



City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of October 18, 2022

A current overview of issues affecting the state of public health in San Francisco

<https://www.dph.org/dph/comupg/aboutdph/insideDept/dirRpts/default.asp>

Today, there are over 179,100 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 1,044 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

ANNUAL DPH SUBSTANCE USE TRENDS REPORT SHOWS DECLINE IN DRUG OVERDOSES IN 2021

DPH released the "[Substance Use Trends in San Francisco Through 2021](#)" report with data showing the first decline in overdose deaths in three years. Even with this encouraging decline, the annual count of people dying of overdoses last year remained at crisis levels.

In 2021, 625 people died from drug overdoses involving opioids, cocaine or methamphetamine, an 11% decrease compared to 2020, but still 41% above pre-pandemic 2019 levels. The pandemic likely contributed to the especially high number of deaths seen in 2020.

Fentanyl remained the primary driver of overdose deaths in the city with 75% of overdose cases involving this powerful, synthetic opioid, whether taken alone or in combination with cocaine or methamphetamines. The report also highlighted the deep and profound inequities that persist as Black/African Americans in San Francisco experience an overdose death rate that is five times higher than the citywide total.

DPH also released "[Overdose Deaths are Preventable: San Francisco's Overdose Prevention Plan](#)," a four-point strategic roadmap with new and enhanced strategies to reduce the number of deaths and eliminate disparities associated with drug use in San Francisco. The report includes measurable goals to reduce overdose deaths and increase treatment among people at high risk.

San Francisco has the highest overdose death rate among large California counties, a rate that is similar to other major cities across the United States due to the 2018 arrival of fentanyl in local drug supplies. Data show that overdoses continue to be highly concentrated in the Tenderloin and South of Market neighborhoods but are present in many other areas of the City as well.



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Director of Health

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The racial disparity in overdose deaths underscores the need for tailored and focused approaches toward overdose deaths and substance use disorders that is informed by the community and supported with sufficient resources to make meaningful change.

In 2021, DPH advanced a number of efforts to save lives and improve the wellness and recovery of people who use drugs. Working with community partners, San Francisco substantially expanded the distribution of naloxone, a life-saving opioid reversal medicine, to more than 33,000 kits. The effort saved lives – distribution sites reported 9,492 overdose reversals in 2021, more than doubling the 4,307 reversals in 2020.

Innovative new programs were also launched last year, including the Street Overdose Response Team, which responded to more than 1,670 calls involving people who had survived a known or suspected overdose. SoMa RISE opened as a drug sobering center, bringing people who are intoxicated on drugs off the streets to sober up safely, receive basic care, and be connected to services.

Meanwhile, DPH offered low-threshold outpatient medications for addiction treatments, such as buprenorphine, at more sites including urgent care, homeless shelters, and on the street, while continuing to expand residential treatment programs to deliver timely and appropriate level of care for people ready to enter overnight programs. San Francisco is now two-thirds of the way toward a goal of expanding its behavioral health bed count by 400 beds.

Under the overdose prevention plan, new efforts are underway to create safe, welcoming “wellness hubs” in multiple neighborhoods for people who use drugs and people experiencing homelessness. The first wellness hub is expected to open this year, with several more to follow in 2023 and will build on the successful elements of the Tenderloin Center in community-centered, drop-in locations that provide overdose prevention services, access to treatment, housing, and other benefits.

MARIA X MARTINEZ HEALTH RESOURCE CENTER

Welcome to the newest member of the San Francisco Health Network family! DPH’s newest Ambulatory Care clinic, the Maria X Martinez Health Resource Center, opened on Friday September 19, 2022. The building is the new home of WPIC’s Urgent Care clinic (formerly 50 Ivy), Street Medicine, WPIC admin, and the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing’s (HSH) SF Homeless Outreach Team (SFHOT).

Services provided at the Maria X are focused on serving people who are experiencing homelessness and who are unconnected to care elsewhere in the system. Services provided include urgent care, low



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barrier medication assisted treatment, integrated transitional primary care, dental, and podiatry. The clinic is anticipated to serve about 5,000 unduplicated clients for over 18,000 encounters this year. It is meaningful that the clinic opened during the National Hispanic Heritage/Latinx Month as this is one of the communities that Maria dedicated her life to serving and who are experiencing increased rates of homelessness in San Francisco.

Maria worked for DPH for 23 years and was serving as the Director of Whole Person Care when she passed away in 2020. Prior to that she served in DPH roles including Deputy Director of Community Programs, Senior Staff to the Director of Health and Chief Integrity Officer. Maria passionately championed the needs of vulnerable populations and brought a racial and equity lens to create collaborations and develop care models for high-risk populations. In her role as Director of Whole Person Care, Maria focused on developing partnerships and an example of Maria's visionary leadership was the creation of an Integrated Homeless Resources Center which, after her death, was named in her honor by the Health Commission as the Maria X Martinez Health Resource Center.

WPIC is continuing to build out integrated care aspects of the Maria X Martinez Health Resource Center to add in increased behavioral health, coordinated entry, and benefits assistance. The work at the Maria X continues Maria's life's work to provide high quality and equitable services to Latinx community members and all of our most vulnerable neighbors.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF GARZA

DPH is deeply saddened by the recent passing of Garza, a core member of the Bridge HIV team for 17 years, an HIV prevention unit that is part of the Population Health Division DPH. Garza joined the Community Programs team at Bridge HIV in September of 2005, quickly learning about all the HIV prevention studies we conduct. She was hired as a recruiter but became so much more—she was a true liaison to many communities with whom we work. Garza elevated how we support our communities with programs such as *Hot and Healthy*, a monthly drag production that raised funds for Bay Area HIV/LGBTQ/trans organizations. In addition to recruiting volunteers to participate in our studies, Garza did community outreach and education about HIV (and later COVID) prevention, and was a peer health navigator for transgender women, providing counseling and linkage to many different types of services. Garza created deep ties over many years with multiple organizations in the community, serving a diverse array of clients, and used her considerable talents to raise funds for these organizations. Garza passed on September 27, 2022, leaving behind a legacy of activism, compassion, and deep community ties. She embodied the heart and soul of who we at DPH aspire to be.



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NATIONAL LEAD POISONING PREVENTION WEEK

October 23-29, 2022 is National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (NLPPW). NLPPW highlights the many ways that a community can work together to reduce children’s exposure to lead in their environment and prevent its serious health effects. In San Francisco, the main source of lead exposure comes from the lead-based paint in children’s homes. The Children’s Environmental Health Promotion Program (CEHP) of DPH’s Environmental Health Branch will participate in NLPPW by continuing its outreach and education to property owners, construction professionals, and families who all play a role in reducing lead exposures. Social media messages will highlight *Fix Lead SF*, a brand-new funding opportunity for property owners to reduce the amount of lead on their property. Construction professionals will be invited to take advantage of *Fix Lead SF* to get training to use safe work practices in all their jobs that disturb lead-based paint. Also, as part of CEHP NLPPW activities, their team will participate in a health fair for San Francisco families with young children, and the Fall edition of *Word on Lead*, a regular CEHP educational bulletin, will be distributed to over 7800 families, medical providers, childcare providers, and a multitude of our partners throughout the City.

MPX UPDATE

LOCATION	TOTAL CASES AS OF 9/13/22 (probable and confirmed)
San Francisco	824
California	5,136
U.S.	27,096
Worldwide	72,457

In alignment with [CDPH’s recent eligibility expansion](#), San Francisco has updated the eligibility for pre-exposure prophylaxis with the MPX vaccine. Added criteria include:

- Persons living with HIV.
- Persons who are taking or are eligible to take [HIV PrEP](#).
- Clinicians who are likely to collect laboratory specimens from persons with MPX.

See the [SF MPX vaccine eligibility criteria](#) for full details.

Since the onset of MPX, DPH has persistently advocated for more vaccines. As a result of these efforts, DPH secured a special allotment of 10,000 additional MPX doses from the Federal government to provide protection for people who were attending large, public events such as Folsom Street Fair and Castro Street Fair.



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DPH and its partners administered 100% of the special allotment of 10,000 additional MPX doses from the Federal government during the weeks surrounding the Folsom and Castro Street Fairs. In fact, DPH utilized additional supply to administer 15,965 doses total during this period. The vaccines, which includes first and second doses of Jynneos, were available at various pop-up vaccination sites, neighborhood vaccine clinics, community-based events and events at health system providers.

We are continuing to work with trusted community partners at various venues to reach communities most highly at risk and supporting pop-up vaccine clinics at neighborhood events, including but not limited to:

- 24th and Capp Streets every Friday, Saturday and Monday from 9am to 3:45pm
- Pan Dulce Wednesday at Beaux Nightclub, from 8pm to 11pm on October 19

COVID-19 UPDATE

As of September 29:

- San Francisco's 7-day rolling average of new COVID cases per day is 88 and 40 people are hospitalized, including 8 in the ICU.
- San Francisco's remaining ICU capacity is 34.3% and remaining non-ICU capacity is 19.8%.
- Eighty-six percent of all SF residents have been vaccinated and 75% have received booster dose(s).

[DPH in the News](#)