

Follow-up Analysis (June 2016) on the
2013-2014 Marin County Civil Grand Jury Report:

***Jail Checkup: What's the Price of a Clean Bill of Health?
June 13, 2014***

Executive Summary

“Jail Checkup: What’s the Price of a Clean Bill of Health?” released on June 13, 2014, examined and made recommendations about health care services provided to inmates at the Marin County Jail. The Grand Jury found that the cost of medical services at the Jail was considerably higher than costs at jails in other Bay Area counties. The report requested responses to recommendations from the Marin County Sheriff and the Marin County Board of Supervisors. These responses were provided on August 1, 2014, and September 10, 2014, respectively.

Both the Sheriff and the Board of Supervisors concurred in their responses that Recommendation 1 (contracting for medical services) and Recommendation 2 (providing involuntary psychiatric medication on a one-time emergency basis in County) required “further analysis.” They stated that Recommendation 3 (enroll eligible inmates in expanded Medi-Cal) had been implemented.

California law requires that further analysis be completed within six months of the original report, or by November 13, 2014.

In a letter dated December 16, 2014, the County Administrator wrote on behalf of the Board of Supervisors that the County had commissioned an outside consulting firm to study the Recommendations in the Grand Jury Report. The study’s expected completion was March 31, 2015, with a follow up letter to be sent to the seated Grand Jury by April 30, 2015.

By the time that the study was completed, the officials who commissioned it were no longer employed by the County. The head of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Medical Director both retired. The study, called the *Marin County Jail Report*, was completed in June 2015.

In January 2016, members of the IRC requested a meeting to discuss the original Grand Jury Report and the County’s obligations to update its response to this report. At the meeting the IRC learned that the County would not implement Recommendation 1. HHS stated that further evaluation was required for Recommendation 2 because Santa Clara County was no longer providing services to other counties.

The County communicated their final responses in a letter dated February 26, 2016. The Sheriff responded in a letter dated February 23, 2016.

As there was no conclusion regarding Recommendation 2, IRC believes that further follow-up is warranted.

Background and Documentation for this Analysis:

Grand Jury Report Summary (published 6/13/14)

Recent changes at the Marin County Jail (Jail) prompted the Marin County Civil Grand Jury to take another look at jail conditions. The California Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011, Assembly Bill 109 (referred to as AB109) now requires county jails to accept responsibility for selected inmates previously sent to state prisons. Some of these inmates will be serving terms far longer than those for which the Jail was designed. Before AB109, stays in Marin's Jail were generally under a year; now they may be considerably longer.

Significant challenges for the Jail are to maintain high quality, affordable health care services, to improve the care of mentally ill inmates, and to provide for transitional care services upon an inmate's release.

The Grand Jury found that the cost of jail medical services is unnecessarily high, compared to other Bay Area Jails, and continues to increase. To this end, we recommend exploring the provision of medical services by a high quality correctional medical contractor, finding an alternative means of administering emergency psychiatric medication, and enrolling all eligible inmates in Medi-Cal as expanded by the federal Affordable Care Act.

Grand Jury Recommendations and Detailed Results:

R1. 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.

R1 Results:

From the Board of Supervisors (2/26/16)

Response Update: "After extensive review both with a consultant and internal staff, we have decided that we will not pursue contracting out the detention medical services at this time. We are looking at alternatives to reduce costs in the jail, such as changing the staffing mix."

From the Sheriff (2/23/16)

"Subsequent to our response to Recommendation 1, Health and Human Services hired a consultant experienced in Jail healthcare to explore options to the current model. After reviewing the Consultant's report and a series of meetings with Health and Human

Services, the County Administrator and myself, a decision was made not to pursue an outside contractor for Jail medical”.

R2. Develop procedures for providing involuntary psychiatric medication on a one-time emergency basis in Marin County, rather than sending the inmate to the Santa Clara jail for this service.

From the Board of Supervisors (2/26/16)

Response Update: *“We are still working on the involuntary psychiatric medication issue. We are handling this on a case-by-case basis while working on a more long-term solution. We are discussing this with other counties as well, looking at best practices.”*

From Sheriff Doyle (2/23/16)

“This is still being considered. However, the County is going to have to make a decision very soon because Santa Clara is no longer accepting inmates from other counties.”

Links:

Grand Jury Report (June 13, 2014)

http://www.marincounty.org/~media/files/departments/gj/reports-responses/2013/jail_report.pdf

Sheriff Robert Doyle’s response (August 1, 2014)

http://www.marincounty.org/~media/files/departments/gj/reports-responses/2013/responses/jail_checkup_sheriffdoyle.pdf

Marin County Board of Supervisors response (Sept.10, 2014)

http://www.marincounty.org/~media/files/departments/gj/reports-responses/2013/responses/bos_jail.pdf?la=en

Marin County Board of Supervisors response from the Office of the County Administrator (Dec.16, 2014)

http://www.marincounty.org/~media/files/departments/gj/reports-responses/2013/responses/jail_cao1.pdf?la=en

Marin County Board of Supervisors response from the Office of the County Administrator (Feb.26, 2016)

<http://www.marincounty.org/~media/files/departments/gj/reports-responses/2014/responses/comjailcheckup201314.pdf?la=en>

Marin County Jail Report, June 2015 (begins on p.3 of response)

<http://www.marincounty.org/~media/files/departments/gj/reports-responses/2014/responses/comjailcheckup201314.pdf?la=en>