

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

919



**FROM:** Executive Office

**SUBMITTAL DATE:**  
September 1, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Response to the Grand Jury Report: Riverside County Regional Medical Center Emergency Treatment Services/Inpatient Treatment Facility – Department of Mental Health – Department of Psychiatry

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Approve with or without modifications, the attached response to the Grand Jury's recommendations regarding Riverside County Regional Medical Center Emergency Treatment Services/Inpatient Treatment Facility – Department of Mental Health – Department of Psychiatry.
- 2) Direct the Clerk of the Board to immediately forward the Board's finalized response to the Grand Jury, to the Presiding Judge, and the County Clerk-Recorder (for mandatory filing with the State).

**BACKGROUND:** On July 14, 2009, the Board directed staff to prepare a draft of the Board's response to the Grand Jury's report regarding Riverside County Regional Medical Center Emergency Treatment Services/Inpatient Treatment Facility – Department of Mental Health – Department of Psychiatry.

Section 933 (c) of the Penal Code requires that the Board of Supervisors comment on the Grand Jury's recommendations pertaining to the matters under the control of the Board, and that a response be provided to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court within 90 days.

  
**DEBRA COURNOYER**  
Principal Management Analyst

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<b>FINANCIAL DATA</b>	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ N/A	In Current Year Budget:
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$	Budget Adjustment:
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$	For Fiscal Year:

<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b>	Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:** APPROVE

BY:   
Dean Deines

**County Executive Office Signature**

Dept's Recomm.:  Consent  Policy  Policy  
 Per Exec. Ofc.:  Consent  Policy

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 3.09 – 07/14/09

District:

Agenda Number:

**3.11**

## 2008-2009 Grand Jury Report

### RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER EMERGENCY TREATMENT SERVICES/INPATIENT TREATMENT FACILITY – RIVERSIDE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH – DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY

#### **FINDINGS:**

##### **Number 1:**

For the months of March and April 2009, ETS interviewed more than 1,700 patients. The only existing triage area, with its two interview rooms, is inadequate to handle the volume of patient interviews. This situation appears to be inconsistent with Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5325.1 (b), relating to patient confidentiality RCRMC executive administration has shared with the 2008-2009 Grand Jury the proposed plans for expansion of the AC. As of the date of this report construction has not commenced. (The patient confidentiality issue was also a finding of the 2006-2007 Riverside County Grand Jury.)

#### **Response:**

##### **Respondent disagrees partially with the finding.**

The expansion of ETS has been in the planning stage for over eighteen months. Construction of buildings that are designed for Hospital use are regulated by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD). The plans and all related activities must be approved by the OSHPD office prior to the start of any construction.

Although construction had not yet begun at the time of the Grand Jury Report, the expected start date will be March 2010. The plans for phase one have been approved by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) on July 20, 2009. The phase one bid opening is scheduled for August 24, 2009. Phase one is for the renovation of Suite 3, where the Medical Records facility will be relocated. The existing medical records suite is where the ETS expansion will be constructed.

The plans for phase two have been submitted to OSHPD on January 26, 2009. Scheduled to receive Phase two drawings from OSHPD on or around August 27, 2009, approval is anticipated. Form-11 to approve plans and specs for this phase are in process. The new facility will provide sufficient space and will allow future growth.

##### **Number 2:**

During a February 2009 visit to ITF, it was observed that one of the monitors surveilling a patient room in Unit A, (Intensive Treatment) was not functioning. It was also noted that the images provided by the monitors surveilling other patient rooms were grainy. In October 2008 there were monitors on order with county Facilities Management to replace Unit A monitors, as well as those in ETS and the restraint room in Unit D. In February 2009 the requisition was modified to include additional monitors to cover blind spots in Units Band C. As of this report none has been received.

#### **Response:**

##### **Respondent agrees with the finding.**

On November 8, 2008, Facilities Management received this project. A walkthrough was conducted at the Arlington Campus on December 17, 2008 for scope of this project. The initial scope was for 16 cameras, and after the walkthrough it was decided by Management to increase the project to include 46 cameras. In May, 2009 it was learned that the work required OSHPD approval. The project is in the design phase and should be completed by next month.

On July 30, 2009 an additional walkthrough was conducted and it was determined that the electrical panel will need an upgrade. Additional amperage will be added while waiting for OSHPD approval.

**Number 3:**

Psychiatric patients are released with a 14-day supply of medication. Because of the minimal number of outpatient clinics available, upon release there can be a lengthy time interval before their scheduled follow up medical appointments. This lag creates a recurring situation where the patients exhaust their supply of medication before they are seen. Staff refers to this situation as a "revolving door syndrome," in which patients will return to emergency services for additional medication multiple times in the interim. Of the more than 1,700 ETS patients seen in March and April, 142 of them had returned only for medication. Because they are not acute patients, some wait up to 12 hours before they are evaluated by staff.

**Response:**

**Respondent disagrees wholly with the finding.**

All 5150 patients are directly sent to ETS. All other patients including voluntary patients are evaluated by a registered nurse upon arrival. Patients are triaged, and based on the acuity of illness, they are seen no later than one hour and half from time of arrival. The most acute patients are seen within one hour by physicians. The issue of 12 hours of wait time is due to the average length of stay from the point of entry which includes assessment and evaluation by the clinical staff, and a final disposition. Under no circumstances do patients wait twelve hours to be evaluated by the clinical staff.

Since the closure of Mental Health Clinics the number of patients being seen in ETS for medication refills has increased.

**Number 4:**

There is a need for RCRMC and the Department of Mental Health to provide outpatient clinics for patients suffering from chronic mental illness.

**Response:**

**Respondent disagrees partially with the finding.**

Outpatient clinics are provided throughout the regions of the county by the Department of Mental Health. Reductions in state funding have necessitated clinic closures and significant reductions of other services over the past year.

**Number 5:**

Other than at the Arlington Campus, uninsured psychiatric clients countywide do not get served unless they are in crisis. When these patients frequent the hospital emergency rooms on a recurring basis, they may become eligible for coverage from Proposition 63 monies. (These state funds are provided to counties to expand mental health services.)

**Response:**

**Respondent agrees with the finding.**

The county has designed and implemented programs throughout the regions of Riverside County with Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding. This funding is targeted for people with severe mental illness. However, the funding level does not match the needs of all the residents who need ongoing care. In addition, Proposition 63 imposed significant limitations for how these funds are used. Clients must meet specific criteria in order to receive services through the MHSA.

**Number 6:**

There is a lack of services in the Coachella Valley for uninsured mentally ill individuals not in crisis.

**Response:**

**Respondent disagrees with the finding.**

During the budget reductions that were implemented earlier this year, the Department of Mental Health determined there were insufficient funds to continue to provide uncompensated care. Existing consumers are continuing to receive uncompensated care in our clinics and in the OASIS Crisis Center. Services continue to be provided through Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), for people with severe mental illness.

**Number 7:**

Interviews revealed that almost daily, patients in the inpatient facility are ready to be released to the next level of care with no immediate place to go. Meanwhile, there are patients in emergency services that have already been evaluated for placement in the inpatient facility with no available inpatient beds.

**Response:**

**Respondent agrees with finding.**

Unfortunately it is difficult to find placement for mental health clients throughout the state. The Department of Mental Health has the responsibility for placement resources. However, due to reduced state funds and the competition with other counties using the same resources fewer placement beds are available for Riverside County residents. Federal funding specifically excludes people with mental illness from this service.

RCRMC plans to expand the capacity of inpatient services in the near future by building a new replacement facility on the RCRMC Moreno Valley campus which will alleviate the congestion in ETS.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Number 1:**

Expedite plans to expand the capacity of ETS at the Arlington Campus. Consider utilization of portable office units as an immediate solution to the space problem.

**Response:**

**Has been implemented.**

Plans for expansion of ETS have been approved by Office of Statewide Healthcare Planning and Development. Construction is expected to begin March 2010.

The Department of Mental Health provided office space in a separate building in proximity of ETS. RCRMC is expediting plans to expand the capacity of ETS at the Arlington Campus. Consideration of utilization of portable office units as an immediate solution to the space problem is costly and will require extensive alteration to the campus.

**Number 2:**

Give top priority to the urgent need for receipt and installation of the video monitors that are on order.

**Response:**

**The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.**

Priority has been given to this project. Under the constraints of OSHPD, the approval process is lengthy and time consuming. ETS and ITF are very eager for these monitors to be installed as we believe this additional surveillance will assist our staff to monitor the patients more closely.

**Number 3:**

Open an Urgent Care Clinic in the ETS lobby for patients who need to be seen and are not in crisis, thus addressing the "revolving door syndrome".

**Response:**

**The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the near future.**

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) and Riverside County Regional Medical Center (RCRMC) are considering a joint service to provide needed psychotropic medications for patients after their discharge from the inpatient unit. However, reductions in funding are delaying the implementation.

**Number 4:**

Create an outpatient clinic at the Arlington Campus to service patients suffering from chronic mental illness.

**Response:**

**The recommendation has been implemented.**

The Department of Mental Health has outpatient clinics locally in Riverside at Blaine St. Clinic and in Corona at Main St. Clinic. Program revenues are declining more than ever and the mental health system is severely contracting. It is expected that further reductions will be necessary in the coming year. There are no additional financial resources available to open any new clinics.

**Number 5:**

Design a program that will qualify uninsured patients for funding based on Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act requirements.

**Response:**

**The recommendation has been implemented.**

The county has designed and implemented programs throughout the regions of Riverside County with Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding. This funding is targeted for people with severe mental illness. However, the funding level does not match the needs of all the residents who need ongoing care. In addition, Proposition 63 imposed significant limitations for how these funds are used. Clients must meet specific criteria in order to receive services through the MHSA.

**Number 6:**

Provide at least one adequate inpatient psychiatric treatment facility in the Coachella Valley for the uninsured population.

**Response:**

**The recommendation will not be implemented because it already exists.**

The OASIS psychiatric health facility located in Indio is an adequate inpatient psychiatric treatment facility in Coachella Valley.

**Number 7:**

Take immediate action to expand the ITF capacity.

**Response:**

**The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.**

Plans for expansion of ETS have been approved by Office of Statewide Healthcare Planning and Development. Construction is expected to begin March 2010.

Riverside County Regional Medical Center is already planning replacement facility and has retained an architectural firm.