

Making a difference during COVID-19 and beyond

By: Dave Pine, San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, District 1

Responding to the ongoing health and economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic has required the San Mateo County government to work with the public, nonprofit and private sectors in the collaborative and unified way that we are well known for. Our hospitals, cities, schools, businesses and nonprofit service providers have all stepped up in remarkable and creative ways to assist the county during these challenging and unprecedented times.

One standout partner throughout this effort has been the Peninsula Health Care District. The PHCD has a long tradition of supporting our residents' health and wellness in a wide variety of ways. During this crisis, the PHCD has helped the community with critical funding for a number of important initiatives.

When San Mateo County's health system was in need of an alternative housing site for those recovering from COVID-19 who otherwise could not be safely isolated from others, the PHCD contributed \$3 million in funding. The PHCD also donated 10 hospital beds and over-bed tables for use in this facility.

Many local nonprofits which provide essential health and human services are struggling during this crisis. These nonprofits are integral to our efforts to effectively respond to the pandemic. Recognizing this need, the PHCD created a \$600,000 Emergency COVID-19 Relief Fund to make grants of up to \$50,000 to direct service organizations to support their important work.

The PHCD also purchased personal protective equipment and supplies such as jumpsuits, masks, face shields and gloves. These items were distributed to hospitals, assisted living and skilled nursing senior facilities and hospice care providers.

In addition, the PHCD funded countywide outreach for an older adult resource call line for seniors staffed by Peninsula Family Services. This "one-stop" call line, which is available in multiple languages, connects isolated seniors with a wide range of community resources and with senior peer counselors who are available for weekly well-being check-ins.

As the county begins the long-term recovery process, our local partnerships will remain a vital component of our work. The PHCD has always been an important ally in serving the community. For example, the PHCD recently allocated \$2.7 million to Sonrisas Dental Health, a dental clinic focused on providing access to dental care to the most vulnerable in San Mateo County. The PHCD also just announced that it was awarded a \$2M grant from the state to help launch allcove, an innovative teen mental health center.

These types of initiatives are possible because the PHCD has demonstrated a commitment to improving community health and investing in programs that yield long-term benefits. We are grateful to the PHCD for all it has done both during the COVID-19 crisis, and as a longtime partner with the county, in meeting the health and wellness needs of our residents.