




BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Probation
Department No.: 022
For Agenda Of: August 27, 2024
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 30 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors 

FROM: Department Director: Holly L. Benton, Chief Probation Officer, (805) 803-8537
Contact Info: Melinda Barrera, Deputy Chief Probation Officer (805) 882-3715

SUBJECT: **Wellpath and Department of Behavioral Wellness Annual Report for Healthcare and Mental Health Services at Juvenile Facilities**

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive and file the annual report regarding the Agreement for Healthcare Services with California Forensic Medical Group (CFMG/Wellpath) and delivery of clinical treatment by Department of Behavioral Wellness (DBW) for youth detained in juvenile facilities; and
- B. Determine that the recommended action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), since the recommended action is a government administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary Text:

This item is before your Board to receive the annual report for healthcare and clinical treatment at the Susan J. Gionfriddo Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) and Los Prietos Boys Camp (LPBC) for calendar year 2023. Wellpath is the contracted healthcare provider for medical services to youth detained at the JJC (and formerly at the LPBC, prior to its closure in the spring of 2024), while the DBW through the Juvenile Justice Mental Health Services (JMMHS) team provides clinical treatment services (mental health services). Mental health services include clinical assessment treatment planning, individual and group psychotherapy, family counseling, crisis intervention, psychiatric evaluation, medication monitoring, case

management, and cognitive behavioral treatment intervention delivery (Moral Reconciliation Therapy and Interactive Journaling). As requested by the Board, the detailed annual reports from Wellpath (Attachment A) and DBW (Attachment C) contain a comprehensive review of service statistics, program reports, and examination of significant trends and issues. Wellpath's annual report is required by Section 15.11 of the Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor between the County and Wellpath executed on February 28, 2017. The Agreement's 7th Amendment was executed on June 25th, 2024 .

Background:

The California Board of State and Community Corrections Title 15, Minimum Standards for Juvenile Facilities Article 8, Subsection 1400 (Title 15) mandates the Probation Department to provide health services to all detained and committed youth at both the JJC and LPBC. Notwithstanding any acute issues, all youth undergo a comprehensive medical evaluation by Wellpath within 72 hours of booking, and a mental health assessment by DBW within seven days of booking. Thereafter, youth can request medical or clinical care by submitting a call slip or staff can make a request for youth to be seen. At least twice a day, Wellpath nursing staff triages the call slips at the JJC and triaged them twice a day at LPBC prior to the closing of the facility. Wellpath also provides Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) to detained youth. Prior to release, Wellpath connects youth to a community-based organization to ensure MAT services are continued.

Discussion:

The 2023 Annual Report of Wellpath Medical Services (Attachment A) and Wellpath 2023 Statistical Report (Attachment B) are based on data from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023. According to the report, Wellpath on-site nursing staff completed 6,951 encounters for both facilities. Nursing encounters are comprised of sick visits, segregation checks, immunization administration and laboratory services. In addition, the pediatrician completed a total of 1,560 clinic visits. This includes a combined 899 Comprehensive Well Child visits, 508 sick visits, and 152 chronic care visits. The most common chronic visits by the pediatrician are related to asthma, obesity, and acne. Psychosocial issues continue to be the biggest health issue facing detained youth, including sexually transmitted infections, substance use disorders, and mental health issues, including impacts of childhood trauma. Dental issues are also prevalent, and dental services were provided by specialists offsite, with 119 total dental care visits provided in 2023.

The average daily population at the JJC increased to 36 youth in calendar year 2023, compared to 24 during the previous calendar year. Wellpath staff administered 4,533 doses of medication and 9,682 doses of mental health medications in 2023, compared to 3,865 doses of medication prescribed by the Wellpath physician and 6,430 doses of mental health medications in 2022. Wellpath's statistics show a 17% increase in medical medications and 51% increase in psychiatric medications in 2023, as compared to 2022. The increase was due to the increasing population within the facility post-pandemic. Wellpath staff continued to offer all childhood vaccinations per the CDC Immunization Schedule, and 169 vaccinations were administered in 2023. Additionally, in 2023 Wellpath staff provided immediate first aid, processed medical service requests, evaluated the need for urgent medical attention, and managed on-site medical emergencies.

At LPBC, the average daily population stayed approximately the same at five youth in 2023, compared to four during the previous year. Wellpath administered 252 doses of non-mental health prescription medication and 2,245 doses of mental health medications in 2023, compared to 553 doses of medication prescribed by the Wellpath physician and 1,319 doses of mental health medications in 2022. Wellpath statistics indicate a 54% decrease in medical medications and 70% increase in psychiatric medications as compared to 2022. Wellpath also administered seven vaccinations in 2023 at LPBC.

During this fiscal year, one grievance was filed by a youth being housed within the JJC. The grievance included a youth who told the onsite pediatrician he wanted to be seen by a “real doctor.” The onsite pediatrician is a licensed physician. However, the facility transported the youth to the local emergency room for further evaluation. No additional treatment was provided to the youth and the grievance was closed.

In 2023, DBW continued to provide mental health services to youth detained at both facilities, the JJC and LPBC; services included post-custody outreach, engagement support, and linkage services. Mental Health services utilized evidence-based principles and best practices, which included clinical assessment treatment planning, individual and group psychotherapy, family counseling, crisis intervention, psychiatric evaluation, medication monitoring, case management, and cognitive behavioral treatment intervention delivery (Moral Reconciliation Therapy and Interactive Journaling). Newly added services in 2023 included Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy, which is an evidence-based counseling model to address trauma. Additionally, DBW staff have provided professional training to facility staff in mental health topics such as trauma-informed approaches to managing youth in a custodial setting and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. The DBW Annual Report 2022-23 (Attachment C) is based on data from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023. During the reporting year, DBW provided 54 initial psychiatric visits, 421 follow-up psychiatric visits, 270 safety checks, and 1,790.73 hours of individual therapy, for a total of 1,506 therapy sessions and 40 family therapy sessions.

The JJC first obtained accreditation on October 20, 2020. The accreditation represents the highest level of medical care in correctional facilities. The JJC currently meets all Title 15 regulatory standards and was provided a provisional accreditation by National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) through June 2024. The current provisional accreditation was given due to rescheduled appointments, which caused a delay in youth receiving needed services. To increase access to dental care in the current calendar year, the Probation Department assigned additional staff to ensure transportations to dental appointments. On June 27, 2024, NCCHC conducted a follow-up audit and noted marked improvement, as all appointments had been kept. Full accreditation will be determined at the next NCCHC meeting, scheduled for August 2024.

Performance Measure:

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (PHD) conducts quarterly audits of Wellpath’s contracted Service Level Agreements. These audits include review of medical records and performance measures. PHD completed a report for audits completed during April 1, 2023 through March 31, 2024 (Attachment D). After the first year of audits, which occurred on April 2, July 24, and October 26, 2021 and January 25, 2022, Wellpath and the Probation Department identified measures that would be more indicative of the health status of the population served. These measures include timely health assessments, identification and continuation of essential medical medications or psychiatric medications and providing updated immunizations. The current report for audits from PHD notes that Wellpath staff consistently

performed well and calculated the quarterly compliance at a rate of 95% or greater for each quarter during this reporting period. PHD and Wellpath continue to assess the current needs of the facility to ensure quality medical care continues to be provided to the youth being housed at the JJC.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

There is no fiscal impact from receiving and filing the report. The Probation Department’s Fiscal Year 2023-24 Adopted Budget included funding for the Wellpath Agreement for Healthcare Services in the amount of \$1,473,431 and funding for delivery of mental health services by DBW in the amount of \$1,126,800.

FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget for Provision of Healthcare Services in Probation Detention Facilities	
Healthcare Services	1,410,729
Pharmacy	60,407
Electronic Medical Record (EMR)	2,295
Total Healthcare Services Budget	\$ 1,473,431

FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget for Provision of Mental Health Services in Probation Detention Facilities	
JJC	430,400
Manager-Administrator	171,200
Other Charges	144,500
Admin Indirect Charges	148,600
LPBC	232,100
Total Mental Health Services Budget	1,126,800

During year 7 of the Agreement covering the period of April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024, Wellpath credited the Probation Department \$30,879 for missed shifts. The following chart shows credits for missed shifts by contract year over the entire contract period.

Contract Year	Period	Total Credits
1	April 2017 to March 2018	1,964
2	April 2018 to March 2019	5,352
3	April 2019 to March 2020	26,006
4	April 2020 to March 2021	10,536
5	April 2021 to March 2022	12,362
6	April 2022 to March 2023	26,096
7	April 2023 to March 2024	30,879

Attachments:

Attachment A: Annual Report of Wellpath Medical Services 2023

Attachment B: Wellpath Annual Statistics 2023

Attachment C: Department of Behavioral Wellness Annual Report 2023-2024

Attachment D: Public Health Department Medical Record Review 2023-2024

Authored by:

Tiffany Phillips, Probation Manager