



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 July 18, 2023

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 200,789 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 1,221 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

HOURS EXPANDED AT DPH BEHAVIORAL ACCESS CENTER

The Behavioral Health Access Center (BHAC) has added operating hours on weekends to make mental health care and substance use treatment more accessible in San Francisco. This weekend-hours expansion comes on the heels of expanded evening hours, which began last year.

Operated by DPH, BHAC serves individuals who walk in or are referred into City-funded mental health and substance use treatment programs and services. Staff at the Center can assess and authorize placement into different levels of care, depending on a person's need, including outpatient and intensive outpatient treatment, medication-assisted treatment, residential treatment, crisis stabilization, and other mental health and substance use services.

Located in the South of Market neighborhood at 1380 Howard St., BHAC is co-located with the DPH Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Pharmacy, which added weekend hours last year, and the Office-Based Buprenorphine Induction Clinic (OBIC). Expanding hours at BHAC and BHS Pharmacy are among the multiple strategies that the City has implemented to reduce barriers to substance use treatment and prevent overdoses.

The increased access to BHAC and BHS Pharmacy is also part of Mayor Breed's strategy to address public drug use on the streets of San Francisco. Under the Mayor's initiative to disrupt drug markets, people who want treatment will be served at BHAC. Additionally, the multi-department street care and response teams can link people to services via BHAC. BHAC also serves individuals referred for substance use and mental health treatment from the criminal justice system, hospitals, community nonprofits, and DPH clinics.

Anyone seeking care for substance use disorders can walk in or be referred to BHAC. DPH also operates the Behavioral Health Access Line (888-246-3333) to help people identify treatment and



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care options 24 hours a day, seven days per week.

As of July 1, BHAC is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., and on Saturdays and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The BHS Pharmacy is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and on weekends from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. OBIC is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., except from noon to 1 p.m. and on Wednesdays when it closes at 5 p.m. BHAC can support people with opioid use disorder by linking them to prompt buprenorphine or methadone treatment. Methadone and buprenorphine are the two most effective medications for opioid use disorder and reduce the risk of mortality by approximately 50%.

In addition to connecting people to outpatient and residential mental health and substance use programs, BHAC staff conducts needs assessments, helps visitors enroll in Medi-Cal, and distributes life-saving supplies like naloxone, a life-saving medication that can reverse an overdose from opioids.

DPH AWARDED MULTI-YEAR STATE GRANT TO FUND HOUSING FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS WITH SERIOUS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEEDS

DPH and the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing have been awarded a \$32 million state grant to be received over the next four years to provide housing and services for San Franciscans who are experiencing homelessness and serious behavioral health conditions.

The Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) state grant intends to address the immediate and long-term housing needs of Californians experiencing homelessness who also have serious behavioral health conditions, including serious mental illness and substance use disorders, that prevent them from accessing help and moving out of homelessness. Participants in the Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment (CARE) Act program will be prioritized for bridge housing support.

DPH, along with Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) will collaborate to use BHBH funding to expand and develop bridge housing consisting of transitional and supportive living programs with a goal to connect individuals to long-term housing stability. In fiscal year 2023-24, the City will receive \$6.2 million, to be followed by \$8.4 million the next fiscal year. A total of \$8.6 million will go to San Francisco in fiscal year 2025-26, and the amount will rise to \$8.9 million in fiscal year 2026-27.

The grant will support multiple types of housing, such as mid- to short-term housing, emergency stabilization units, shelter beds, women's transitional housing, and assisted living beds. The funding



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will also allow DPH to provide additional housing navigation and support services for housing stability, retention, and wellness.

In San Francisco, 5,000 people experiencing homelessness are receiving behavioral health care from DPH each year. DPH provides behavioral health care for more than 25,000 people annually through primary care. Another 15,000 people receive services each year in DPH specialized behavioral health programs.

DPH AND SHERIFF'S OFFICE RECEIVE MAJOR GRANT TO ENSURE MEDI-CAL COVERAGE FOR NEWLY RELEASED INCARCERATED PEOPLE

DPH and the San Francisco Sheriff's Office (SFSO) announced the receipt of a \$660,000 collaborative grant from the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to provide greater support to plan, implement, and improve insurance support to prevent lapses in Medi-Cal coverage for those persons newly released from San Francisco County Jail.

This funding, provided under the California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) initiative, will allow for program enhancement to ensure the continuity of healthcare coverage for those re-entering the community through pre-release Medi-Cal enrollment, providing key services in the 90 days prior to release.

CalAIM is a five-year statewide initiative to transform California's Medi-Cal program by improving quality outcomes. Through collaborative planning, DPH and SFSO will design, modify, and launch new processes to provide more streamlined access to care, which includes eliminating the bureaucratic red tape that many incarcerated people experience when it comes to securing health insurance upon release.

CalAIM's mission to transform Medi-Cal requires the investment and sustained commitment of a broad network of health partners, including plans, providers, and community-based organizations. CalAIM is improving Medi-Cal for more than 14 million Californians. By funding partners with a particular focus on those who have been historically under-resourced, Cal-AIM's Providing Access and Transforming Health Initiative (PATH) will help California advance health equity and address social drivers of health.



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SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC SAFETY INITIATIVE TO DISRUPT OPEN AIR DRUG MARKETS SEIZING FENTANYL AT RECORD LEVELS

Mayor London Breed announced progress from the City's multiagency initiative to address open-air drug markets made up of local, state, and federal public safety partners focused on a more coordinated enforcement and disruption of illegal activities.

As part of this work, SFPD has focused enforcement in the Tenderloin and South of Market Area, where officers have seized over 60 kilos of fentanyl year to date, amounting to over 30 million lethal doses of the deadly drug. This is an increase of 160% over the same time period last year, and more than 640% seized year over year since 2021.

Additionally, 28% of those cited for public drug use under new enforcement efforts have had existing warrants for other crimes and are now being charged under those warrants. Only 8% cited for public drug use identified as San Francisco residents.

This effort is part of Mayor Breed's commitment to enforcing laws to make our streets safer for residents, small businesses, and workers, to offering help to people in crisis. This initiative is focused on addressing drug markets in three key areas: open drug sales, public drug use, and fencing of stolen goods in drug market areas.

Coordinated Response to Fentanyl

A coordinated City initiative to address open-air drug markets led by the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) began ramping up in April. Starting June 12, this effort expanded to include more city agencies, including DPH, as well as regional and state partners, and is focused on enforcing existing laws, as well as continuing street outreach and offers of services to those in need of care.

Open Drug Sales

In the first six months of 2023, SFPD has focused enforcement efforts in the Tenderloin and South of Market areas. This work has yielded in these areas:

- 390 arrests for sale
- 61 kilograms of fentanyl seized
- 95 kilograms of narcotics seized

The CHP announced the seizure of 4 kilograms of fentanyl since May 1 when the State announced its plans to direct resources to San Francisco to support efforts targeting open-air drug markets. The



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California National Guard has been deployed to provide investigative support for dismantling drug rings.

Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi has also announced that San Francisco will be included in Operation Overdrive, a federal initiative under the Department of Justice that deploys federal law enforcement resources to help local and state authorities identify and dismantle criminal drug networks. These partnerships play a critical role to develop long-term, sustainable strategies to maintain clearance from drug sales.

Public Drug Use

SFPD and SFSO have launched a new coordinated effort to arrest and detain those who pose a danger to themselves and to others through their public drug use. Between May 30 and June 18, this team of officers trained to identify narcotics use completed 58 total encounters, resulting in 5 medical transports to local hospitals, 11 misdemeanor citations, and 42 misdemeanor bookings into county jail for temporary detention due to narcotics intoxication.

None of those detained under public intoxication laws accepted services for treatment offered to them upon release. Anyone detained in San Francisco's jails are supported by DPH Jail Health Services, and offered access to voluntary services upon release. Additionally, City health and homelessness outreach teams will continue routine daily outreach to offer services and treatment linkages in targeted neighborhoods.

Next Steps

As part of the City's efforts to streamline and coordinate efforts, regular data updates on key metrics around these efforts will be shared publicly as they become available. The Mayor's Budget, which is currently before the Board of Supervisors, provides key funding to continue this work, as well as broader support for law enforcement and public health needs.

SF EXPANDS 5150 TRAINING TO HELP PEOPLE IN CRISIS RECEIVE CARE

Mayor London N. Breed announced a new program that will expand training to community paramedics as part of a Citywide effort to help people experiencing behavioral health crises on our streets.

San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) community paramedics that respond to people in crisis on the streets are being trained by DPH to initiate 72-hour involuntary psychiatric hospitalization holds



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to better serve people experiencing mental health emergencies in San Francisco. Colloquially, these 72-hour hospitalizations are known as “5150 holds” or “5150s.” Currently, only captain-level community paramedics are authorized to place involuntary mental health holds.

DPH began training SFFD non-captain level community paramedics to initiate 5150s last month. Additional rounds of training will occur every four months, as needed. After trained paramedics pass the training and test, Dr. Hillary Kunins, DPH Director of Behavioral Health and Mental Health SF, will authorize 5150 application powers.

The San Francisco Health Code was updated effective September 2021 to expand designation for initiating 5150 WIC holds to SFFD paramedics. The newly trained paramedics may begin placing holds on Monday, July 10, granted all requirements are met.

To date, 55 active community paramedics and community paramedic captains have successfully completed the training; 23 are part of this expansion.

SFFD community paramedics on the Street Crisis Response Team respond to 911 calls for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Local legislation provides authority for paramedics and community paramedics to receive the specific behavioral health training and authorization like other mental health providers to initiate 5150 holds so that individuals can receive the appropriate assessment in a hospital setting.

Community paramedics have six weeks of additional training that includes practicing trauma informed care, de-escalation techniques, resource navigation, and recognizing social determinants of health.

DPH ACCEPTING GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS TO REDUCE OVERDOSE DEATH DISPARITIES

DPH announced that it will partner with community-based organizations to reduce overdose death disparities.

SFDPH is seeking grantees embedded in the San Francisco Black/African American community to provide overdose prevention outreach, engagement, and education to Black/African American individuals. Black/African Americans in San Francisco experience fatal overdoses at five times the city-wide average.



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This community partnership funding is in alignment with the DPH Overdose Prevention Plan strategic goal to reduce racial disparities in fatal overdose among Black/African Americans by 30% by 2025.

The request for grant applications (RFGA) is open July 12, 2023, to 12:00pm August 7, 2023. DPH supports services to all populations and ethnicities in San Francisco with a focused expertise to address the unique cultural needs of Black/African American residents of the City and County of San Francisco who do not already receive services through DPH.

Funding will expand capacity of local community-based organizations to prevent and lessen harmful health outcomes associated with substance use, and to reduce overdose death disparities through original and innovative approaches.

Applicants may apply to:

- **Program 1: Substance Use and Overdose Community Presentations**
Substance Use and Overdose Community Presentations are made by community members. Presentations should raise awareness and capacity around substance use and overdose prevention, including how to access the continuum of substance use services.
- **Program 2: Outreach to Targeted Impacted Communities**
Outreach performed by community members towards individuals within the priority population to raise awareness on the possible negative health outcomes associated with substance use, including overdose prevention.
- **Program 3: Additional Program Services**
To apply for Program 3, applicants must apply to Program 1 or Program 2. Applicants can not apply to Program 3 as a standalone program. The City will engage with the selected applicant to negotiate a scope of work.

To receive a full copy of this RFGA, visit: <https://sfcitypartner.sfgov.org/pages/Events-BS3/event-search.aspx> and search for "SFGOV-0000007926" or contact: Cindy Rivas, SFDPH Office of Contracts Management & Compliance – Pre-Award Unit Cindy.Rivas@sfdph.org

Applications are due on or before 12:00pm August 7, 2023.



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DR. DAVID SANCHEZ WAY STREET DEDICATION AT ZSFG

On Thursday, July 13, DPH dedicated a street in honor and memory of Dr. David Sanchez at Zuckerberg San Francisco General (ZSFG). Family, friends, colleagues and the community joined in the festivities in recognition of Dr. Sanchez's inspiring commitment and contributions to the community. He was a beloved advocate and leader in San Francisco and served on the Health Commission for 22 years and connected ZSFG to the community through the development of significant programs for children and families and his work with the Latino community. After his 36-year tenure with DPH, he retired in 2005 and passed away peacefully in December 2020. Now, with "Dr. David Sanchez Way" officially on the ZSFG campus, his legacy will live on as we continue to improve health equity through the care we provide to all our patients and to the community.

MOVES INTO UCSF'S NEW RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC BUILDING, PRIDE HALL, BEGIN

In June, UCSF research, academic, and administrative programs began to move into UCSF Pride Hall on the ZSFG campus. This new, state of the art facility is located on the southeast corner of the campus, facing 23rd Street, near San Bruno Avenue. With the support of the San Francisco Health Commission, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the ground lease for this project in 2017 and construction began in 2020. With the opening of Pride Hall, the UCSF community of researchers and academics who are based at ZSFG will be better positioned to conduct transformative research and other academic endeavors which are intended to improve health outcomes. Our 150-year partnership with UCSF is essential for the clinical, research, and medical advancement we offer to better serve our community. More than 200 members of the UCSF research and academic community at ZSFG contributed guidance, recommendations and ideas, influencing building program and design modifications, guiding principles and move preparation.

NEW COMMEMORATIVE HEART INSTALLED AT ZSFG

ZSFG is excited to add another commemorative heart to the campus. The San Francisco General Hospital Foundations' Hearts in San Francisco project debuted in 2004 creating hearts by local Bay Area artists, that are displayed throughout San Francisco for the public to enjoy. They are auctioned by the Foundation to support ZSFG. The new commemorative heart at ZSFG was commissioned by local artist Sirron Norris and it celebrates 150 years of providing care to the community. It is currently on display at ZSFG Building 25 on the mezzanine.



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DPH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PARTICIPATES IN BAYVIEW CHILDREN'S DAY

The Environmental Health Branch's (EHB) Children's Environmental Health Promotion Program and the Healthy Housing Program participated in the Wu Yee's Bayview Children's Day event July 8th. The event was held at the Southeast Community Center and was a great opportunity for EHB to do outreach to families with children under 6 years old. Staff provided information regarding the EHB home inspection services around healthy housing issues, including child lead poisoning prevention.

In San Francisco, the main source of lead exposure comes from the lead-based paint in homes. This community event was an important opportunity to share with Bayview residents about the Fix Lead SF program. Fix Lead SF is funded through a settlement with the lead paint manufacturers and San Francisco is receiving \$21 million to remove lead from homes. This funding is primarily being used to replace high friction sources of lead dust in homes like old doors and windows. The Bayview is one of the areas being prioritized by the Fix Lead SF program. The Wu Yee's Bayview Children's Day event allowed DPH another outlet for informing residents about the program and their potential to qualify to have lead hazards removed from their home at no/low cost.

The EHB staff participating in the outreach event were Celina Ayala, Environmental Health Technician, Cynthia Melgoza, Assistant Health Educator and Karen Yu, Senior Environmental Health Inspector. We thank them for their outreach efforts!

COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 7/13:

- San Francisco's 7-day rolling average of new COVID cases per day is 27.*
- Eighty-six percent of all SF residents have been vaccinated and 65% have received booster dose(s). Forty-one percent of residents have received a bivalent booster.

*We are temporarily pausing the distribution of hospitalization data while CDPH makes updates to the hospitalization data reporting stream. We plan to re-integrate this data once system updates are complete.

[DPH in the News](#)