



A-29

de la Guerra, Sheila

From: Suzanne Riordan <suzanne@familiesact.org>
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2019 4:42 PM
To: Adam, Peter; Lavagnino, Steve; Williams, Das; Hart, Gregg; sbcob; Hart, Gregg; Hartmann, Joan
Subject: Letter to Board of Supervisors from Families ACT! re Agenda Item A-29 of 3/19/19 Agenda
Attachments: Families ACT! Letter to BOS re Grievance Report March 2019.pdf

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See attached letter from Families ACT!

Suzanne

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Stop the Revolving Door! Beds Not Cells!

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Date: March 18, 2019

To: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
From: Suzanne Riordan, Executive Director of Families ACT!
Subject: 3/19/19 Agenda Item A-29
2018 SB County Jail Annual Medical Grievance Coordinator Report
Date: March 18, 2019

Families ACT! representatives to the Community Corrections Input Group established by Sheriff Brown to involve community stakeholders in efforts to improve the mental health, dental and medical care at the Santa Barbara County Jail are pleased with the considerable progress made over the last year in jail medical service delivery and the way medical grievances were handled, as documented in the Jail Oversight Coordinator's 2018 Annual Report.

The quality of medical, mental health and dental care in our jail has clearly improved in the last year, thanks in part to the excellent oversight over the grievance process provided by Mark Mahurin.

Mr. Mahurin has worked closely with jail medical staff and Lt. Shawn Lammer of Custody Support Division Health Services to improve procedures and policies and address specific concerns represented in grievances filed by inmates or brought to their attention by concerned family members of inmates in need of care. In several instances, both Mark Mahurin and Shawn Lammer have gone beyond the call of duty to get to the bottom of reports coming from inmates or the families of inmates and to address the need.

There is much work still to be done in improving service to several categories of inmates with medical needs. One of these categories are those with serious mental health conditions being held in isolation cells, some of whom are not capable of filing a grievance, due to the severity of their condition. Inmates judged Incompetent to Stand Trial who are often incapable of recognizing their need for medication are often being held far too long in a facility that was simply not designed for their care.

Several such cases have come to our attention in recent months, and, Families ACT! will be reaching out to Jail Chief Deputy Vincent Wasilewski at the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department in hopes of exploring ways to address the complex needs of inmates who continue to fall through the cracks of the system of care, even in its vastly improved state.

We trust that, in the spirit of collaboration that has characterized our collective efforts to transform this situation, even more progress can be made, and that other communities may someday follow the lead of Santa Barbara County.