

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT RESPONSE
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY GRAND JURY'S 2007-2008 REPORT
"MAIN JAIL HEALTH SERVICES: Inmate Care Gets a Check-Up"

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1: *The Institute for Medical Quality denied accreditation to jail health services in August, 2007.*

Response to Finding 1: The Sheriff's Department agrees with the finding.

Recommendation 1: *The Sheriff's Department and Prison Health Services should correct all deficiencies noted in the Institute for Medical Quality review and insure that accreditation is granted at next review.*

Response to Recommendation 1: This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

The Sheriff's Department recognizes the importance of keeping this accreditation and to meet this end, we have required Prison Health Services to schedule another inspection this year at their expense. On February 18, 2008, a pre-inspection was completed and the majority of the failed standards have been corrected. We have been approved and scheduled by the IMQ for another inspection on July 29, 2008.

Finding 2: *The costs of medications are over \$400,000.00 per year and are increasing.*

Response to Finding 2: The Sheriff's Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 2: *Jail staff should pursue ways to decrease pharmacy costs such as forming a purchasing pool with other county departments and/or other Sheriff's departments from other counties.*

Response to Recommendation 2: This recommendation has been implemented.

The Sheriff's Department currently uses ANB Services for pharmaceutical supplies. When the Probation Department and the Sheriff's Department partnered in 2006 with PHS to contract for medical services, a bid process was also reviewed for pharmacy needs. ANB was chosen out of several other companies as the best choice to accommodate both adult and juvenile facilities.

ANB Pharmacy is a closed-door pharmacy located in California. They are not a wholesaler. They purchase their inventory at contract prices; therefore, their prices are competitive and in many cases lower than wholesale pricing. They specialize in corrections care in county and juvenile facilities.

The Sheriff's Department recently received a comparison cost sheet from the pharmaceutical company Maxor National Pharmacy Services Group. This is the vendor used by Prison Health Services. This company is slightly lower in cost. We will continue to explore alternate pharmaceutical resources.

Finding 3: *There is inadequate discharge planning for inmates with medical or mental health problems.*

Response to Finding 3: The Sheriff's Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 3: *Jail health staff should be assigned to assist in discharge planning.*

Response to Recommendation 3: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable during current budgetary constraints.

The current contract with PHS does not include additional staff positions to conduct discharge planning. Increasing staffing would entail an increase in the contract price. Due to the budgetary constraints within the County this is not feasible at this time.

PHS recognizes the need for discharge planning and has taken steps to initiate alternatives to a "discharge planner". Some of these alternatives include taking extra time to verbally inform the inmates on how they may obtain continued treatment after they have been released. In addition to the verbal information, PHS provides an informational sheet to chronic care inmates.

Future budget planning will include a requested increase to allow for the addition of a discharge planner.

Finding 4: *The clinician-administrator position has remained unfilled.*

Response to Finding 4: The Sheriff's Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 4: *The clinician-administrator position for mental health should be filled.*

Response to Recommendation 4: This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

This position has remained vacant throughout the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services (ADMHS) reorganization of their leadership structure. ADMHS intends to fill the clinical administrator position in FY 08-09.

Finding 5: *Classes for the Sheriff's Treatment Program are full, and all inmates cannot attend.*

Response to Finding 5: The Sheriff's Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 5: *The Sheriff's Department should increase efforts to partner with outside agencies to run drug, alcohol and anger management classes for the Sheriff's Treatment Program.*

Response to Recommendation 5: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

There is currently no waiting list for female inmates to enter the Treatment Program in the Main Jail. There continues to be a waiting list for male programs due to limited space and funding to offer additional programming time.

To implement this recommendation, the Sheriff would need additional secure programming space available for use, and/or additional staffing. In addition to its limited dedicated programming space, the Sheriff currently uses existing dayroom space and/or exercise room space to provide programming in specified housing locations. This space is not ideal for that purpose, and in some cases provides interruption and distraction that undermine ideal outcomes for an in custody program.

Dedicated programming space is in use 100% of the available business day. It is also in use during significant portions of the evening hours. Some limited further use of this facility space would require additional staff for inmate movements and additional paid staff time or contractor time.

Outside provider services would require additional staff for oversight, and additional funding to provide more service and or programming time, either in existing space, and/or additional space. Generally, free outside contractor service has not been available when previous efforts have been made to secure this level of service. When it is made available consistent with the policies and programming models used by the jail, this service is welcomed. However, these services usually require additional staff expense and occasional materials costs that the Sheriff must provide to allow the 'free' service.

Anger Management classes are currently offered at the maximum hours offered by the Community College. Further offerings would necessitate additional dedicated programming space. The Sheriff's Office has funded, from its own budget, additional Anger Management programming beyond that offered by the Community College.

Finding 6: *Jail medical records are handwritten.*

Response to Finding 6: The Sheriff's Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 6a: *Jail health services should convert electronic medical recordkeeping.*

Response to Recommendation 6a: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.

Currently, both medical and mental health records are in one file. This was a recommendation from the Institute of Medical Quality years ago. Since both entities oversee our inmates and at times overlap, they felt it important that both doctors were able to review all treatment in one location. The ADMHS staff assigned to the Santa Barbara County Jail have access to these records and have the ability to update the records in both the file and the ADMHS on-line medical records system.

Recommendation 6b: *Mental health records should be part of the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services on-line medical records system.*

Response to Recommendation 6b: This recommendation will not be implemented as it is not reasonable under current budgetary constraints.

Mental Health (ADMHS) has access from the jail to their on-line system – “Clinicians Gateway”. The psychiatrist can research this system for mental health history on patients/inmates. The only thing they cannot do is input progress reports in the system. Due to staffing issues, they feel it is more feasible at this point in time to handwrite the progress report and place it in the medical file. Without added staffing to assist in the paperwork and data entry, this would burden the current staff with more filing. According to the psychiatrist, the current method is the easiest method at this time. However, the Sheriff's Department recognizes that an on-line system may be more advantageous and we will explore the possibility in the future. Due to budget constraints, an increase in staffing levels is not possible during this fiscal year. Future budget planning will include a requested increase to allow for additional staffing and an automated medical records system in future years.

Finding 7: Jail health staff do not have access to on-line medical records from other local health care facilities.

Response to Finding 7: The Sheriff's Department agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 7a: Prison Health Services should have an agreement with Cottage Hospital that when inmates are treated at the hospital, copies of medical records accompany the inmate when the inmate returns to the jail.

Response to Recommendation 7a: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.

Due to medical confidentiality laws, Cottage Hospital is not comfortable documenting medical conditions on a form and then having it transported by another entity to the jail. To mitigate this issue, PHS will contact Cottage Hospital when the inmate returns to the jail and ascertain any necessary follow up procedures for the inmate.

Recommendation 7b: The Sheriff's Department and Prison Health Services should make a collaborative effort to obtain a freestanding computer with high-speed internet access to allow access to on-line medical records from other health care facilities.

Response to Recommendation 7b: This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

Prison Health Services is currently working with their IT staff to re-connect a DSL line to access Cottage Health Care system and/or other County Health care systems. Unfortunately, due to Sheriff/County firewall and security issues, we are having some difficulty getting this accomplished. We will continue to work towards resolving these concerns and installing a system that will allow for computer access to Health Care systems within the County.