



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 February 6, 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 key indicators of COVID-19 severity and spread including [hospitalizations](#), [deaths](#), and [test positivity](#).

DPH WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR OF PRIMARY CARE

DPH is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Blake Gregory to the position of Director of Primary Care for the San Francisco Health Network, effective January 6, 2024. In her new position, Dr. Gregory will provide executive leadership over our 14 Primary Care health centers and all associated Primary Care programs. She will supervise and support the eight-member Primary Care Leadership Team, oversee Dental Services, Nutrition Services, and provide matrix oversight of Primary Care Pharmacist services.

After completing her internal medicine residency at UCSF and serving as Chief Resident, Dr. Gregory spent over six years in a number of leadership positions at Alameda County's Highland General Hospital. She returned to the Department of Public Health in 2020 in the role of Director of Population Health and Quality for Primary Care. Dr. Gregory's population health improvement work is deeply rooted in principles of health equity and community health. With a team of other SFHN Primary Care leaders, she recently completed the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Pursuing Equity fellowship. She is Co-Chair of DPH Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) Working Group, which has spearheaded efforts to collect SDoH data in the electronic health record and use that information to drive improvement work aimed at addressing disparate access to resources as a means of improving health.

As Dr. Gregory assumes this important leadership role in the DPH, she will bring a fresh spirit of innovation, collaboration, and social justice to Primary Care and SFHN leadership. She has the ideal leadership skills to take the reins and lead during a time of transformation and rebuilding in Primary Care and public health.



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

We welcome Dr. Blake Gregory as our new SFHN Director of Primary Care and extend our gratitude to Deputy Director Carol Taniguchi for her service as our interim Director of Primary Care for the past six months.

SB 43 IMPLEMENTATION IN SAN FRANCISCO

On January 1, 2024, Senate Bill 43 (Eggman), which modernizes California's conservatorship laws for the first time in more than 50 years, went into effect. The law updates the definition for those eligible for conservatorship to include those who live with severe substance use disorder and those who are unable to provide for their own personal safety or necessary medical care.

To prepare for the new law, Mayor Breed issued an Executive Directive in October of last year to form an Executive Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Department of Public Health and the Department of Disability and Aging Services, to coordinate SB 43's implementation in San Francisco. As part of implementation efforts, DPH and DAS have provided new trainings for City staff and health care professionals on the new law (as of February 1st, DPH has trained over 1,000 staff on the new law and how to utilize the new law when assessing for an involuntary psychiatric hold), developed new metrics to track implementation, and created new workflows to improve coordination among agencies to better support individuals when conservatorship may be appropriate.

San Francisco has continued to invest significant resources in expanding behavioral health treatment options across the continuum of care to ensure high quality, timely, easily accessible, coordinated, and recovery-oriented care delivered in the most appropriate, least restrictive settings. Conservatorship remains an important treatment option within the continuum of care for some high acuity patients who have few alternatives. SB 43 will allow us to better support individuals to ensure they receive the care and treatment they need.

LAGUNA HONDA UPDATE

Laguna Honda Hospital submitted the Plans of Correction for the CMS Recertification Survey —the Fire Life Safety portion was submitted on Saturday, January 13 and the Health Monitoring portion was submitted on Wednesday, January 17. At this time, Laguna Honda awaits full approval and validation of the Plans of Correction, and then a determination from CMS regarding recertification into the Medicare program.



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

DPH CELEBRATES THE START OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

DPH kicked off Black History Month with our “Uplifting Black Health” celebration for staff at Southeast Community Center on Feb. 1. The event remarks from Dr. Jonathan Butler, associate director of the UCSF Black Health Initiative; Uzuri Pease-Greene, executive director of Community Awareness Resource Entity; and DPH Director of Health Dr. Grant Colfax. Attendees also viewed inspiring performances by an African dance group and a youth poet. This Black History Month, DPH affirms its commitment to providing community-based health services and reducing barriers to accessing high quality healthcare.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH BRANCH PROVIDES FOOD SAFETY TRAINING FOR CHINATOWN BUSINESS OWNERS

The Chinatown Beautification Action Committee reached out to the DPH Environmental Health Branch to provide food safety training for business owners wanting to sell food at night markets in Chinatown. At the Autumn Festival last year there were several vendors who successfully held a night market and there was a desire to provide more of these in 2024. Local merchants felt this type of activity could play a vital role in revitalizing the Chinatown economy. Senior Inspectors Amelia Castelli, Aron Wong and Kyle Chan provided the training which was held at a local hotel. The inspectors reviewed the permitting process and reviewed basic food safety practices with local businesses in attendance. The training was covered by [Chinatown newspaper Sing Tao](#), so the information provided was widely distributed in the community. The Environmental Health Branch is always looking for opportunities like these to proactively partner with local businesses around food safety. Preventing foodborne illnesses from occurring is always better than responding to an outbreak. As the saying goes, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

ZSFG HOSTS UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES XAVIER BECERRA

Last week, Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra visited ZSFG and met with myself, Dr. Susan Ehrlich, Dr. Elena Fuentes-Afflick and staff at UCSF Pride Hall. They had an important conversation about what has been happening across the nation, what is being done and what progress needs to be made to protect reproductive freedom, including the need for legislative change at the state and national levels. Dr. Daniel Grossman of UCSF’s Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health, a collaborative research group at UCSF, facilitated the discussion where Secretary Becerra thanked ZSFG and UCSF for their commitment and leadership in women's health rights and in providing compassionate care to everyone. He encouraged people to share their stories and experiences on the topic and stressed the importance of doing so.



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

Thank you, Secretary Becerra for your commitment and advocacy in making reproductive health providing equitable health care.

ZSFG TOURS SAN FRANCISCO EIGHTH GRADERS

ZSFG hosted 38 students from Cathedral School for Boys last week. They met with members of ZSFG's Emergency Department, ICU, Radiology, Rehabilitation and Psychology departments to learn about what it is like to work in one of the busiest public hospitals in the country and what it takes to keep San Franciscans healthy. They also had a chance to board an ambulance and hear from our paramedic partners with the San Francisco Fire Department about their experience responding to emergencies and providing care throughout the City. Through partnering with the community to share programs like these, we hope to inspire the next generation of nurses, doctors, paramedics and more. It is also a great way to showcase our health care providers and teams at ZSFG.

DPH IN THE COMMUNITY

DPH continues to directly connect people with public health resources and services this winter. On January 16, DPH and community partners held a Street Health and Wellness Fair at the San Francisco Public Library's Main Library. Over 200 people attended to access medical care, sexual health services such as STI/HIV testing, and linkage to substance use disorder and treatment.

In addition, DPH has distributed over 200,000 COVID-19 tests to community and government partners and has offered the updated COVID-19 and flu vaccines at over 20 community events since October 2023.

We are proud of our efforts to keep the community healthy and thank staff for their hard work.

COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 02/01:

- San Francisco's 7-day rolling average of COVID test positivity is 8.0% and there are 56 COVID hospitalizations.
- Twenty-eight percent of SF residents are fully up to date on their COVID vaccinations and have received the updated vaccine.

[DPH in the News](#)