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BILL BROWN

Sheriff - Coroner

CRAIG BONNER

Undersheriff

September 13, 2023

Christian McGrath
 Foreperson
 2022-2023 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury
 Grand Jury Chambers
 Santa Barbara County Courthouse
 1100 Anacapa Street
 Santa Barbara, CA 93101

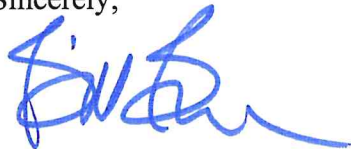
RE: Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report Entitled
"A Death in Custody – Lessons Learned"

Dear Foreperson McGrath:

I am sharing with you the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office response to the 2022-2023 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report entitled *"A Death in Custody – Lessons Learned."*

As requested in the report, the Sheriff's Office is responding to findings and recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 681-4290.

Sincerely,



BILL BROWN
 Sheriff – Coroner

Enclosure: SBSO response

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office
Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury 2022-2023 Report
"A Death in Custody – Lessons Learned"

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1

Under the existing agreement between the County and WellPath, Santa Barbara County does not provide mental health professional care onsite in the Jails from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Sheriff's Office Response: Agree.

Recommendation 1

That by the end of the second quarter of FY 2023-24, Santa Barbara County amend the existing agreement between the County and WellPath to provide Jail inmates, in both the north and south facilities, with overnight (24/7) mental health professional onsite services.

Sheriff's Office Response: This will not be implemented.

The Sheriff's Office relies on a recent (April 26, 2023) analysis of WellPath Health and Mental Health Services entitled, "*SANTA BARBARA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE JAIL HEALTH SERVICES STAFFING REVIEW*" conducted by Avocet Enterprises. In their review, the experts did not indicate that additional coverage for Mental Health services was required as the Grand Jury suggests.

Finding 2

WellPath medical staff do not receive advanced training on mental health crisis intervention, which can be critical in circumstances when mental health staff are not on duty or not otherwise available and is required under a federal court order.

Sheriff's Office Response: Disagree partially with an explanation.

WellPath disagrees that there is any causal relationship between the training of its staff and patient JT's unfortunate death, which was determined by the medical examiner to have been accidental and due to somatic medical causes, including morbid obesity, dilated cardiomyopathy, acute methamphetamine intoxication, and active resistance. WellPath does not oppose providing additional mental health training to jail medical staff. WellPath does provide all staff with mental health-specific training at hire and annually after that. While this training does include suicide prevention and risk reduction, we are always looking at ways to improve staff training and appreciate the Grand Jury's focus on this issue.

Recommendation 2a

That by the end of the first quarter of 2023-24, Santa Barbara County amend the existing agreement between the County and WellPath (or its successor) to provide all medical staff with advanced 40-hour mental health crisis response training.

Sheriff's Office Response: Requires further analysis.

WellPath will work to create more in-depth training for medical staff, which will include de-escalation techniques and crisis intervention. WellPath's Regional Mental Health team will develop this. This proposed training program will not replace the annual mental health training provided at hire and will supplement existing training. The hours needed to train staff will be determined by the regional team. We aim to develop this training by the end of the first quarter 2024.

Recommendation 2b

That by the end of the first quarter of 2023-24, Santa Barbara County amend the existing agreement between the County and WellPath (or its successors) that requires WellPath medical staff, when faced with an emergent or urgent mental health case when WellPath mental health staff is not on duty or available, to be trained on how to obtain outside assistance from a) senior regional WellPath mental health staff and/or b) an available County Behavioral Wellness Crisis Management Team.

Sheriff's Office Response: Requires further analysis.

Jail medical staff currently work with the County's Mobile Crisis management team for patients with emergent needs. The Mobile Crisis team will respond to the jail when needed to assist WellPath with patients who require a higher level of care. Medical can request that the team evaluate a patient when WellPath mental health staff are not on-site after contracted hours. Furthermore, the Sheriff's Office and the Department of Behavioral Wellness have come to a collaborative agreement to station both the north and south county Mobile Crisis tea at the Main Jail and the Northern Branch Jail, so that whenever they are not responding to a crisis in the community, they will be immediately available to assist custody and WellPath staff in caring for mentally ill inmates in crisis. WellPath, County Behavioral Wellness, and the Sheriff's Office meet monthly to continue to grow and expand collaborative efforts to meet the needs of incarcerated persons with mental health needs at the jail. WellPath is open to discussions on further amendment of the contract with the Sheriff's Office.

Finding 3

The majority of the Santa Barbara County Sheriffs Office custody staff hired pre-2021 have not been provided 40-hour mental health crisis response training. Although the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office offers an advanced mental health 40-hour training course for members of its patrol co-response teams and for Santa Barbara County Sheriffs Office custody staff recent hires, it does not mandate this for custodial staff hired before 2021.

Sheriff's Office Response: Disagree partially with an explanation.

The Sheriff's Office continually offers advanced mental health 40-hour training for co-response and certain other patrol and allied staff. Custody staff hired since 2021 have each received 40 hours of CIT training in their Core basic training course. In addition, some other patrol, custody, and dispatch staff have received additional advanced mental health training from 8 to 40 hours.

Recommendation 3

That by the end of the first quarter of FY 2023-24, Santa Barbara County and Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office provide funding so that the Sheriff's Office implement effective advanced mental health crisis response training consisting of at least 40

hours of instruction and annual refresher training consisting of at least eight-hours for its custody staff.

Sheriff's Office Response: Will not be implemented.

All custody deputies hired since 2021 have received and all newly-hired custody deputies are receiving 40 hours of mental health crisis training in their Core academy. Due to present staffing levels and substantial financial constraints, we are unable to offer this training at the moment. In the event that funding becomes available, the Sheriff's Office will proceed with additional advanced mental health training for pre-2021 custody staff as staffing levels permit.

Finding 4b

All cities in Santa Barbara County with their own police departments, i.e., cities of Guadalupe, Lompoc, Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria, and the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office patrol officers and supervisory personnel would benefit from advanced mental health crisis response training consisting of at least 40 hours of instruction and annual refresher training consisting of at least eight-hours.

Sheriff's Office Response: Requires further analysis.

The Sheriff's Office relies on established training standards for its sworn law enforcement deputies under the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). Specifically, the mandated requirement for Basic Academy instruction includes the course entitled "*Mental Illness and Developmental Disabilities Course*," which must be a minimum of eight (8) Hours (Penal Code section 13515.25). While the Sheriff's Office recognizes the value of enhanced training in dealing with those with Mental Health issues and will do all it can to accommodate more deputies receiving the 40-hour training, a blanket order of forty (40) additional hours of training, would impose significant scheduling and financial challenges on the County.

Finding 5

Lawfully shared data collection and analysis among multiple Santa Barbara County law enforcement agencies (Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office, Santa Barbara County

District Attorney's Office, Santa Barbara County Public Defender, Santa Barbara County Probation Department), the municipal police departments in Santa Barbara County (Guadalupe, Lompoc, Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria), mental health (County Behavioral Wellness) and public health (County Public Health) agencies would provide relevant county personnel with better tools to effectively serve community members with mental health illness.

Sheriff's Office Response: Agree

Recommendation 5

That by the end of the first quarter of 2024 Santa Barbara County, the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office, Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office, Santa Barbara County Public Defender, Santa Barbara County Probation Department, and all local municipal city councils with police agencies (Guadalupe, Lompoc, Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria), mental health (County Behavioral Wellness), and public health (County Public Health) agencies adopt relevant recommendations for more effective data sharing in the referenced San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) study.

Sheriff's Office Response: Agree

The County has a committee dedicated to sharing data amongst the criminal justice partners and public health and behavioral health agencies. They report their progress regularly to the Board of Supervisors. We will present the Grand Jury's recommendation to the CJ data-sharing committee for consideration and ask for a response by January 13, 2024.

Finding 6

The Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner investigation and the District Attorney's Office review of the medical cause and manner of JT's death that left the Jury with questions:

a) whether within reasonable medical certainty, the custody staff's use of on-stomach prone restraint and JT's vigorous resistance to it was the direct cause of JT's cardiac arrest; and b) whether the custody staff followed Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office training policies when they employed the on-stomach prone restraint hold on JT.

Sheriff's Office Response: Disagree wholly.

In this case, the Sheriff's Office concurs with the forensic pathologist's finding of JT's cause of death, which he opined was due to the five factors: morbid obesity, dilated cardiomyopathy, acute methamphetamine intoxication, active resistance, and restraint. His opinion is that all five of those factors acted in synergy, and he emphatically believes that any one of them (i.e., physical restraint, as questioned by the Jury) cannot stand alone as the primary cause of death.

Recommendation 6

That the County of Santa Barbara and the Sheriff-Coroner's Office request an independent review from the State Attorney General of all facts and circumstances leading up to the death-in-custody of JT, and any legal consequences that result from that review to include the following questions:

1. Whether within reasonable medical certainty, the custody staff's use of on-stomach prone restraint and JVs vigorous resistance to it was the direct cause of DTs cardiac arrest;
2. Whether the custody staff followed Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office training policies when they employed the on-stomach prone restraint hold on JT.

Sheriff's Office Response: Will not be implemented.

As previously stated, the Sheriff's Office concurs with the forensic pathologist's finding of JT's cause of death, which he opined was due to the five factors: morbid obesity, dilated cardiomyopathy, acute methamphetamine intoxication, active resistance, and restraint. His opinion is that all five of those factors acted in synergy, and he emphatically believes that any one of them (i.e., physical restraint, as questioned by the Jury) cannot stand alone as the primary cause of death. Additionally, on October 6, 2022, District Attorney Joyce Dudley concluded that the physical force used by custody deputies to restrain JT prior to his accidental death was reasonable and lawful, and that they bear no criminal liability.



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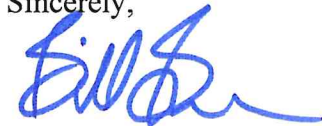
RE: Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report Entitled
"Every Death in Custody is a Failure"

Dear Foreperson McGrath:

I am sharing with you the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office response to the 2022-2023 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report entitled *"Every Death in Custody is a Failure."*

As requested in the report, the Sheriff's Office is responding to findings and recommendations 1 and 2. Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 681-4290.

Sincerely,



BILL BROWN
Sheriff – Coroner

Enclosure: SBSO response

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office
Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury 2022-2023 Report
"Every Death in Custody is a Failure"

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the Grand Jury Report for the year 2022-2023, the title "*Every Death in Custody is a Failure*" appears to be a stark representation of shortcomings that can unfold within the criminal justice system. However, it is important to recognize that the assertion made in the title does not accurately reflect the complexity surrounding this death. While every death in custody undeniably represents a *tragedy*, not all of them are attributable to systemic, institutional, or individual failure.

The Grand Jury report seeks to delve deeper into the intricacies of such distressing events, using the case of KP as an illustrative example. It should be noted, however, that during his time in custody, KP *denied* having any prior mental health history, and did not actively seek out mental health services that are available to inmates in custody. It is a fundamental principle of personal freedom that, absent indications that a person is a danger to himself or others, or gravely disabled, the decision to access mental health services rests with the person in question. In this context, KP elected not to seek such services.

While systemic or individual issues could play a role in certain cases, not every death in custody is a criminal justice system failure. Rather, these tragic events often serve as a poignant reminder of the many stresses and challenges faced by people in all walks of life, irrespective of whether they are in or out of custody, underscoring the pressing need for a comprehensive and empathetic approach to addressing mental health and well-being in all aspects of our community.

Finding 1

WellPath electronic medical records established that KP had a long history of substance abuse and severe mental health illness. When the Sheriff's Office custody staff decided to house KP with a cellmate, it did not have access to the full extent of KP's well established severe mental illness history. Inmates' safety and overall health would be

better protected if those making classification decisions had access to inmates' vital medical and mental health information.

Sheriff's Office Response: Disagree partially with an explanation.

The Sheriff's Office agrees that inmate would be better served if custody staff had access to their medical records. Although, in hindsight, it was determined that there were indications in KP's health records, these were not available to custody staff contemporaneous to his death. There was also nothing within the records to establish that KP had been diagnosed with "severe mental illness."

Recommendation 1a

That Santa Barbara County and the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office promptly request that Santa Barbara County Counsel prepare a legal opinion as to whether, consistent with Federal and California law, WellPath (or its successors) may provide critical inmate mental health information to Sheriff's custody staff that have an appropriate need to know that information for inmate housing and programming.

Sheriff's Office Response: This has been implemented.

County Counsel has provided its opinion concerning whether WellPath (or its successor) may disclose mental health and substance abuse information.

Recommendation 1b

That if County Counsel determines that WellPath (or its successors) has any legal authority to provide inmate mental health information, then Santa Barbara County shall amend the agreement between WellPath and the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office to provide inmate mental health and substance abuse information sharing on an appropriate need to know basis.

Sheriff's Office Response: Requires further analysis.

To the extent such information can be legally shared, additional research would be needed to ascertain if a WellPath contract amendment would be required due to an expanded scope of work. If so, negotiations would then be needed, as well as Board

approval and additional funding, once that process was completed. Even with an aggressive schedule, the full implementation of such an information-sharing procedure will likely take 8 to 10 months.

Finding 2

KP was severely mentally ill, was traumatized by witnessing his cellmate's attempted suicide, and should not have been rehoused alone, back into the same cell.

Sheriff's Office Response: Disagree partially with an explanation.

At the time he was in custody, there was no indication that KP, who denied mental health issues, was "severely mentally ill," or was "traumatized" by witnessing his cellmate's attempted suicide. KP was not "re-housed," rather he was returned to his assigned cell once the emergency had resolved. It was KP's cellmate who was rehoused. Due to COVID-19 intake quarantine protocols, it would have been inappropriate to rehouse KP with another inmate at that time. Furthermore, KP denied any previous attempts or considerations of suicide during his classification interview, upon which his housing assignment was based. The above notwithstanding, the Sheriff's Office agrees in hindsight that KP should have been evaluated and monitored by mental health staff following his cellmate's attempted suicide.

Recommendation 2

That Santa Barbara County and the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office ensure that inmates with severe mental illness and suicidal ideation histories receive immediate mental health professional care after they are exposed to traumatizing events, including, but not limited to, the suicide attempt of a cellmate.

Sheriff's Office Response: This has been implemented.

Immediately following the multi-disciplinary death review, which was conducted within 30 days of KP's suicide, WellPath issued a written directive and conducted training to ensure that inmates are provided with immediate mental health professional care after exposure to traumatizing events, including, but not limited to, the suicide or attempted suicide of a cellmate. Sheriff's custody staff participated in that training, and a recently issued a critical incident follow-up communication directing custody staff to provide

inmates so exposed with enhanced observation, access to mental health services, and access to religious services.

Conclusion

It is important to understand that our custody facilities house a cross-section of members of our society, reflecting the diversity and complexity of the people within our care. It is also important to recognize that the provision of medical and mental health services within custodial settings is a formidable challenge. Many of those who enter our custody arrive with significant pre-existing physical and mental health challenges, and, regrettably, some choose not to seek, or they reject, medical and/or mental health services during their time in our facilities. Considering the complexities involved, it is essential to underscore a crucial point: the healthcare services provided within our custody facilities often exceed the level of care that many people receive in the community while outside of our custody. While we acknowledge that the health care services provided in our jail system are not perfect, we do believe they are excellent. Nevertheless, our commitment to continual improvement remains unwavering. We understand that the well-being of those in our custody is not solely a matter of institutional responsibility, but rather a reflection of our community's collective commitment to humanity.

While we acknowledge that deaths in custody are tragedies, just as they are anywhere else in our community, we hope this response to the Grand Jury's report illuminates the multifaceted nature of the challenges we and our healthcare providers face. We remain steadfast in our dedication to improving conditions and services within our custody facilities, and to ensuring, to the best extent possible, that those under our care receive the best possible medical and psychological care and support. Our aspiration is that through our ongoing efforts, we can contribute to a broader dialogue on mental health, medical care, and the criminal justice system, ultimately fostering a community in which people receive the type of care and support they need, both within and beyond our custody facilities.



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RE: Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report Entitled
"A Vicious Cycle: Incarceration of the Severely Mentally Ill"

Dear Foreperson McGrath:

I am sharing with you the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office response to the 2022-2023 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report entitled "*A Vicious Cycle: Incarceration of the severely Mentally Ill.*"

As requested in the report, the Sheriff's Office is responding to findings and recommendations 1, and 4. Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 681-4290.

Sincerely,



BILL BROWN
Sheriff – Coroner

Enclosure: SBSO response

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office
Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury 2022-2023 Report
"A Vicious Cycle: Incarceration of the Severely Mentally Ill"

In response to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Report titled "A Vicious Cycle: Incarceration of the Severely Mentally Ill," it is essential to begin by acknowledging a fundamental principle: each death in custody represents a tragedy. Such incidents demand nothing less than multiple comprehensive investigations and their meticulous review, with a view to provide continuous quality assurance.

Turning our attention to the specific case of KC, it is important to clarify her circumstances. While KC was housed alone, she was not formally classified as an inmate in administrative segregation. Documentation reveals that KC had documented behavioral issues, indicating difficulties in her interactions with other inmates. However, we must emphasize that although her housing placement was aligned with her classification and mental health diagnosis, she and the other inmates in her housing area regularly spent time in the common day room areas. Ironically, we believe it was in such an area that she obtained the contraband drug that killed her.

Furthermore, our commitment to addressing the concerns raised by the Grand Jury Report is evident in the actions taken following our internal after-action review of her death. In response to identified issues, modifications have been made to the housing unit door, with the aim of preventing the passage of contraband. These measures underscore our dedication to continuously improving our practices and ensuring the safety and well-being of those in our custody.

Finding 1

Although the Sheriff's Office hired a statistician in July 2022 to compile information about inmates suffering from mental health conditions, as of the date of this Report, the Jury was not provided with any information regarding the number of inmates who have substance abuse and/or mental health disorders or illnesses.

Sheriff's Office Response: Disagree partially with an explanation.

Although the Sheriff's Office previously had a jail statistician on staff, that position was cut due to the County's budgetary shortfall, subsequent to the Great Recession. The Sheriff's Office did not hire "a statistician in July 2022 to compile information about inmates suffering from mental health conditions," as is stated in the Grand Jury report.

The Sheriff's Office did hire a Data Unit Supervisor and created a Data Unit in July 2022. That team's primary duties are to gather, analyze, and report on data from *current* Sheriff's Office systems, none of which track the number of inmates who have substance abuse disorders or mental illnesses. The Jury, in its finding, would have the reader believe that the sole purpose of the Data Unit is to "compile information about inmates suffering from mental health conditions," which is an inaccurate statement and not currently possible.

Recommendation 1

That the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office compile and report monthly to the County and the public the number of inmates who have substance abuse, mild to moderate mental health disorders or serious mental illness.

Sheriff's Office Response: Requires further analysis.

For some time, the Sheriff's Office and various county agencies have been actively engaged in discussions regarding the sharing and integrating of data related to common clients and their resource utilization. Over the past few years, numerous efforts have been made to enhance efficiency and foster collaboration. One of the top priorities within this ongoing process has been identifying individuals with serious mental illnesses. Nevertheless, this is difficult to achieve and an issue that demands substantial labor.

It is essential to acknowledge that achieving significant progress in delivering reportable data within the timeframes recommended by the Grand Jury poses a formidable

challenge. Identifying inmates with mental illnesses is easier said than done, as it is an inherently complex process and lacks a definitive litmus test. While we are committed to progressing, reaching our goals will take time.

It's crucial to note that relying solely on the number of inmates receiving psychotropic medications within our custody facility is not a comprehensive method of identifying those who suffer from mental illness. This approach is not all-encompassing, as it includes medications such as sleep aids, which do not necessarily indicate the presence of a mental illness. As mentioned in other contemporaneous responses to the Grand Jury reports, we are negotiating with WellPath to determine a path forward to receiving medical and mental health information which will more accurately identify those inmates with mental illness.

Recommendation 4a

That Santa Barbara County work with countywide criminal justice agencies" to analyze why the Santa Barbara County Incompetent to Stand Trial caseload is one of the highest in the state.

Sheriff's Office Response: This has been implemented.

In collaboration with various County agencies, the Sheriff's Office has actively participated in a workgroup led by the CEO's Office. This workgroup's primary objective is to comprehensively study the Incompetent to Stand Trial (IST) process and explore strategies to minimize its occurrences within Santa Barbara County. Since January 2023, the workgroup has been meeting regularly to address this critical issue.

Recommendation 4b

That the County work closely with the Santa Barbara Superior Court and criminal justice agencies to identify effective community-based treatment programs to reduce Incompetent to Stand Trial orders and Department of State Hospitals commitments.

Sheriff's Office Response: This has been implemented.

In conjunction with various County agencies, the Sheriff's Office has been actively engaged in a workgroup led by the CEO's Office. This workgroup's primary objective is to comprehensively study the Incompetent to Stand Trial (IST) process and explore strategies to reduce its frequency within Santa Barbara County. Since January 2023, the workgroup has been meeting regularly to address this critical issue.

As part of our collaborative efforts, the group has identified specific programs and indicated the need for them to help in our quest to reduce the number of IST's.



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Grand Jury Chambers
Santa Barbara County Courthouse
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

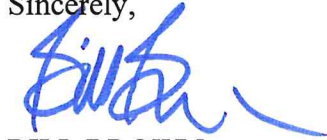
RE: Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report Entitled
"Death on Electronic Monitored Home Release"

Dear Foreperson McGrath:

I am sharing with you the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office response to the 2022-2023 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report entitled "Death on Electronic Monitored Home Release."

As requested in the report, the Sheriff's Office is responding to findings and recommendations 1 and 2. Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 681-4290.

Sincerely,



BILL BROWN
Sheriff – Coroner

Enclosure: SBSO response

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office
Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury 2022-2023 Report
"Death on Electronic Monitored Home Release"

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1a

A list of mental health and addiction treatment program contacts was offered to NM upon his discharge to the Electronic Monitored Home Release program, but the Sheriff's Office did not monitor whether NM contacted or participated in any of those programs.

Sheriff's Office Response: Agree

Finding 1b

Beginning July 1, 2022, the Sheriff's Office transferred the Electronic Monitored Home Release program monitoring responsibility to the Santa Barbara County Probation Department.

Sheriff's Office Response: Agree

Recommendations 1a and 1b

That the Sheriff's Office and the Santa Barbara County Probation Department ensure that participants in the Electronic Monitored Home Release program, especially those with mental health and substance abuse issues, enter appropriate clinical programs and closely monitor such participation.

Sheriff's Office Response: Will be implemented, with an implementation schedule.

The Sheriff's Office and Probation Department will research, develop, and implement a process that strives to identify individuals accepted to the Alternative Sentencing Program who suffer from mental health and substance use issues, to ensure they are appropriately referred to treatment, and that their participation is monitored. This process will be completed on or before January 9, 2024.

Finding 2

If the Sheriff's Office had known of NM's mental health history, it indicated it would have more closely monitored him to ensure meaningful participation in effective substance abuse and mental health clinical programs.

Sheriff's Office Response: Agree

Recommendation 2a

That the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office and the Santa Barbara County Probation Department promptly request that Santa Barbara County Counsel prepare a legal opinion as to whether, consistent with Federal and California law, WellPath or any successor may provide critical inmate mental health information to Sheriff's Office personnel who need to know that information for inmate housing, programming, and Electronic Monitored Home Release program decisions.

Sheriff's Office Response: This has been implemented.

To the extent that such information can be legally shared, additional research would be needed to ascertain if a WellPath contract amendment would be required due to an expanded scope of work. If so, negotiation would then be needed, as well as Board approval and funding, once that process was completed. Even with an aggressive schedule, the full implementation of such an information-sharing procedure will likely take 8 to 10 months.

The Sheriff's Office has received legal advice from County Counsel and entered into negotiations with WellPath about such information sharing. This process will be completed on or before January 9, 2024, with a view to implementing the Jury's recommendation.

Recommendation 2b

That if Santa Barbara County Counsel determines that WellPath does have legal authority to provide inmate mental health information to Sheriff's Office personnel and Santa Barbara County Probation Department, then the County and the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office shall amend the existing agreement with WellPath to require such sharing to the full extent of the law.

Sheriff's Office Response: Requires further analysis.

To the extent that such information can be legally shared, additional research would be needed to ascertain if a WellPath contract amendment would be required due to an expanded scope of work. If so, negotiation would then be needed, as well as Board approval and funding, once that process was completed. Even with an aggressive schedule, the full implementation of an information-sharing procedure will likely take 8 to 10 months.

The Sheriff's Office has received legal advice from County Counsel and entered into negotiations with WellPath about such information sharing. This process will be completed on or before January 9, 2024, with a view to implementing the Jury's recommendation.