

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



201

FROM: EXECUTIVE OFFICE

SUBMITTAL DATE: August 28, 2001

SUBJECT: Response to Grand Jury Report: **Riverside County Regional Medical Center Detention Health**

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Approve with or without modifications, the attached response to the Grand Jury's recommendations regarding the Riverside County Regional Medical Center Detention Health.
- 2) Direct the Clerk of the Board to immediately forward the Board's finalized response to the Grand Jury, to the Presiding Judge, and to the County Clerk-Recorder (for mandatory filing with the State).

BACKGROUND: On July 10 the Board directed staff to prepare a draft of the Board's response to the Grand Jury's report regarding the Riverside County Regional Medical Center Detention Health.

Section 933(c) of the Penal Code requires that the Board of Supervisors comment on the Grand Jury's recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the Board, and that a response be provided to the Presiding Judge of the Supervisor Court within 90 days.

TONY CARSTENS
Deputy County Executive Office

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FINANCIAL DATA:	N/A			
CURRENT YEAR COST	\$	ANNUAL COST:	\$	
NET COUNTY COST	\$	IN CURRENT YEAR BUDGET:	Yes/	No/
		BUDGET ADJUSTMENT FY:	Yes/	No/

SOURCE OF FUNDS:

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE.

County Executive Officer Signature

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Mullen, seconded by Supervisor Tavaglione and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended.

Ayes:	Buster, Tavaglione, Venable, Wilson and Mullen	
Noes:	None	Gerald A. Maloney
Absent:	None	Clerk of the Board
Date:	August 28, 2001	By:
xc:	RCRMC-Detention Health, Grand Jury, E.O., Pres. Judge, Deputy	
	Co.Clk. & Recorder	

3.10

ment Recommendation: Consent Policy
Per Executive Office: Consent Policy

SPECIFIC FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER DETENTION HEALTH

FINDINGS

Finding Number 1:

Riverside County detention facilities do not utilize the Detention Health Services (DHS) staff for the initial health screening of new inmates. The sheriff's correctional staff completes a medical questionnaire and refers positive responses or obvious medical needs to DHS. A number of medical conditions that require nursing or physician attention may not be recognized. Bookings occur 24 hours a day and there were 44,562 bookings in 1999. (Smith, June 2000).

Response:

-X- Respondent agrees with the finding.

Finding Number 2:

The nursing staff of Detention Health Services is currently made up of approximately 80% Registered Nurses (RN) and 20% Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVN).

Response:

-X- Respondent agrees with the finding.

Finding Number 3:

Each area nursing supervisor is responsible for three different DHS units. When a RN is not available, the area supervising RN must fill that position, and this takes him/her away from his/her supervising responsibilities.

Response:

-X- Respondent disagrees partially with the finding. Explain the partial disagreement:

It is the responsibility of the area supervising RN to maintain adequate staffing schedules to accommodate the health care needs of the inmates at their assigned facilities. In the event a RN is ill, the supervisor solicits help from other RN staff (Per Diem, Part-Time, and Full Time) to cover the shift(s). RNs are paid premium (OT) rates to work the extra shift. DHS has established a mandatory OT policy that provides a mechanism to have available staff when the need arises. Area supervisors included themselves voluntarily in the mandatory OT process to maintain parity among the staff. It is not uncommon, in the event of emergent staffing needs, to have a supervisor cover for staff. Although infrequent, it allows the supervisor to function in the capacity of the staff thereby maintaining their clinical skill level and demonstrates to their staff that they are team players.

Finding Number 4:

Currently there is not an on-call roster of RNs with security clearance to be used as substitute personnel at detention facilities.

Response:

-X- Respondent agrees with the finding.

Finding Number 5:

California Penal Code 4025 reads in part "(e) The money and property deposited in the inmate welfare fund shall be expended by the sheriff primarily for the benefit, education, and welfare of the inmates confined within the jail. Any funds that are not needed for the welfare of the inmates may be expended for the maintenance of county jail facilities. Maintenance of county jail facilities may include, but is not limited to, the salary and benefits of personnel used in the programs to benefit the inmates, including, but not limited to, education, drug and alcohol treatment, welfare, library, accounting, and other programs deemed appropriate by the sheriff. An itemized report of these expenditures shall be submitted annually to the board of supervisors."

Response:

-X- Respondent agrees with the finding.

Finding Number 6:

The inmate Welfare Fund (IWF) is not being utilized as a source to hire needed DHS personnel.

Response:

-X- Respondent agrees with the finding.

Finding Number 7:

DHS is lacking a Nurse Educator, Drug and Alcohol Counselor, Social Worker, and a Public Health Nurse.

Response:

-X- Respondent agrees with the finding.

Finding Number 8:

X-Rays taken at RCRMC are filmless and paperless. Lacking a digitizing machine, x-ray films taken at detention centers must be transported to RCRMC for reading and digitizing. There are occasions when x-rays are held and sent over with those taken the following day for reading. Onsite digitizing would facilitate the reading of the x-rays and treatment of the patient.

Response:

-X- Respondent disagrees partially with the finding. Explain the partial disagreement:

Occasionally x-rays were held and sent over to RCRMC along with those taken the following day for reading.

X-rays are no longer held before being sent to RCRMC. X-Ray film is now digitized and read by the Radiologist on the date the film was taken. The primary reason digitizing is required to be completed on the date the film was taken is to have the same date logged onto the film recorded as the date the actual film was taken.

Finding Number 9:

DHS has only one portable Digital Monitoring with Pulse Oxymeter machine at Robert Presley Detention Center. This unit is used for checking vital signs and oxygen concentration in blood. It is essential for monitoring asthmatics and inmates complaining of respiratory difficulties to ascertain if he/she has a medical problem or is malingering.

Response:

-X- Respondent agrees with the finding.

Finding Number 10:

The Jail Information Management System (JIMS) is the computer software used in detention facilities. This is a secure system for inmate information and DHS staff has use of only a limited section. Confidential medical information, i.e. medical records, are not in the system so hard copies must be maintained and physically transferred with the individual inmate. During transfer, records are sometimes misplaced or misdirected.

Response:

-X- Respondent agrees with the finding.

Finding Number 11:

There is a lack of computer terminals at some nursing stations.

Response:

-X- Respondent agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation Number 1:

Provide funds for and hire 15 RNs to be utilized for the initial health screening of new inmates at Robert Presley, Southwest and Indio detention facilities on a 24 hour, 7 day a week basis.

Response:

-X- The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. Provide a time frame for implementation:

Even though the California State Board of Corrections' Title 15 established guidelines that allow correctional staff to complete the pre-booking medical screening, this is not the standard level of care practiced by other County jail systems. In addition, DHS acknowledges the advantages of having professional health care

providers (RNs) complete the process. Those advantages include, but are not limited to: the RNs advanced assessment skills and training, professional judgment, and their ability through visual observation to validate inmate responses to health questions.

DHS submitted staff additions during the annual FY 01-02 budget process. Those requested positions were not included in the final DHS budget due to exceeding the County designated target. Therefore, a formal Form 11 will be drafted and submitted to the Executive Office and Board Of Supervisors within the next 90 days for their review and consideration.

Recommendation Number 2:

Allocate funds from the IWF to hire a Nurse Educator, Drug and Alcohol Counselor, Social Worker, and Public Health Nurse.

Response:

-X- The Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Explain:

Detention Health Services does not possess the information and knowledge to address the use of dollars associated with the Inmate Welfare Fund (IWF). Therefore, DHS respectfully defers this recommendation to the Riverside County Sheriff's Department for response.

However, Detention Health Services, as other health departments that deliver health care can attest to, would benefit from the addition of a Nurse Educator to provide more detailed health information and instruction to inmates. A Drug and Alcohol Counselor would provide direction and follow up for those inmates incarcerated with drug problems in addition to medical issues. A Social Worker would facilitate the discharge planning needs and coordinate health care services that is often provided by community agencies. A Public Health Nurse would assist with infection control issues and communicable disease problems associated with the high risk population in the correctional setting.

Recommendation Number 3:

Develop an on-call roster of RNs, with security clearance, to cover illnesses and vacations of the nursing staff within DHS.

Response:

- X- The Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Explain:

Developing an on-call roster of RNs has shown to work well in the hospital setting to cover staff illness and vacations however, in the correctional setting (jails), staff are required to understand security protocols and procedures in the performance of their duties in conjunction with the initial step of a security clearance. This respondent feels it impractical to finance a pool of RN staff at a cost of approximately \$1000/per clearance for the purpose of vacation coverage or unexpected, unplanned illness. Also note that recruitment and hiring for the jail setting has its difficulties and challenges. Additionally, DHS continues to pursue the filling of vacancies in the department to assess operational, performance and staffing coverage with the full allocation of staff. Pursuit of enhancing DHS staff with a few additional Per Diem RNs to support vacations and illnesses would be a more realistic and reasonable way to address this issue.

Recommendation Number 4:

Purchase two x-ray digitizing machines and five Portable Digital Monitoring with Pulse Oxymeter machines.

Response:

- X- The recommendation requires further analysis. Explain the scope and parameters of an analysis or study.

The volume of x-rays taken in the jail setting needs to be evaluated to establish the cost – benefit analysis. The cost of placing a single digitizer in the jail exceeds \$80,000 and is considered a non-urgent priority. The present process of having a technician carry the film to RCRMC daily has resolved the issue related to the dates logged on the film. Once the film has been digitized at RCRMC, the reading is done by the Radiologist thereby providing immediate information to the jail physician provider(s) so they can determine diagnosis and/or treatment needs for the inmate(s).

Over the next ninety (90) days, DHS proposes to analyze the statistical data associated with the volume of x-rays taken in the jail setting to evaluate the feasibility of purchasing digitizing machines versus the cost associated with the process.

-X- The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. Provide a time frame for implementation:

Portable Digital Monitoring (PDM) with Pulse Oxymeter machines are being purchased for the jail setting. A second machine has been ordered and three (3) additional machines will be purchased over the next six (6) months. Upon completion of these purchases, all jail sites will have PDM devices accessible for inmate care.

Recommendation Number 5:

Program a secure medical records system for DHS staff use within the JIMS.

Response:

-X- The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Explain:

Electronic medical records in the jails would be inconsistent with the operations of the Regional Medical Center. Presently, hard copies of medical records are the standard in all County medical services however, plans are directed at eventually moving in the direction of an electronic record system.

The flow of medical records for inmates presents a number of challenges due to the frequency in which inmates are mobilized within the county jail system. DHS makes every effort to ensure that valuable medical information is available with the inmate during their movement from jail facility to jail facility.

When the opportunity to advance to an electronic medical record data base for the county jails is available, DHS will be ready and willing to implement the change.

Recommendation Number 6:

Provide a computer terminal at all DHS stations.

- X- The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. Provide a time frame for implementation:

Computer terminals, which provide access to the Riverside County Sheriff's Department's (RCSD) Jail Information Management System (a.k.a. JIMS) will be made available at all jail nursing stations once cabling has been completed.

A plan for the cabling has been submitted by RCSD Information Technology staff for the process to begin sometime within the next three months. Once the cabling has been installed, all DHS nursing stations in the jails will be supplied terminal hardware with JIMS access.

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RIVERSIDE COUNTY

LARRY D. SMITH, SHERIFF



Sheriff

August 1, 2001

P.O. BOX 512 • RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92502 • (909) 955-2400 • FAX (909) 955-2428

Office of the Grand Jury
Post Office Box 829
Riverside, California 92502

ATTN: David Howitt, Foreperson
2000-01 Riverside County Grand Jury

RE: 2000-2001 Grand Jury Report -- Riverside County Regional Medical Center
Detention Health Services

Dear Sir:

This report is in response to the Grand Jury Report on the "Riverside County Regional Medical Center Detention Health Services".

As stated in their report, Detention Health Services (DHS) is "...charged with administering health care in the Riverside County Detention Centers and... is committed to carrying out the Hospital mission in the jails and juvenile halls." The Sheriff's Department and DHS work side by side in the correctional facilities and at the detention wing of the Riverside County Regional Medical Center in Moreno Valley. There is a cooperative effort between the agencies to ensure that medical care is provided to persons incarcerated in county jails.

The Grand Jury report indicates in one of their recommendations that the Inmate Welfare Fund (IWF), a trust account administered by the Sheriff, be utilized to fund certain areas of medical responsibility of DHS. Penal Code Section 4025(e) does not require, or suggest, that the Sheriff use IWF money to fund the functions and responsibilities of another county agency. While the Sheriff concurs that there may be room for additional health care and training to the inmates, health care in detention facilities is the responsibility of the Riverside County Health Services Agency and Detention Health Services. This in no way should be taken to imply that the Sheriff is unhappy with the level of service currently being provided by DHS staff.

In its list of "Findings", the Grand Jury identifies areas for improvement which appear to be addressed to the County Health Agency and Detention Health Services. Finding number five reports a reference to Penal Code section 4025. Finding number six states that the Inmate Welfare Fund is not being utilized as a source to hire needed DHS personnel.

An increased level of medical staffing would assist in meeting the recommendations of the Grand Jury. However, the responsibility for health care staffing and equipment remains the responsibility of the Health Services Agency, not the Sheriff's Inmate Welfare Fund.

The Grand Jury is suggesting that the Inmate Welfare Fund provide funds that should be budgeted for the County Health Services Agency. This is not the purpose of the Inmate Welfare Fund. It is the responsibility of the County Health Services Agency to provide Detention Health

Services with an adequate budget for health care staffing and medical related equipment, not the Sheriff's Inmate Welfare Fund. The Inmate Welfare Fund Committee continues to receive and evaluate individual proposals for funding. If DHS chooses to reintroduce any of the Grand Jury proposals to the IWF committee, they will be evaluated for implementation.

If my staff or I can answer any questions or address any additional concerns, please feel free to contact Chief Deputy Robert Dotts at 909.955.2400.

Sincerely,

LARRY D. SMITH, SHERIFF

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Dotts', is written over the typed name.

Robert Dotts,
Chief Deputy