

June 26, 2020



HPSJ is Grateful to Our Local County Public Health Officers

As everyone pitches in to defeat the worst public health crisis in over 100 years, at Health Plan of San Joaquin we are taking a moment to appreciate the essential role our County Public Health Officers are continuing to play in keeping us safe.

It's been months since the outbreak of COVID 19. We all have been through this together, taking precautions. Now, it's summer, we want to go out and enjoy the outdoors and get back to all our activities. And, yes, we have COVID-fatigue.

But the Novel Coronavirus? As the economy is getting back on its feet, the virus is spreading relentlessly.

In unique ways, it falls to our local Public Health Officers – each a licensed physician – to stand guard and protect us. When COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations spike, they are our eyes to see what is happening in real time, they are the voices to warn us where the dangers lay – and they are the ones we turn to for the trustworthy advice that lets us safely reenter public life as much as possible.

Locally, in San Joaquin County we have seen 2,400 cases and 48 deaths; in Stanislaus County there have been 1,787 cases and 37 deaths. COVID hospitalizations now are on the rise. In San Joaquin County, we went from 15 on May 9 – to 91 on June 22. In Stanislaus County, they rose from 18 on May 9 to 73 on June 22. These rates show the spread is spiking in many places. Epidemiologists warn us pandemic rates are poised to grow exponentially – unless we follow all the safety and prevention guidelines coming from the county Public Health Officers.

We have learned that shutting down the economy has really bad effects on the physical, mental, and economic health of our community. So that we can safely reopen, let us step up – practice preventive measures diligently and help our friends and neighbors to do the same. Our Public Health Officers are offering us a road map on just how to safely reopen.

We owe a debt of gratitude to all the California public health officials and staff that have worked tirelessly and selflessly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic – even while understaffed and under-resourced. At HPSJ, we are grateful to be able to rely on and work closely with our own two County Public Health Officers. We want to offer our thanks to **San Joaquin County Public Health Officer Dr. Maggie Park, MD** – a pediatrician who has long cared for local children, and to **Stanislaus County Public Health Officer Dr. Julie Vaishampayan, MD** – a preventative medicine specialist caring for local families for over 20 years.

[CLICK HERE](#) for **Ways to Stay Safe**