



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Daniel Tsai
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
Daniel L. Lurie
Mayor

Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of May 19, 2025

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 [test positivity](#) and will monitor other indicators including hospitalizations.

73 NEW TREATMENT BEDS ANNOUNCED

Mayor Daniel Lurie announced a plan to significantly expand behavioral health care resources for people with some of the greatest or most complex mental health challenges. The plan includes 73 new treatment beds, with 57 locked subacute treatment beds for those with mental health disorders who are under a conservatorship and 16 dual diagnosis beds for those with substance use and behavioral health needs. These new resources will be funded by \$27.6 million in state Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP) funding.

DPH applied for capital funding under Proposition 1, passed by Californians in March 2024. As part of Proposition 1, the state authorized additional BHCIP funding and is awarding one-time behavioral health capital funding in two rounds, with \$3.3 billion awarded statewide and another \$1.1 billion to be awarded statewide by March 2026.

More information about the projects awarded:

Locked Subacute Treatment (LSAT) Beds

\$21.3 million to expand capacity at the Behavioral Health Center on the Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital (ZSFG) campus by adding 57 additional locked subacute treatment beds

Locked subacute treatment facilities, also known as Mental Health Rehabilitation Centers, offer 24/7 intensive psychiatric care, nursing care, and psychosocial rehabilitation services to adults with severe mental illness and/or placed under conservatorship. These facilities serve some of the most behaviorally complex clients, including individuals under conservatorship.

Locked treatment facilities are difficult to acquire or construct due to the high building standards



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required. The Behavioral Health Center at ZSFG was built as a locked treatment facility, and with BHCIP funding, DPH will complete critical renovations to expand the locked subacute treatment capacity at the Behavioral Health Center by 57 beds.

Dual Diagnosis Treatment Beds

\$6.3 million for 16 residential treatment beds to serve individuals with both mental health and substance use disorders

DPH will reopen the 7th Street Dual Diagnosis residential treatment program using the BHCIP capital funds to address maintenance needs and make the 16-bed facility ADA accessible. This facility location was previously operated as a behavioral health dual diagnosis program (formerly Jo Ruffin Place). It was acquired by the city in 2024 as part of the debt settlement with the prior provider. The BHCIP funds provide the city with a solution to reopen these much-needed services.

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

DPH was excited to inform, educate, and promote public awareness of 2025 National Nurses Week (May 6-12), and National Nurses Day (May 6). We honored the dedicated, knowledgeable, compassionate, and hardworking DPH nurses who bring care to the City's most vulnerable residents.

Representing nearly 40% of the entire DPH workforce, nurses serve across every division. Whether at the bedside, in the clinic, on the street, or behind the scenes, nurses deliver essential, lifesaving services to their patients every day—advocating for their needs, championing their dignity, and providing care with expertise and compassion.

To emphasize the importance of nursing roles in patient care in San Francisco, the Communications team released a multimedia internal and external communications campaign.

The team developed and supported over 25 communication deliverables and activities across all DPH divisions/branches to include:

- Director's communications
- Divisional leadership messages
- Proactive media stories highlighting nurses
 - Univision: ["I can help them heal": Latina nurse shares her struggle to achieve her dream in California](#)
 - KPIX: [Meet the Nurses Serving on the Frontlines of San Francisco's Homeless Crisis](#)



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- KCBS: [Experts say staffing nurses at SF shelters benefits public health](#)
- Three events (Nurses Week Research Symposium at ZSFG, and nursing awards events at Laguna Honda Hospital & ZSFG)
- [A video recap of the Nurses Week events](#)
- Two digital media marketing messages: DPH website & ZSFG video screens
- Two social media campaigns on all DPH & ZSFG platforms

LAGUNA HONDA HOSPITAL CONGRATULATES WINNERS OF NURSING AWARDS

Laguna Honda Hospital honored the outstanding work of its nurses at its Nurses Week celebration on May 8. The following staff received awards for their compassion and dedication to Laguna Honda residents:

DAISY awards:

- Barbara Clark
- Namnama “Namie” Angeles
- Talivaimaila “Tali” Seumanutafa

The Ann Hughes Award

- Kathleen MacKerrow

Friends of Nursing Awards:

- Joel Igu
- Jennifer Carton-Wade

Unsung Hero Awards

- Maria Antoc
- Aye Hnin
- Shannon Bevet
- Dr. Lisa Hoo

Recognition for Recertification Efforts

- Terry Dentoni

ZSFG CELEBRATES NURSES WEEK

For Nurses Week, ZSFG celebrated its amazing nurses under the inspiring theme, “The Power of Nurses to Transform Health.” Throughout the week, hospital leaders and staff highlighted the



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dedication of nurses and the compassionate and high-quality care they provide patients, whether coordinating care, advocating for timely treatment, or simply offering a listening ear.

This year, ZSFG hosted its First Annual Nurses Week Research Symposium, featuring powerful presentations that highlighted how nurses are advancing care and tackling complex health challenges. Congratulations to the awardees:

- Catalyst Award: Dr. Monica R. McLemore
- Best Podium Presentations: Mavourneen Hoover, Alonn Ilan, Merjo Roca, Ann Caltagirone, Marisella Carranza, Vanessa Almaguer
- Best Poster: Adrian Smith and team

Thank you to organizers Jennifer Berke, Norlissa Cooper, and Rebecca Menza for a phenomenal event, and to Dr. Susan Ehrlich, Gillian Otway, and the ZSFG executive team for their leadership. ZSFG capped off the week with a joyful appreciation ceremony honoring DAISY, BEE, Friends of Nurses, and Ambulatory Care Award recipients, whose work uplifts ZSFG's mission.

Congratulations to the awardees:

- DAISY Awards: Giovanni Palasigui, Cristina Abella, Brent Abel, Gabriella Bridges, Vannie Phan
- BEE Awards: Dorothy Carson, Chloe Yang, Indah Chan, Henry Viray, MJ Haney, Nhi Chau, Elina Durnell, Keith Turk, Brenda Gotera, Wutyi Hlaing, Yohannes Beyenne
- Friends of Nurses Award: Danyelle Diggs
- O'Connell Society Award: Rachel Perry Limon

TOBACCO PROGRAM PILOT PROJECT

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death in the US, killing more than 480,000 people each year. In San Francisco, the highest rate of smoking is among young adults (ages 18-24), 15.8% of whom smoke. DPH's Environmental Health Branch enforces the San Francisco Health Codes, Art. 19P and California Penal Code, Section 308 which prohibits the sale of tobacco products to anyone under the age of 21. Typically, compliance is monitored by hiring a contractor under the age of 21 who attempts to purchase tobacco products from retail markets. However, this summer, the Tobacco Program at DPH is spearheading a new pilot project that will hire a student intern to assist with compliance monitoring operations. We are optimistic that this pilot project will both introduce potential future public health workers into the field while also supplementing DPH's important enforcement work around proper tobacco retail practices.



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ZSFG'S CNO NAMED ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN IN THE BAY AREA BY SF BUSINESS TIMES

Congratulations to Gillian Otway, RN, Chief Nursing Officer at ZSFG for being named one of the Most Influential Women in the Bay Area by San Francisco Business Times.

As the hospital's Chief Nursing Officer, Gillian leads by example—inspiring teams across the hospital to always lead with compassion. She is a strong believer that good leaders practice active listening because it creates stronger relationships, better collaboration and more effective problem-solving across all levels. Gillian shares, "Success is measured in trust earned, relationships built and the positive change created in people's lives and communities. Fulfillment comes from purpose-driven work and being able to uplift those around me." Her dedication to health equity, innovation, and advocacy for nursing excellence at the City's safety-net hospital and only Level 1 Trauma Center continues to elevate quality care for communities who need it most.

Gillian Otway has been an exceptional nursing leader at ZSFG since 1998. As Chief Nursing Officer, she leads more than 1,000 nurses on the ZSFG campus, the largest single group of nurses in the Department of Public Health. Congratulations to Gillian.

JCC'S STROKE PROGRAM JOINT COMMISSION SURVEY CONCLUDES WITH PRAISE FOR ZSFG

The Joint Commission recently concluded their review of the Advanced Primary Stroke Program at ZSFG and are contingently recertified pending resolution of RFIs (requirements for improvement). The surveyor was extremely complimentary of the stroke team and the many aspects of best practice care they provide—particularly highlighting the teamwork they witnessed during the visit. The survey is a testament to the entire team's commitment to the critical care the team provides leading to long-term success in improving positive patient outcomes.

Special appreciation for Sara Cole, Lawrence Chyall, Niko Absila, Tristen James and Dr. Claude Hemphill with the Stroke Team and to Adrian Smith and Emma Moore and the entire regulatory team for keeping teams at our hospital and Trauma Center Survey Ready.

RECOGNIZING INTERPRETERS AT ZSFG DURING NATIONAL INTERPRETER APPRECIATION DAY

ZSFG recognized the dedicated Interpreter team consisting of 22 interpreters serving patients in Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Toishanese, Vietnamese, Russian and more. The team provides phone and video interpretation services to city clinics across the DPH network-including WIC,



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Health at Home, the Nurse Advise Line, Laguna Honda Hospital, the Trauma Recovery Center, and many others.

Interpreters are present at nearly every stage of a DPH patient's journey and are the cultural and linguistic bridge between providers and patients, ensuring care is delivered with compassion and clarity. Whether it's helping a mother welcome new life into the world in Labor & Delivery, interpreting sensitive end-of-life conversations, or supporting patients with other needs such as financial services, dialysis, mental health, or spiritual care, the interpreters bring empathy, intelligence, and skill to their work. Thank you to our amazing team of interpreters at ZSFG.

COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 4/30:

- San Francisco's 7-day rolling average of COVID test positivity is 2.4%.
- Thirty percent of SF residents are fully up to date on their COVID vaccinations and have received the updated vaccine.