



MARIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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ROBERT T. DOYLE
Sheriff - Coroner
MICHAEL J. RIDGWAY
Undersheriff

August 1st, 2014

Nadine A. Muller, Foreperson
Marin County Civil Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive #275
San Rafael, CA 94903

Reference: Response by Sheriff-Coroner Robert T. Doyle to the 2013-2014
Civil Grand Jury Report Entitled, "Jail Checkup: What's the Price of
a Clean Bill of Health"

Dear Ms. Muller,

As required by Penal Code Section 933.05, I offer the following response to
the 2013-2014 Civil Grand Jury Report Entitled, "Jail Checkup: What's the
Price of a Clean Bill of Health"

This letter will serve as my response in my official capacity as the Sheriff –
Coroner of Marin County.

FINDINGS:

**Finding 1: The Cost of health care in the Marin County Jail has increased and
is likely to continue to increase if the services are continued at the current
level and funded as currently provided**

- I agree with the finding numbered: F1

**Finding 2: Providing involuntary psychiatric medication by Marin County
Psychiatric Emergency Service on a one-time emergency basis (rather than at
Santa Clara Jail after transport) is likely to reduce costs and to improve
patient care in some instances.**

- I disagree partially with the finding numbered: F2

The Grand Jury's conclusion that costs would be reduced and patient care
improved if inmates received involuntary psychiatric medication on a one-
time basis at Marin General Hospital's Psychiatric Emergency Services Ward
(PES) is predicated on otherwise eliminating the need to transport or house

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that same inmate within the Santa Clara County Jail's Mental Health Unit, where staff is licensed to force medication in a manner the Grand Jury proposes for Marin. The core presumption relied on by the Grand Jury, that being that there is a population of inmates who are transported to Santa Clara County for one-time dosages of psychotropic medications, is however flawed.

Rare is the inmate in need of a single dosage of psychotropic medication who is transported to Santa Clara County for care. In fact, the vast majority of inmates sent to Santa Clara County for treatment are in need of protracted stays and repeated dosages of medication before they are deemed fit for return to the Marin County Jail.

While there may be some instances where a single dosage of medication may alleviate a mental health related crisis situation for a Marin County Jail inmate, those instances are likely far too rare to suggest a significant savings would be experienced by having one-time forced treatment available at Marin PES.

Finding 3: Enrolling eligible inmates in expanded Medi-Cal under the Affordable Care Act would save the County a modest amount of money while the inmates are incarcerated and would improve the transition to outside health care when the inmates are released.

- I agree with the finding numbered: F3

Recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Explore the option of contracting for medical, mental health, and dental services at the Jail with a high quality correctional provider, rather than providing these services with County Employees

- Recommendation 1 requires further analysis.

Cost is but one factor in determining the true value of the health care being provided, whether inside or outside a custody environment. Just as important to that discussion is ensuring a community standard of care that does not unreasonably disadvantage an individual solely on the basis of their status as an inmate in the County Jail.

The Grand Jury compares the cost of health care being provided in the Jail by the Department of Health and Human Services against the cost of providing health care in a number of other Bay Area county jails, but it does not report on the level of care inmates housed in those other jails enjoy. While one can reasonably assume each facility provides treatment that at least meets minimum established standards of care, the Grand Jury does not provide an

analysis that compares the respective jails' standard of care to that being provided to the communities at large.

Any study on the savings that might be incurred by contracting with a private correctional health care provider must be balanced against the quality of care ultimately provided. Marin County enjoys a very high standard of community care and that standard must provide the framework for comparison with alternative models of care delivered inside the jail.

I will direct staff to work with the Department of Health and Human Services to study this issue in greater detail and to present their findings to me no later than December 10th, 2014

Recommendation 2: Develop procedures for providing involuntary psychiatric medication on a one-time emergency basis in Marin County, rather than sending inmates to the Santa Clara County Jail for service.

- Recommendation 2 requires further analysis.

Allowing one-time forced applications of psychotropic drugs within the Marin County Jail would require additional study to determine the level of certification required before jail medical staff could administer that kind of treatment.

Certainly Marin Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) has the ability to force psychotropic medication, but their facility is not secure and may not be suitable for accepting high-security jail inmates, particularly those suffering from a mental break and who might pose a much more significant risk of harm to staff than the patients they normally treat.

The Sheriff's Office would need to work closely with the Department of Health and Human Services to determine whether one-time forced medication is a reasonable treatment alternative within the Marin County jail, particularly since rare has been the instance where a single dose of psychotropic medication has proven effective in combating the kinds of mental illness experienced within our particular jail setting.

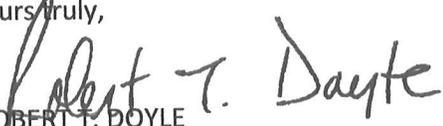
I will direct staff to work with the Department of Health and Human Services to study this issue in greater detail and to present their findings to me no later than December 10th, 2014.

Recommendation 3: Enroll, or continue to enroll, eligible inmates in expanded Medi-Cal under the Affordable Care Act. Provide assistance with the application process for those who are unable to accomplish it for themselves.

- Recommendation 3 has been implemented.

The Probation Department and the Department of Health and Human Services have collaborated to assign staff to the Marin County Jail to ensure eligible inmates are enrolled in expanded Medi-Cal, consistent with the opportunities provided under the Affordable Care Act.

Yours truly,


ROBERT T. DOYLE
SHERIFF-CORONER