



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 August 15, 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 201,873 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 1,231 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

“THE HEART OF ACCESS” DOCUMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS SAN FRANCISCO’S COMMUNITY-DRIVEN COVID-19 EQUITY RESPONSE

From the San Francisco Department of Public Health’s Center for Learning & Innovation and the COVID-19 Task Force, in partnership with OLU8 Film and Culture and AllThrive Education comes **The Heart of Access, San Francisco’s Fight for Health Equity during the COVID-19 Pandemic**, elevating compelling stories of community, academic, public health partnerships at the center of San Francisco’s COVID-19 equity response.

The upcoming short film documentary will premiere in August and September at community screenings hosted by collaborating community-based organizations featured in the film. The Heart of Access honors the memory of the lives lost to COVID-19 and uplifts the partnerships that helped San Francisco achieve one of the lowest pandemic-associated death rates of any metropolitan area in the U.S.

Still upcoming Heart of Access community screenings are:

- **Thursday, August 17 at 6:00pm, Mission Screening**
Brava Theater Center 2781 24th Street
[Get Tickets for Mission Screening](#)
- **Thursday, September 7 at 2:00pm, Tenderloin Screening**
GLIDE Memorial Church 330 Ellis Street
[Get Tickets for Tenderloin Screening](#)

After the community screenings, the film will be available at heartofaccessfilm.org.



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During the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak, San Francisco mounted an aggressive strategy to mitigate the spread of disease in the community and lower the incidence of severe illness. The strategy used a health equity lens to prioritize neighborhoods and populations disproportionately impacted, resulting in greater accessibility of tests, vaccines, and financial support for these populations. The strategy also included targeted funding for community-based organizations to help centralize resources.

The documentary highlights crucial lessons learned such as the importance of community partnerships in the joint planning and collective action needed to respond effectively to COVID-19 as well as future pandemics. The film equally uplifts voices from health experts and community members who united and supported each other through the shared challenges, emerging stronger after the crisis.

The film will be distributed broadly through conferences, film festivals, and an interactive website that will feature the film and a discussion guide for public learners. A trailer of the film is available for preview at heartofaccessfilm.org

DPH NEWCOMERS HEALTH PROGRAM AND TB CLINIC PUBLICATION IN *EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES*

An article summarizing the outcomes of a recently developed collaborative tuberculosis screening program for recent arrivals from Ukraine by [SF DPH's Newcomers Health Program](#) and the [San Francisco TB Clinic](#) was recently published: [Uniting for Ukraine Tuberculosis Screening Experience, San Francisco, California, USA - Volume 29, Number 8—August 2023 - Emerging Infectious Diseases journal - CDC](#). Of 299 newcomers from Ukraine screened in San Francisco using interferon- γ -release-assay (IGRA) and chest radiograph, 7.4% were IGRA positive and one had laboratory-confirmed pan-susceptible TB. The initiation of this screening program allowed for the expansion of enhanced TB assessment to newcomers from other countries, resulting in the early detection of an additional case of TB, and giving important information on TB risk to individuals arriving from various regions seeking humanitarian parole in the USA. Special thanks to lead author Dr. Janice Louie, Medical Director of San Francisco TB Prevention and Control, and the team of authors for elevating and sharing this important local work with global implications in EID journal.

DPH STAFF RECEIVES NATIONAL TUBERCULOSIS CONTROLLER'S ASSOCIATION "UNSUNG HERO AWARD"

Each year the National Tuberculosis Controller's Association honors individuals or organizations for their dedication and distinguished service in the field of TB. This year, DPH's own Felix Crespin



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was awarded the “Unsung Hero Award” in recognition of his outstanding service. The San Francisco TB Section serves a diverse population, including immigrants from Asia and Central America, people experiencing homelessness or marginally housed in congregate settings, and those with substance use disorders. Our clientele come in all shapes and sizes, genders, ages, and ethnic backgrounds. Mental health and language barriers are a common problem that make navigating health services especially challenging. Mr. Crespin has served as a role-model for our program staff and in particular, leadership, regarding keeping us focused on our mission to serve our most vulnerable patient population with respect and humility. Mr. Crespin goes above and beyond to ensure the TB Section provides equitable, respectful, and culturally appropriate service to all clients we serve. Congratulations Felix on this well-deserved recognition!

DPH’S FOOD SAFETY REGULATORY PROGRAM TRANSITIONS ONLINE

In 2018, the DPH Environmental Health Branch (EHB) went through the Lean Management A3 process and identified key strategic areas for evaluation and improvement. One of the areas identified was data and technology management. EHB particularly aimed to solve the problem of having multiple siloed database platforms by creating a new and comprehensive database for the entire Branch. After going through an RFP process in 2019, a contract was awarded to HealthSpace and they began the process of developing the database, with the Food Safety Regulatory Program being the first go-live deliverable. After a long process that was delayed by the pandemic, the Food Safety Program database went live this month! Among other things, this means that field inspections will now be completed using tablets and all data will be uploaded and tracked online.

The EHB lead for this project has been June Weintraub, who has been tireless in working with her counterparts in the IT Program Management Office and other EHB staff. June trained Branch super users and thanks to her efforts, this rollout has been successful. This is a big accomplishment for EHB, and they will go-live with the more programs in the months ahead.

HIGHLIGHTING DPH’S ADULT IMMUNIZATION AND TRAVEL CLINIC

The Population Health Division’s Adult Immunization & Travel Clinic (AITC) is in full swing as interest in international travel has been recovering from pandemic lows. AITC provides preventive consultation, vaccines, and travel medication prescriptions to persons of all ages going abroad, enabling travelers to reduce their risk for travel-related health conditions and infectious diseases, so they can return home feeling well. AITC also provides the full spectrum of routine vaccinations for adolescents and adults, school-required vaccinations for San Francisco Unified students lacking a primary provider, TB clearance for those who need it to attend work or school, vaccines to prevent rabies in those who have been exposed to potentially rabid mammals, and blood testing to check



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immunity to key vaccine-preventable diseases such as hepatitis B and measles. All services require an appointment. Though AITC services typically require payment at the time of service, staff routinely assess patient eligibility for free vaccines under state and federal programs, in order to reduce financial barriers to vaccination among those lacking insurance coverage. For more information: www.TravelClinicSF.org

COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 8/10:

- San Francisco's 7-day rolling average of new COVID cases per day is 49 and there are 37 COVID hospitalizations.
- 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.

DPH in the News