



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 15, 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.

DPH RESPONDS TO RECORD HEAT IN SF

On October 1, DPH quickly activated the departmental emergency operations center (DOC) ahead of what became a long period of excessive temperatures in San Francisco. Dangerous heat waves like what we experienced are expected to increase in frequency for San Francisco due to climate change. Led by the Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch, the DOC's main goal was to prevent and minimize adverse impacts to at-risk communities, public health services, and the county's medical systems. The DOC worked with teams across DPH to ensure that operations continued to run smoothly and that the people they serve were safe. The emergency medical system, including hospitals, were monitored and provided immediate assistance when needed. Communications with community-based organizations and medical and non-medical residential care facilities provided health safety guidance. One highlight in the response was the opening of a community cooling space at DPH's Southeast Family Health Center.

Thank you to all the DPH employees who helped take care of our community during the heat wave.

2023 VIRAL HEPATITIS C SURVEILLANCE REPORT NOW AVAILABLE

DPH's Applied Research, Community Health Epidemiology and Surveillance Branch (ARCHES) recently released the [2023 Viral Hepatitis C Surveillance Report](#). This report provides a comprehensive overview of the status of hepatitis C in San Francisco as well as details data trends



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and planned efforts to further prevent and cure hepatitis C in our community. Thank you, Hepatitis Surveillance Team, for continuing to inform the public about viral hepatitis.

ZSFG ISSUES ITS FIRST EQUITY PROGRESS REPORT

In September, ZSFG Hospital's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Department issued its first Equity Progress Report, highlighting key updates on equity initiatives during fiscal year 2023-2024. The report provides an in-depth look at the hospital's commitment to equity—one of its True North goals that aligns with all other organizational priorities. The report features an overview of the DEI Team, Equity Council, Equity Champions, and other stakeholders driving equity efforts across ZSFG. It also includes detailed patient demographics, with a focus on primary language, as well as DPH staff demographics, broken down by clinical and non-clinical roles and staff levels. The report outlines DEI strategies and outcome metrics that track progress. The report also includes summaries on important initiatives, such as the Patient/Family Member Community Forum and the continued efforts of our Equity Champions. It showcases the advancements made in Relationship-Centered Communication Equity in Teams trainings, as well as improvements in Equity Communications. [The Equity Progress Report can be found here.](#) Congratulations to ZSFG and especially the DEI Department for this accomplishment. This is helping to foster an equitable workforce experience at ZSFG, eliminate health disparities, and cultivate a culture of inclusion and belonging.

ZSFG CO-HOSTS EQUITY AND INNOVATION GRANT CEREMONY

On October 7, the San Francisco General Hospital Foundation with ZSFG honored Project REACH and the Hearing Screening Project at ZSFG with Equity and Innovation grants. The Foundation celebrated the teams at Carr Auditorium where they discussed the importance of the care they provide to the community and how these grants can make an impact. Project REACH brings together human-centered design, whole-person care, and on-the-ground innovations in surgical care to better serve patients at ZSFG experiencing housing instability or homelessness—allowing for more healing environments, more frequent check-ins, and care plans that meet patients where they are.

The Hearing Screening Project is expanding access to a simple yet essential test for an often overlooked and critical gap in healthcare: hearing loss in marginalized communities. Integrating audiology screening into primary care visits and taking the screening test on the move to community



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centers in San Francisco ensures more patients receive the screenings necessary to treat hearing loss. Through projects and programs like these, ZSFG can continue to help close the critical gap in health equity in our community. Congratulations and thank you to the teams and individuals involved in these efforts and gratitude to the San Francisco General Hospital Foundation.

ZSFG EXPANDS PERIOPERATIVE SERVICES

ZSFG has experienced an increase in the demand for urgent procedures and surgeries among inpatients. To significantly improve the timeliness of such care for patients, ZSFG's Perioperative Leadership Team increased anesthesia staffing to expand perioperative capacity by one room daily effective October 2024. As a result of this addition, ZSFG can now complete a significant number of surgical and interventional procedures in a timelier manner. This is critical, as delays can have adverse consequences, including increased patient morbidity, extended hospital stays, higher clinical workload for providers and staff, provider burnout, and reduced trauma preparedness due to more nighttime operations. To monitor the efficiency of this additional resource, ZSFG will track several metrics including case volume/minutes, first case on time starts, percent room utilization, revenue, and reductions in length of stay. With this additional perioperative capacity, ZSFG will further improve the quality, timeliness, and access to perioperative services for our patients.

ZSFG CELEBRATES HEALTHCARE FOOD SERVICE WORKERS

In October, ZSFG celebrated its Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) team during National Food Service Workers Week. ZSFG's FNS team is made up of 130 employees, including food service workers, diet office staff, cooks, supervisors, managers, support staff, dietitians, and dietetic technicians. It is a well-integrated interdisciplinary team, one that works together to make delicious and nutritious food for the community. Annually, the FNS serves approximately 438,000 patient meals and 547,000 cafe meals, operating out of two kitchens in Buildings 5 and 25.

Proper nutrition is a cornerstone of health and healing. Each member of the FNS team plays a crucial role along with the physicians and nurses who treat the patients. They contribute significantly to a patient's recovery and overall health. The team in FNS who work hard behind the scenes in healthcare food service dedicate themselves to ensuring that our patients have the nourishment needed to fight illness and heal from injuries. DPH expresses its gratitude to these dedicated professionals.



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COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 10/11:

- San Francisco's 7-day rolling average of COVID test positivity is 3.9%.
- Twenty-six percent of SF residents are fully up to date on their COVID vaccinations and have received the updated vaccine.