



City and County of San Francisco
Edwin M. Lee, Mayor

San Francisco Department of Public Health

Barbara A. Garcia, MPA
Director of Health

Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of October 4, 2016

A current overview of issues affecting the state of public health in San Francisco
<https://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/aboutdph/insideDept/dirRpts/default.asp>

Addendum

Crisis Intervention Specialists to Improve Police Crisis Response Capabilities

Mayor Ed Lee announced today that San Francisco will deploy licensed mental health professionals to the scene of police encounters with troubled individuals as part of a new partnership between the Department of Public Health and the San Francisco Police Department. The program strengthens and expands the city's crisis response capabilities by providing a pool of professionals to support police negotiations, de-escalate conflict situations, and ensure that individuals are adequately assessed and provided mental health crisis services if needed. This team will support the de-escalation of conflict situations when police officers respond to individuals who may be mentally ill or under the influence of drugs or alcohol and pose a potential danger to themselves or others. It is part of the city's ongoing police reforms and will emphasize the importance of protecting lives and assuring public safety for all San Francisco residents.

The team will be made up of experienced behavioral health clinicians employed by the Health Department. It will include three clinical psychologists and two behavioral health clinicians (either clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists or professional clinical counselors). Team members will also assist the police department with Crisis Intervention Trainings, to improve police capability to recognize people with behavioral health problems and restore safety as quickly and humanely as possible.

The formation of Crisis Intervention Specialists is a pilot project that builds on more than a decade of the Health Department's crisis response services in the field. This includes the Comprehensive Crisis Services unit, which includes the Mobile Crisis Treatment, Comprehensive Child Crisis, and Crisis Response Services for families, community members and individuals affected by violence and critical incidents.

The program will be implemented over the next three years and evaluated based on factors such as the outcomes of negotiations and crisis assessments, short term case management services, linkage to long term care and reduction in crisis contacts.