



**SOLANO COUNTY GRAND JURY
2011-12**

CALIFORNIA MEDICAL FACILITY

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2011-12 Solano County Grand Jury

I. SUMMARY

California Penal Code §919(b) states, "The Grand Jury shall inquire into the condition and management of public prisons within the county." Pursuant to the statute, the 2011-12 Solano County Grand Jury conducted inspections, performed research, and is reporting the results of the inquiry at the California Medical Facility. The Grand Jury found issues related to staff safety and the smuggling of cell phones into the facility.

II. INTRODUCTION

The California legislature established California Medical Facility (CMF) in 1955 to provide a centrally located medical/psychiatric institution for the health care needs of the male inmate population incarcerated within the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) system. The facility is located in Vacaville, California.

The mission statement for CMF, a division of the CDCR, is "to provide constitutionally acceptable levels of health care in a timely, professional, and cost-effective manner to inmate patients within a safe, secure, well-maintained, and therapeutic environment that reflects community care standards."

CMF provides medical care for inmates/patients who are from facilities throughout the CDCR. Inmates requiring specialized care that is not available at CMF are securely transported to contracted community hospitals. Inmates undergo screenings and an evaluation process for placement in specific medical units according to their needs. CMF health care services include:

- Primary care, chronic care, and specialty care clinics
- Surgery, radiology, and dialysis facilities
- Occupational and physical therapy
- Pharmacy services
- Laboratory
- Respiratory therapy
- Inpatient and outpatient mental health treatment
- End-of-life care services (Hospice)
- Services for the visually and/or hearing impaired
- Services for those with other acquired or developmental disabilities

CMF provides health care services in various housing units as follows:

- General Population (GP)
- Outpatient Housing Units (OHUs)
- Correctional Treatment Centers (CTC)

- Licensed¹ Prison Elder Care Unit
- Licensed Mental Health Crisis Bed (MHCB)
- Licensed General Acute Care Hospital (GACH)
- Outpatient Psychiatric Facilities
- Licensed Prison Hospice
- Licensed Acute Care Psychiatric Hospital
- Department of Mental Health (DMH)

CMF provides medical care for medically complex inmates (patients who cannot function without 24-hour nursing supervision). These inmates are sent from facilities throughout the CDCR, and the housing of these patients is as follows:

- 7 licensed general acute care beds
- 21 licensed elderly care beds
- 28 licensed medical CTC beds
- 3 negative pressure isolation rooms
- 162 medical OHU beds
- 17 licensed hospice beds

At the time of the Grand Jury's visit, CMF employed 2,215 people, comprised of the following:

- 1,089 CMF employees (871 Correctional officers, 218 non-medical staff)
- 672 medical employees dedicated to satisfy the *Plata vs. Davis/Schwarzenegger*² settlement agreement
- 454 Department of Mental Health personnel

At the time of the Grand Jury site inspection, the inmate census was 2,832. The annual cost per inmate in custody at CMF is \$108,742 as compared to an average of \$49,000 state wide for inmates in CDCR non-medical facilities. The increased cost is due to the specialized medical/mental healthcare inmates receive at this facility.

The operating budget for fiscal year 2011-12 is approximately \$308 million. The budget is as follows:

• Custody	\$127,702,907
• Health Care	119,876,326
• Department of Mental Health	58,195,100
• Education	<u>2,182,796</u>
• Total	\$307,957,129

¹Licensing and certification requirements at CMF are performed by California State Boards. The boards are independent of CDCR.

² A recent court decision that required better medical care for California prison inmates.

California Penal Code §919(b) states, “the Grand Jury shall inquire into the condition and management of public prisons within the County.” Pursuant to the statute, the 2011-12 Solano County Grand Jury inspected the California Medical Facility.

III. METHODOLOGY

The Grand Jury interviewed the following CMF personnel:

- Warden
- Custody Management Staff
- Medical Management Staff
- Correctional Officers

The Grand Jury inspected the following housing units in the facility:

- Licensed General Acute Care Hospital
- Several Medical Units
- Licensed Prison Hospice

The Grand Jury received and reviewed the following CMF documents:

- California Medical Facility Annual Summary Report
- Other documents and correspondence provided by CMF staff

IV. STATEMENT OF FACTS

The correctional staff are equipped with personal electronic safety alarms (panic alarms). However, staff expressed concern to the Grand Jury that their devices do not function in all areas of the facility. There are numerous “dead spots” that render the alarm system ineffective and compromise staff safety.

CMF staff stated there is a problem with cell phones being smuggled in by staff members and vendors for inmates’ illegal use. According to CDCR statistics, 236 cell phones were confiscated at CMF during the calendar year 2011. Inmate use of cell phones can be a safety issue for prisoners, staff, and the community because it facilitates criminal activities. Staff advised the use of a product called “Managed Cell Phone System,” which restricts unauthorized cell phone use by blocking signals within the facility, would be a solution.

V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1 – Correctional officers and staff working throughout the facility have a personal safety alarm device (panic alarm) that does not function in all areas.

Recommendation 1 – California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation provide an enhanced personal safety alarm device system that ensures all correctional officers and staff have an effective means to report an emergency.

Finding 2 – Inmates having access to cell phones creates safety issues for prisoners, staff, and the community.

Recommendation 2 – California Medical Facility implement the “Managed Cell Phone System” that controls unauthorized use of cell phones.

COMMENTS

The CDCR and the CMF operations are experiencing challenging times due to court and legislative mandates, which results in fewer staff, staff transfers, lay-offs, and reassignments. CDCR is undergoing significant changes to improve medical, dental, and mental health care of inmates. A new medical facility is expected to open in Stockton, California, and CMF-Vacaville will soon open a new 64-bed mental health care unit.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

None

COURTESY COPIES

Secretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
Warden, CMF-SOLANO
State Senator Lois Wolk, 5th District
State Assemblymember Mariko Yamada, 8th District
Mayor, City of Vacaville
City Manager, City of Vacaville