

San Francisco General Hospital

FOUNDATION

I AM THEIR PEOPLE

ZSFG provides a
mental health safety
net for everyone

LOOKING FORWARD

What's on ZSFG CEO
Susan Ehrlich's list
of priorities

A NIGHT FOR THE BIG- HEARTED

Transform Mental and
Behavioral Health Fund
launched at Hearts in SF



Everybody Needs Somebody. Kevin was making his way through the Mission when the voices in his head took control. He doesn't remember who called 911. But he's glad somebody did, because paramedics brought him to Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital (ZSFG), where doctors diagnosed bipolar disorder. And that's where his recovery began. Kevin is not alone. And he may not be the person you expect. Mental illness can affect anyone: your brother or your neighbor, the young man sleeping on the sidewalk or the elderly woman in a wheelchair outside BART. Because Kevin could be anyone, ZSFG is here for everyone, including those who have no one to call, no couches left to surf, no shoulder to lean on. **We are their people.**

Mental Health in SF

Across the United States, one in five people has experienced a major mental illness, a shocking statistic illustrated in what some have called a mental health crisis on San Francisco's streets. Depression, trauma, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, addiction — left untreated, conditions like these can erode the human connections that keep us

anchored in our lives. "The natural tendency is to think it could never happen to us or someone we know," says ZSFG's Mark Leary, MD. "The fact is, mental illness cuts across all socioeconomic classes. Everyone is potentially subject to it."

As Chief of Psychiatry at ZSFG, Dr. Leary is part of the dedicated team that cares for people admitted with symptoms of mental illness. Advancing a community-centered approach rooted in San Francisco's defining values — compassion, innovation, inclusion — Dr. Leary and his colleagues ensure that ZSFG is a place of recovery, respite, and resources for everyone, including the city's most vulnerable.

"We see a wide variety of people at ZSFG, from someone depressed over recent stress or past trauma, to someone with a serious illness like schizophrenia," Dr. Leary says. Most often, he points out, people come to the hospital in a crisis. "They may be overwhelmed by paranoid thoughts, delusions,



“ When we interview people for our program, we say, ‘We really need you.’ Some people have never heard that before, and I love to say it.”

– Mindy Oppenheim, Director,
Vocational Rehabilitation Program

or hallucinations. They may be agitated or delirious, dealing with substance abuse or domestic violence,” he adds. “When they come through our doors, our opportunity is to help resolve their crisis, stabilize them, and help them find a path to becoming their best selves.”

ZSFG’s approach begins with a commitment to meeting people where they are, whether they are housed, employed, and experiencing their first psychiatric crisis, or living on the street, with a history of mental illness. Services range from 24/7 psychiatric emergency treatment to inpatient care to psychosocial support, with programs geared to every niche in the San Francisco community. (Learn more about ZSFG programs at sghf.org/tmh)

Social Medicine and Vocational Rehabilitation are just two of many programs that enable ZSFG to provide a comprehensive mental health safety net for the city. A new model of care, Social Medicine has proven



“ I do the clothing donations, so everyone can leave the hospital wearing something clean. I like being here, seeing different people, talking to my coworkers.”

– Albert, ZSFG Vocational Rehabilitation Client



transformative for people whose mental health issues are exacerbated or caused by homelessness, hunger, or isolation. Social workers, nurses, medical doctors, psychiatrists, pharmacists — all work in collaboration, along with city organizations, to provide medical care, mental health care, and support with social challenges, including shelter and food.

Once a client is stabilized, Vocational Rehabilitation can provide a path to employment, self-sufficiency, and self-worth. Participants have the chance to earn while they learn — distributing donated clothing so every discharged patient has something to wear, managing a coffee or hotdog cart on campus, working in catering or the café. The program prepares people who may have gone years without employment to join the workforce and rejoin the community.

ZSFG’s multifaceted approach to mental health confronts one of the biggest misconceptions

ZSFG ranks as the

#1

provider of adult
emergency mental
health care in the
city and county of
San Francisco

I've been part of the programs here for over 35 years. They have the best doctors. Coming here during the day we meet special people we never expected to meet. And they do wonderful things for you. — Ronald, ZSFG Patient

I think the hospital is phenomenal. What they're doing for people who are on a limited income — it really helps motivate you and keeps you inspired.

— George, ZSFG Patient

I lived outside for so long, carrying around a 60-pound backpack. I hadn't had employment for seven years. If I didn't have this, I don't think I would've found a paying job because of my living situation. — Matthew, ZSFG Patient

This is the only place a person can go in San Francisco 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and be seen by a psychiatrist. Being able to provide that service for people in crisis is such a rewarding opportunity. — Anton Nigusse Bland, Director of Mental Health Reform, San Francisco Dept. of Public Health

8,000

Adult patients treated at ZSFG per year for a mental health emergency, half of them walk-in patients

In the early 90s, a friend suffering from AIDS was having a dementia-like emergency. At ZSFG, we were greeted with open arms and assured he would be well taken care of. At that time, people with AIDS were being shunned. Since that moment, the hospital has held a special place in my heart.

— Charly Zukow, Foundation Supporter

We are about taking care of folks who have nowhere else to go. The commitment to our client population is what drives me and makes me feel hopeful about this work. — Giselle Clark-Evaniez, Director, Emergency Department Case Management Program

150+

Years ZSFG has provided a safety net for the city of San Francisco

110+

Individuals who receive vocational assessment and job training through ZSFG each year

18.5

Percentage of adults in the U.S. who experience mental health challenges in a given year



about mental illness: That there’s no hope. In truth, there are treatments. There are resources. And in San Francisco, there are people who care. “Right now there’s a sense of common purpose around mental health in the city,” says Dr. Leary. “It’s so important for our patients to feel San Francisco’s support as they deal with mental illness. That support can give them a sense of hope about their recovery.”

Mental illness is a challenge that takes a toll on individual lives and on communities. And it will take a community to address it. San Francisco General Hospital Foundation, with its newly launched Transform Mental and Behavioral Health Fund, gives everyone the opportunity to make a difference on an issue that affects all of us. Discover how you can make a difference at sfghf.org/tmh •

Keeping Our Commitments

An update on ZSFG priorities and projects



In this newsletter, we focus on an issue of increasing importance to all

San Franciscans: mental health. Although this issue is often addressed in relation to the city’s homeless population, in reality, mental health matters to all of us, because mental illness can affect any of us. ZSFG is on the front lines with innovative treatment strategies that frame mental health holistically, looking at the social, psychological, and medical needs of patients, including the most vulnerable. Once again, our city’s hospital stands out as a beacon, demonstrating how to treat people with dignity, kindness, and pioneering medical care.

The Foundation’s launch of the Transform Mental and Behavioral Health Fund rallies us to invest in people and programs that are essential to ZSFG’s mission. But mental health isn’t our only priority. With support from our community, we continue to move forward with two critical initiatives that will improve the quality and safety of care at ZSFG.



One of these is Epic, our new, comprehensive, coordinated electronic health record system, which we are working to bring online. In March, an interdisciplinary team of clinicians, coordinators, and patient advocates paved the way for Epic by testing our ability to identify the right level of care for each patient. Learnings from this exercise will enable us to integrate industry best practices at ZSFG.

Meanwhile, we’re also making progress on important upgrades to a campus building that is key to our ability to meet today’s health care needs. Planned renovations for Building 5, including a seismic retrofit, will create a patient-centered, modern, accessible

ambulatory care center, conveniently co-located with Building 25, our acute care hospital and trauma center, and a planned state-of-the-art UCSF research and academic building. Key services are already moving into the modernized ambulatory care center.

These major projects, among others, will have a profound impact on ZSFG’s role as a key service provider for San Francisco. They wouldn’t be possible without the heartfelt support and generosity of San Franciscans. Thank you for caring, for investing, and for believing in San Francisco’s hospital.

Susan P. Ehrlich, MPP, MD
Chief Executive Officer, ZSFG



First Impressions

Perspective from new Foundation leadership



In January, it was my good fortune to become the Foundation's interim executive director. I'm proud to bring my 30 years of experience to an organization strengthened by the leadership of former CEO Amanda Heier, who is pursuing new opportunities in the non-profit sector. On February 13th, I had the chance to experience Hearts in SF, the Foundation's annual fundraiser. It was the Foundation's most successful event ever, marked by the launch of the Transform Mental and Behavioral Health Fund and the introduction of "I Am Their People,"* a campaign to

humanize mental illness and illustrate ZSFG's commitment to those who have run out of people, resources, and often hope. I was deeply moved by the urgency of the challenge and by the compassionate, innovative, inclusive spirit of our community. I look forward to my work at the Foundation, in partnership with people who care so much about the role our city hospital plays for their fellow San Franciscans.

Ann Lazarus

*Interim Executive Director,
SFGHF*

**View the video online: [sfghf.org/iatp](https://www.sfghf.org/iatp)*

Get Involved

Your support for San Francisco General Hospital Foundation enables ZSFG to deliver transformative mental health care for everyone in our community.

How can you make a difference?

- Make a gift today using the enclosed form or online: sfghf.org/donate
- Deepen your impact with monthly gifts. Go online to join our Heartbeat Club: sfghf.org/monthly
- Sustain ZSFG's mission with a legacy gift from your will or trust. Visit sfghf.org/legacy to learn more.
- Stay in touch through our Foundation website, social media, and newsletters. Visit sfghf.org to learn more.



HEARTS IN SF

Thank you to all our sponsors

for supporting a night of compassion focused on mental health care and our community. Your support enables our vision of providing health, care, healing, and hope to all at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center.

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We promote excellence in research, education, and care for all at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center.

For more information visit HeartsInSF.org

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2789 25th Street, Suite 2028

San Francisco, CA 94110

