

Mayor Newsom Unveils Major New Steps Toward Universal Healthcare

Mayor announces Universal Healthcare Council to draft plan for implementation of universal healthcare for uninsured San Franciscans

Mayor proposes \$51.6 million strategic investment in expanded access and capacity of the City's public health system

San Francisco, CA – Mayor Gavin Newsom today was joined by Supervisor Tom Ammiano to announce the formation of the Universal Healthcare Council (UHC), charged with developing the parameters of the Mayor's first-of-its-kind proposal to provide healthcare for all uninsured San Francisco residents. Chairing the Council will be Sandra Hernandez, Executive Director of the San Francisco Foundation and Lloyd Dean, President and CEO of Catholic Healthcare West.

Speaking before a crowd of clinic workers and healthcare providers, Mayor Newsom also announced a proposed investment of \$51.6 million in the city's healthcare system, which will in part expand capacity at neighborhood clinics and help meet the Mayor's goal of providing healthcare for uninsured San Franciscans. The investment includes funding for efficiency reviews at neighborhood health clinics similar to that conducted at the Tom Waddell clinic last year that increased patient visits by over 30%. Additionally, the proposal includes \$25 million for the pre-development phase for the new General Hospital, including architectural design and engineering plans, economic impact and other initial steps.

Mayor Gavin Newsom called the dual announcement "an order of magnitude change in the way we provide healthcare for San Franciscans," saying, "This proposed investment in our healthcare system is essential if we are to meet our goal of providing healthcare for all uninsured San Franciscans. We cannot continue to rely on insurance alone to solve our health care issues. We must ensure that San Franciscans who can't afford insurance can finally afford health care." The Mayor continued, saying of the Council, "Today, we are bringing together this City's best and brightest to help map our plan for ensuring basic healthcare for uninsured San Franciscans."

Co-Chair Sandra Hernández said, "This is an extraordinary opportunity to expand access to this city's quality healthcare delivery system. I am honored to be able to work in a collaborative effort with business leaders, public, private and nonprofit sectors. Our goal is to create a "medical home" for every all San Franciscans."

(MORE)

Co-Chair Lloyd Dean, spoke from the providers' perspective saying, "The San Francisco provider community stands ready to be part of the solution. During the last few years, we have forged partnerships and community links that improve access to care. Mayor Newsom's council is the logical next step, and we will do our part."

The Council will utilize proven best practice methodologies, driven by medical data, to make recommendations for mapping a culturally competent and geographically accessible system of care for uninsured San Franciscans. Over the course of the next 100 days, the UHC will address such issues as the cost of employer/employee participation level; co-pays and premiums; the network of providers; and the specific health services provided.

The Universal Healthcare Council is in the process of being formed. To date, members include:

- Sandra Hernandez, Co-Chair, Chief Executive Officer, San Francisco Foundation
- Lloyd Dean, Co-Chair, President and CEO, Catholic Healthcare West
- John Gressman, President and CEO, SF Community Clinic Consortium
- Mark Laret, CEO, UCSF Medical Center
- Mike Alexander, Senior Vice President/Area Manager, Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc. and Hospitals
- Jean Fraser, CEO, San Francisco Health Plan
- Steve Falk, President and CEO, Chamber of Commerce
- Tim Paulson, Executive Director, San Francisco Labor Council
- Mitch Katz, Director, Department of Public Health
- Lucien Wulsin, Project Director, Insure the Uninsured Project

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