



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 5, 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 203,176 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 1,236 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

LONG-TERM FUTURE OF LAGUNA HONDA HOSPITAL SECURE AS THE STATE GRANTS MEDICAID RECERTIFICATION

In a major victory for the City and County of San Francisco, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) approved Laguna Honda Hospital (LHH) for Medicaid recertification, meaning critical Medicaid dollars will continue to flow to the institution. With more than 95% of LHH's residents relying on Medicaid funding for their care, this ensures that LHH will continue to serve San Francisco's most vulnerable residents for generations to come.

Laguna Honda Hospital represents a significant and extensive commitment by San Francisco to publicly fund a long-term care facility and hospital for those with limited means. Representing more than 30% of all skilled nursing beds in San Francisco, LHH provides safety net healthcare services to hundreds of the City's most vulnerable individuals with complex medical and care needs. There are few facilities in the area capable of caring for these residents, and even fewer that will accept them.

In April 2022, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) terminated LHH's participation in Medicare and Medicaid Provider Program. Since that time, LHH staff have made the facility-wide improvements necessary to improve resident care and safety and the significant changes to meet the rigorous regulatory requirements and timelines set by CMS. Based on this progress, LHH applied for recertification into the Medicaid Provider Program on Friday, August 11, 2023.

CDPH and DHCS, which oversee the Medicaid recertification process for CMS, approved the application and granted recertification in the Medicaid Provider Program, restoring certainty to the system that supports LHH residents. The recertification of LHH provides relief to residents and their



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

families who can now be secure about the future of Laguna Honda.

LAGUNA HONDA HOSPITAL UPDATE

In August, Laguna Honda Hospital was recertified in the Medicaid Provider Program, and also submitted an application for Medicare recertification. Both actions are critical to securing the long-term future of Laguna Honda, and demonstrate the significant progress that has been made in the areas of patient care, patient safety, fire and life safety, and operations.

We are now subject to a full survey by CMS, which could happen at any time, and without notice.

Thank you to everyone who put in the hard work to make these significant successes happen, including Mayor London Breed and our elected leaders, the Health Commission, union partners, and Laguna Honda staff.

Laguna Honda remains focused on achieving recertification with CMS, as well as sustaining the improvements that have been made so we can deliver a world-class skilled nursing facility for our residents and families.

CHANGES TO COVID-19 COMMUNITY TESTING

San Francisco remains a model for COVID-19 response, and we continue to respond effectively as we enter the endemic phase, continuing to slow the spread of the virus and care for our residents. San Francisco continues to see high rates of vaccination and low hospitalizations.

With the federal COVID-19 pandemic public health emergency declaration ended as of May 2023 and demand for services decreased, our efforts have moved from emergency response to providing robust COVID-19 prevention and care through our normal operations within DPH.

Utilizing a smaller COVID-19 budget than in previous years when San Francisco received federal and state funding to fight the pandemic, we are keenly focusing public health resources in ways that are most effective and impactful. We are continuing to explore options for vendor services to better meet the potential future needs of the community.

Currently, as we align services with available budget and as demand for daily COVID-19 testing and vaccination have dramatically decreased, effective September 1, 2023, DPH will:

1. Transition from PCR tests to rapid antigen tests at COVID-19 community-based testing sites.



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

2. Permanently close the following COVID-19 community testing sites:

- 1099 Sunnydale Ave, San Francisco, CA 94134
- 2055 Sunnydale Ave, San Francisco, CA 94134
- GLIDE Memorial Church Parking Lot, 330 Ellis St., San Francisco, CA 94102

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the community testing sites have served their purpose as a resource for those most in need of testing services such as uninsured individuals. Over time, the community testing sites have been increasingly used by those with private insurance, who could obtain testing via their regular provider.

The update to the community testing sites is part of the approach to return to normal mechanisms of delivering healthcare, in hospitals and clinics. It is also an important step in focusing the City's public health efforts for COVID-19 as a safety net for those who are uninsured or under-insured and have difficulty accessing care.

San Franciscans who have been utilizing the testing sites will remain well-served. We will continue to prioritize BIPOC communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. DPH will continue to provide services at two community testing sites in or near priority neighborhoods.

DPH will initially start in-house services, with the goal to transfer back to vendor services. In addition, people will be able to pick up rapid test kits to take home, reducing need to leave the house to get a test while feeling ill. Tests will continue to be available at:

Ella Hill Hutch
1050 McAllister St., San Francisco, CA 94115
Monday and Thursday
9:00am-1:00pm

Southeast Health Center
2401 Keith St. San Francisco, CA 94124
Tuesday and Wednesday
9:00am-1:00pm

Rapid tests quickly identify higher levels of the virus through same day test results within 10-15 minutes. This is important to help guide people with the information they need to make decisions about their health. Getting tested and treated early for COVID-19 is the best way to prevent serious



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

illness, and our testing sites will also provide information on how people can get treatment. We will continue to reach out to partner with community stakeholders to ensure continuous dialogue and transparency as information becomes available.

Please visit our website <https://sf.gov/find-out-about-your-covid-19-testing-options> to learn more about COVID-19 resources.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CHINATOWN PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER'S TEEN HEAL INTERNSHIP GRADUATES

On August 5, Chinatown Public Health Center (CPHC) held its 2022-2023 Teen HEAL Graduation and 2023-2024 new intern induction ceremony. CPHC's Teen Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Internship Program is sponsored by Gum Moon/Asian Women's Resource Center and CPHC/DPH, and is co-sponsored by Chinatown YMCA. It is designed to empower youths to improve their nutritional and physical well-being, as well as foster leadership skills. The program was started in 2019.

During the internship, interns were taught eight nutrition skills: building a healthy plate, shopping smart, making healthy snacks, eating out right, managing your weight, staying active, exploring the benefits of organic food and vegetarianism, managing stress, and healthy cooking. They also learned leadership skills, such as program planning, goal setting, public speaking, communication strategies, and social awareness. Interns utilized their nutrition and leadership training to serve their peers by leading HEAL clubs at their schools to promote healthy cooking, healthy eating habits and active lifestyles. This past year, five HEAL school clubs completed a total of 65 club meetings and 633 encounters. They also served their community by teaching children at Chinatown YMCA, summer camps at the Gum Moon/Asian Women's Resource Center, the seniors at Self Help for the Elderly, and senior housing units and SRO families.

The interns completed a 2022-2023 Teen HEAL Yearbook on their Champion stories and recipes that they have modified themselves to display both their understanding of making healthy substitutes and creativity with different flavors, along with a reflection of the self-growth they have experienced as a result of the program. For more info and get your copy of the HEAL yearbook, please contact Catherine Wong, Nutrition Manager, CPHC at Catherine.wong@sfdph.org.

DPH LEADERS RECOGNIZED WITH ACHE REGENT'S AWARDS

The American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) is an international professional society of more than 48,000 healthcare executives who lead hospitals, healthcare systems and other healthcare



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

organizations. ACHE's mission is to advance members and healthcare leadership excellence who are committed to integrity, lifelong learning, leadership, diversity, and inclusion. ACHE is also the only organization to provide the prestigious FACHE® credential, signifying board certification in healthcare management. Yearly, the ACHE Regent, along with Healthcare Leaders across Northern and Central California, select senior-level healthcare executives and early career healthcare executives to receive the highly competitive ACHE Regent's Award. This year, two of the San Francisco Health Network's executives were recognized on August 24, 2023.

- Corina Clark, who currently serves as the San Francisco Health Network's Executive Administrator/VP for Health at Home and Integrated Rehabilitation Services, was recognized with the ACHE Regent's Early Careerist Award. This recognition is awarded to leaders who model the ACHE Code of Ethics, have demonstrated leadership in advancing and sustaining Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, both in healthcare and the community, and participate in ACHE national chapter activities as well as in hospital or health association activities (local/regional/state/national) and civic/community activities and projects.
- Baljeet S. Sangha, FACHE who currently serves as the San Francisco Health Network's Chief Operating Officer and LHH Recertification Co-Incident Commander, was recognized with ACHE's Senior Level Careerist Award. This recognition is awarded to leaders who are board certified Fellows of ACHE, hold a senior level executive role in their current organization, model the ACHE Code of Ethics, have demonstrated leadership in advancing and sustaining Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, both in healthcare and the community, work to actively develop one's organization and promote its growth and stature in the community, participate in and lead ACHE (national and chapter) activities, provide leadership in hospital or health association activities (local/regional/state/national) and civic/community activities and projects, and actively contribute to the development of leaders in the healthcare profession.

Congratulations to Corina and Baljeet on their awards! DPH is lucky to have leaders like them on our team.

SECURITY ESCORT PROGRAM LAUNCHES AT ZSFG

In response to feedback we received from this year's Employee Engagement and Safety Survey, ZSFG Hospital has launched a new Security Escort Pilot Program in collaboration with Allied Security, Care Experience and DPH Security. The safety of our staff is among our highest priorities,



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

and as a safety improvement, trained security officers are now stationed at strategic locations across ZSFG campus, such as the employee lot, Vermont Street, and the lot at 23rd Street to provide escorts for employees to their vehicles. This program helps ensure staff safety during shift changes. The program augments the services provided by the City's Sheriff's department on campus who are available to staff by request to escort them to their vehicle.

ZSFG RECEIVES MATERNITY CARE HONOR ROLL AWARD

The California Health & Human Services and Cal Hospital Compare recognized ZSFG as a hospital that consistently demonstrates a strong culture of safety across multiple departments in the Maternity Care Honor Roll. The 2023 Maternity Care Honor Roll recognized hospitals that meet or surpass the statewide target aimed at reducing births via c-section in first-time mothers with low-risk pregnancies. This year's award reflects calendar year 2022 hospital discharge and birth certificate data from 211 California hospitals that offer maternity services and participate in the California Maternal Quality Care Collaborative's Maternal Data Center (CMQCC's MDC). Great work, ZSFG!

ZSFG RECEIVES OPIOID TEAM HONOR ROLL AWARD

California HSS and Cal Hospital Compare also recognized ZSFG for the hospital's efforts to increase access to addiction treatment for patients and the reduction of opioid-related deaths by placing the hospital on the state's HSS Opioid Care Honor Roll. All California adult, acute care hospitals were invited to participate. ZSFG was one of 110 hospitals that submitted data sharing our progress on implementing evidence-based practices to address the opioid crisis. Participation in the Opioid Care Honor Roll is a signal to California's health care community that all 110 hospitals are actively accelerating and strengthening their opioid stewardship programs. ZSFG was one of 35 hospitals that achieved "Excellent Progress." Hospitals achieving Excellent Progress have taken steps to spread and scale appropriate opioid prescribing guidelines, opioid use disorder treatment, and overdose prevention strategies across one or more service lines that reduce the use and risk of opioids for patients who visit emergency rooms, new patients with pain, and patients being discharged to reduce the likelihood of chronic use. Congratulations to ZSFG on this additional achievement!



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

WELLNESS/ANIMAL THERAPY AT ZSFG

The Staff Experience team at ZSFG Hospital has been hard at work with their efforts leading up to the recent re-opening of the Wellness Center, which had been closed to in-person events since the onset of the COVID pandemic. The team leveraged August's theme of National Wellness Month as a foundation to coordinate a variety of wellness events for staff. In addition to weekly virtual classes and in-person Zumba, Bootcamp and Yoga, well-being pop-ups and the official "Restore" opening event of the Wellness Center, they also hosted an Animal Therapy Day. The pet therapy session at the Wellness Center allowed staff to spend time with three volunteer service dogs and their humans. Spending time with companion animals has proven health benefits and this event at ZSFG brought smiles to many!

COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 8/31:

- San Francisco's 7-day rolling average of new COVID cases per day is 68 and there are 52 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](#)