all the supervisorial districts now have less than 100 retail tobacco permits. Supervisorial District 6 alone went from 123 retail tobacco permits down to 77 which is a decrease of 38%. The supervisorial district with the fewest permits is District 7 with 23 retail tobacco permits. San Francisco has now increased the number of supervisorial districts meeting the 45 or less retail tobacco permit cap requirements to 6 out of 11 districts. This is a huge accomplishment for San Francisco and the Environmental Health Branch in their efforts to reduce



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the availability of tobacco use and its related health impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRESENTATIONS TO GALILEO HIGH SCHOOL BIOTECHNOLOGY STUDENTS

Three Environmental Health Technicians gave presentations to students at Galileo High School this month. The presentations covered the topics of general vector control related to mosquitos and ticks and how biotechnology is being used to monitor these vectors and their arboviruses. The biotechnology class students were able to sequence DNA from mosquitos provided by the EHB employees and isolate the DNA from Wolbachia which is a bacterium used for mosquito control. Wolbachia is an extremely common bacteria that occurs naturally in many insects including mosquitoes. Once established in a mosquito population the bacteria is passed from one generation to the next through the insects eggs. Wolbachia blocks viruses like dengue, chikungunya and Zika from growing in the bodies of Aedes aegypti mosquitoes. Programs now exist to breed colonies of mosquitoes infected with the Wolbachia bacterium and release them into areas affected by mosquito-borne diseases. This was an opportunity for these high school kids to see this cutting-edge technology up close and hopefully some of these students will be inspired to pursue careers in public health.

ZSFG WELCOMES KPO FELLOWS

Every year, ZSFG brings on board a new cohort of fellows to join the Kaizen Promotion Office (KPO). The KPO creates a structured approach to how we improve patient care by identifying and analyzing problems, developing and implementing solutions, and reviewing results to establish new protocols and standards of care.

KPO Fellows will be embedded in departments across ZSFG, including Information Technology, Pediatrics, Quality Management, Medicine, Emergency Medicine, and Anesthesia and Perioperative Care departments.

They will be working on equity-informed projects aiming to remove pediatric health disparities, reduce sepsis infections, build data-informed electronic medical record tools to enhance patient care, use data to improve emergency care for vulnerable populations, and expand access to surgical care.



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Fellows bring fresh perspectives, diverse experiences, and commitment to continuous improvement to care for our San Franciscan patient population. Please join me in welcoming this talented group to DPH.

ZSFG GETS A SHOUT OUT FROM THE SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

The San Francisco 49ers recognized Zuckerberg San Francisco General at Monday Night Football on September 9 for their care of wide-receiver Ricky Pearsall. The spectacular ceremony included Dr. Lucy Kornblith, who received an official 49ers jersey on the field. The Trauma Care and Emergency Department teams were also acknowledged with a photo display for the thousands of fans in attendance.

This is a reminder that ZSFG's Level 1 Trauma Center is a critical part of our health network that is caring for all of San Francisco and northern San Mateo County, serving everyone with the same high quality, life-saving care. The evening ended with a Niner win.

COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 09/12:

- San Francisco's 7-day rolling average of COVID test positivity is 5.5%.
- Thirty-four percent of SF residents are fully up to date on their COVID vaccinations and have received the updated vaccine.