



Quarterly Report

April through June 2021



COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA
Health System

Better Health for All



Santa Clara County is one of the **top five counties in the country** for population health and mental health. US News & World Report's fourth annual *Healthiest Communities* survey ranked more than 3,000 communities nationwide. Rankings were based on data regarding COVID-19's impact on community health, mental health, and health equity. Santa Clara County ranked fourth in the mental health category, and fifth in overall population health. The measures included access to care, health behaviors, and health conditions.

Because we are an integrated system of care, and with the County of Santa Clara's support, protecting the health of the community has been paramount. Additional resources of staff and funding were provided so we could care for, treat, test, and vaccinate our community. With the extra resources and support, our public system of healthcare was able to successfully respond to the early waves of COVID-19 infections, and saved lives during the significant winter surge. It has also meant running an incredibly successful vaccination program.

The experience and expertise of our staff has come together together to protect the health of this community. Today, the best protection against COVID-19 is the vaccine. Led by Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, Santa Clara County has realized the highest vaccination rate of any county our size in the US. What an accomplishment!

The County of Santa Clara Health System includes the Behavioral Health Services Department, Custody Health, Emergency Medical System Agency, Public Health Department, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center Hospitals and Clinics, and Valley Health Plan. We continue to monitor and respond to changes in the pandemic. At the same time, we remain **dedicated to improving the health of all people and our community.**

Quality Care and the Patient Experience

At the County of Santa Clara Health System, we know that quality care and patient safety are deeply connected. Quality care is safe, effective, accessible, patient/client-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable. This is central to our efforts to improve the health and well-being of the communities we serve.

During the pandemic, many people have hesitated about going to a hospital. To help women access specialized services, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center opened the OB Gyn Urgent Care Center, one of the first in Northern California. The center provides **timely access for women with urgent gynecologic issues.** Over 2,500 urgent care visits included walk-in appointments, on-site office procedures, and diagnostic imaging services. The Board of Supervisors recognized the value and approved making the center permanent. Staffed by board-certified OB Gyn specialists, the OB GYN Urgent Care Center has proven to be a great value to women in our community.

O'Connor Hospital has put into place projects to **improve patients' hospital experience.** These include having hospital leadership and teams of physicians and nurses make the rounds to patient units. To further enhance the environment of care, nurses and physicians make daily phone calls with patients' families. After a patient is discharged from the hospital, they will get a phone call to check on their medications, answer any question, and ask about their experience at the hospital.

Quality Care and the Patient Experience



The Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement Program at O'Connor Hospital has been approved and will begin accepting patients this fall. Using specialized technology, this state-of-the-art minimally invasive practice eliminates the need for an open-heart procedure. This advancement will provide **faster recovery times** with similar clinical outcomes as open-heart procedures. It will also reduce the risk of complications.

Santa Clara Valley Medical Center has been recognized for quality care and meeting performance standards. Cal Hospital Compare recognized the hospital for **high standards in maternity care, appropriate use of opioids, and opioid management**. The hospital received The Joint Commission accreditation for its sepsis initiatives.

St. Louise Regional Hospital achieved the American Stroke Association/American Heart Association "Get with the Guidelines" Gold Plus Target Stroke Honor Roll Elite Award for 2020. The hospital received the award for meeting the standards for **Primary Stroke Center Certification**. The hospital also achieved the **California Honor Roll for maternity care and the appropriate use of opioids**.



Several Custody Health Services (CHS) initiatives are showing **effectiveness in improving health outcomes** of incarcerated adult patients. CHS is now using a rating system to identify patients who are the most likely to be readmitted within 30 days of a hospital discharge. A higher score equates to a higher risk of readmission. Patients are then matched to an appropriate level of care. They also receive case management services based on their score.

Equity in Healthcare

We believe that everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Disparities in healthcare are not new and are rooted in racism and discrimination. These obstacles to health are based on race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, age, mental health, physical disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Removing obstacles to healthcare will help our community achieve the highest level of health.

To **improve maternal and infant health outcomes and reduce infant mortality**, the Santa Clara County **Black Infant Health Program and Perinatal Equity Initiative** will be expanded. These programs are partnering with local community-based organizations to expand community services to a broader population of child-bearing women of African and African Ancestry descent. The Perinatal Equity Initiative will also raise awareness of disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes. With healthcare systems, they will work to adopt policies and strategies to reduce the impact of implicit bias and discrimination to improve the perinatal experience and outcomes among African-African Ancestry women.

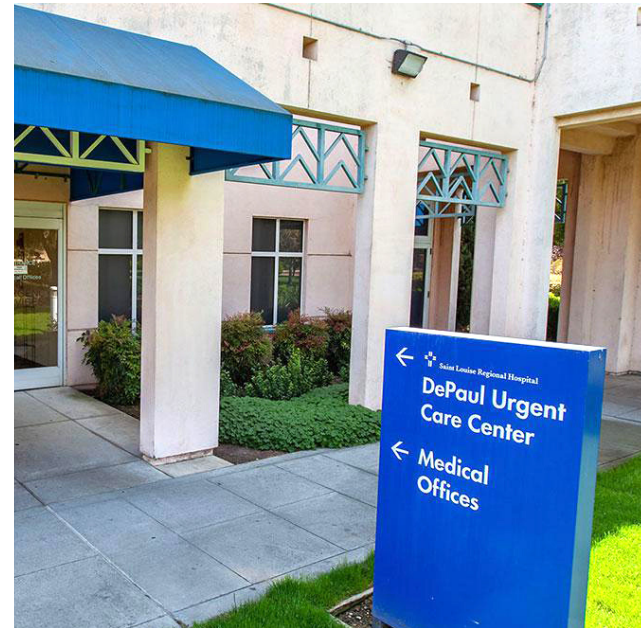
Hiring **Asian Pacific Islander Community Health Workers** by the Public Health Department for the County of Santa Clara. The lead agency for this work, Asian Americans for Community Involvement, has begun recruiting staff and training workers. They have also started a youth educator group. The youth group will participate in a podcasting workshop to learn how to effectively use this platform to provide outreach and education in the Vietnamese community. These and other efforts help **address health concerns and disparities and improve the overall health status** of Asian/Pacific Islanders in our county.



Expanding Access to Care and Services

Access to comprehensive, timely, and quality healthcare services and programs is key to the health of our community. Access to care helps maintain health, prevent and manage disease, reduce unnecessary disability and premature death, and achieve health equity.

To meet the medical and urgent care needs of South County residents, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center's DePaul Health Center was funded to undergo major renovations. A new urgent care center will be added, as will a skilled nursing facility with a 36-bed capacity. Laboratory and radiology services, outpatient pharmacy, and support services will also be upgraded. These new and refreshed spaces will **expand the services being provided to the community**.



As part of a multi-agency coordinated effort, a medical clinic at the Children's Advocacy Center of Santa Clara County opened in April 2021. Located in San Jose, the clinic provides **expert, compassionate, and coordinated evaluation and treatment** for children and adolescents who have experienced physical abuse, sexual abuse, assault, and/or neglect. The clinic also provides forensic exams for survivors of child sexual abuse, physical abuse, assault, or neglect.



The Medication Assistance Program was launched to help residents of Santa Clara County **get the medications they need**. Residents of our county 18 years or older with a current, valid prescription for insulin, EPI pens and asthma inhalers may be eligible for the program. The pilot program focused on low and moderate-income residents of the county and those residents who use one of 12 County of Santa Clara Health System pharmacies. Due to the pilot's success, the program is being expanded this fall to make these prescriptions more affordable to more residents of Santa Clara County. Starting in October 2021, qualified participants will receive an annual grant to help make these prescriptions affordable.

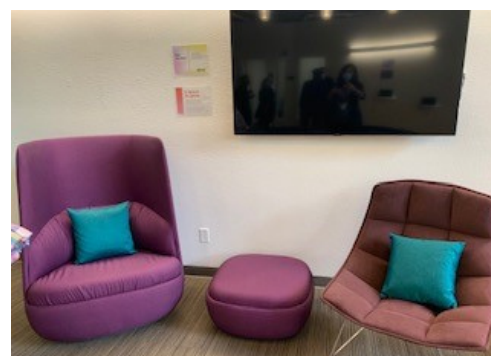
The Board of Supervisors invested an additional \$1.1M to launch the new **community mobile response program**. This Behavioral Health Services Department program will **expand access to crisis and mental health services** to individuals and families. Situations that do not need a law enforcement response will be responded to by community residents, mental health workers, and emergency medical services providers. It is expected the new program will serve about 5,000 people annually.

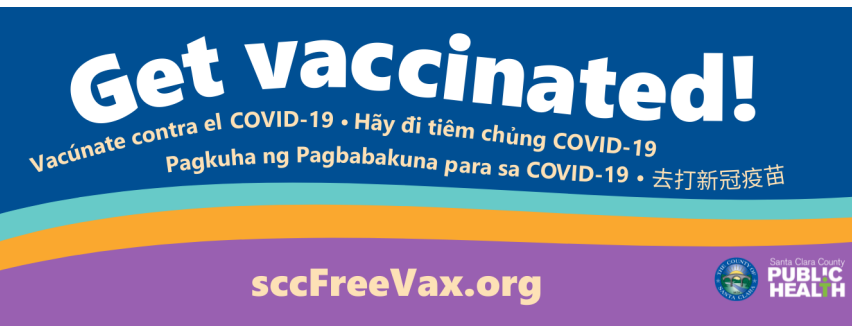
St. Louise Regional Hospital received approval for a new two-story addition to enlarge the emergency department, add a new intensive care unit, and expand the number of isolation, triage, and trauma response rooms. The infrastructure investments in this facility increases our capacity to **provide critical care and improve access to care** for the residents of South County.

Expanding Access to Care and Services

To better serve and care for patients, the Diagnostic Imaging Department at St. Louise Regional Hospital has new digital portable x-ray machines to use in operating rooms. The department is also retrofitting and upgrading existing x-ray rooms to digital technology, which provides lower radiation exposure, improves the quality of images, and gets faster results. A new 4D-5D state-of-the-art ultrasound machine is used for prenatal imaging.

The first of their kind in the US, two allcove centers for youth opened in June. The Board of Supervisors approved Mental Health Services Act funding for centers in San Jose and Palo Alto. Additional centers will be established in the future throughout California. These centers provide youth-centered, integrated care through prevention and early intervention. The centers serve the needs of young people ages 12-to-25 by providing mental health, substance use, physical health, peer and family support, and supported education and employment services, all under one roof. allcove's mission is to reduce stigma, embrace mental wellness, increase community connection, and provide easy access to services.





The Public Health Department continued to meet the challenges of the pandemic and address the ongoing health situation in our community. Santa Clara County's vaccination rates are among the very highest in the nation, with more than 75% of county residents 16 and older having received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by the end of June. The high rate of vaccination has helped keep our COVID-19 case rate lower than the state or national rates. It has also helped save lives.

Medical historians tell us there have been 9 influenza pandemics in the past 300 years. So, one every 30 to 35 years or so, or roughly 3 per century. It is anyone's best guess about the future frequency of influenza pandemics. And we must be prepared in case they happen more often.

A strong and effective Public Health Department is essential in the response to a public health emergency like a pandemic. In recognition of the importance and value of its work, the Public Health Department received \$62 million in one-time funding from the California Department of Public Health's federal stimulus funds.

This funding will be used to build and modernize the department's infrastructure so that we can rapidly identify and mitigate diseases, and better respond to future pandemics or another public health crisis. Funding will also support efforts to advance racial and health equity, expand capacity for communicable disease prevention and control, increase laboratory capacity and genomic surveillance, develop 21st century data systems and analytic capacity, and enhance public health communications.

Many of us rarely thought about or understood the role of public health before this crisis. When we thought about "health," we typically talked about medical matters. Unlike the practice of medicine in places like a doctor's office or hospital—public health is not a one-on-one field. Instead, public health focuses on improving and protecting community health and well-being, with an emphasis on prevention among large groups of people.

We did not realize that our public health officials and staff worked every single day to keep people healthy and safe, locally, nationally, and around the world. Their response to emergencies will continue, as will their efforts to promote healthy lifestyles, advocate for policy and system changes to provide for a healthier community, stop injuries, and prevent, detect, and respond to infectious diseases.

Public health initiatives such as vaccinations, family planning, recognizing tobacco use as a health hazard, fluoridation of drinking water, safer workplaces, and clean air and water policies increased life expectancy in the U.S. The critical work of public health must continue.

Focus on Health

As we continue to respond to the pandemic, we are also moving along our journey of transformation. Every day our employees demonstrate the value of the care and services we provide, and a dedication to the residents we serve.

With support of the Board of Supervisors and County Executive, the investments being made in the Health System are significant. Several projects represent a steadfast promise to this community to improve and enhance our programs, services, facilities, technologies, and access to care. Whether it is the future Behavioral Health Adolescent Center or a new two-story addition to St. Louise Regional Hospital's emergency department or expanding access to outpatient care or the County's investment to the community mobile response program, we are moving closer to reaching our vision of Better Health for All.

We are not out of the woods yet when it comes to the pandemic, but the work of the Health System will continue to impact and improve the health and well-being of our community.

Follow us on:



Facebook [@cshealthsystem](#)



YouTube [@County of Santa Clara Health System](#)



Twitter [@cshealthsystem](#)



Health System web page: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/hhs/>



COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA
Health System