

2021-2022 CONTINUITY REPORT

PSYCHIATRIC HEALTH FACILITY:

A REVIEW OF BEHAVIOR PATTERN

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE

The State of California requires county grand juries to inspect all detention facilities within their county on a yearly basis. Since incarcerated persons may be sent to the Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF), this facility is now routinely inspected. In this report, the 2019-2020 San Luis Obispo County Grand Jury documents the results of our inspection of the County's PHF.

The San Luis Obispo County PHF is a hospital facility licensed by the California State Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and is located at the former San Luis Obispo County General Hospital complex. The San Luis Obispo County Health Agency oversees the facility. PHF is licensed to serve 16 patients at any one time from 72 hours to 14 days.

PHF serves:

- Individuals who may be involuntarily detained due to indications of a mental disorder or indications they may be harmful to themselves or others (Welfare and Institutions Code §5150).
- Persons in custody of the county jail who are charged with a misdemeanor, but who have been determined to be incompetent to stand trial, are treated for restoration to competence so they can participate in legal proceedings (Penal Code §1370).
- Conserved individuals (gravely disabled and permanently housed elsewhere) who are in need of stabilization.

The 2019-2020 County Grand Jury toured PHF and interviewed staff members as part of its annual routine inspection. During the inspection Grand Jurors inquired as to the frequency of behavior problems. Grand Jury members learned of staff concerns regarding a variety of physical altercations among inmates, who are now patients, despite patient checks that occur every 15 minutes, 24 hours per day. Data reflecting recorded behavior problems were solicited. These data are normally collected as part of standard procedure. The San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors approved a contract (August 2019) for additional security staff. The Grand Jury wanted to

determine whether the additional personnel would positively impact the data reported for altercations at PHF.

Data reflecting altercations occurring between November 2019 and July 2020 were as follows:

Period 1 – Following additional security.

November 15 - July 01, 2020					
1370/4011 Clients	Total	All Other Clients	Total	All Clients	Total
Assaulted	2	Assaulted	4	Assaulted	6
Assaultive	11	Assaultive	17	Assaultive	28
Destructive/Vandal.	5	Destructive/Vandal.	8	Destructive/Vandal.	13
Staff Injury	2	Staff Injury	1	Staff Injury	3
Total	20		30		50

Data reflecting altercations occurring between July 2020 and December 2020 were as follows:

Period 2 – Data on PHF subsequent to 2019-2020 Grand Jury’s report and Health Agency’s responses.

July 01 - December 31, 2020					
1370/4011 Clients	Total	All Other Clients	Total	All Clients	Total
Assaulted	0	Assaulted	2	Assaulted	2
Assaultive	3	Assaultive	7	Assaultive	10
Destructive/Vandal.	0	Destructive/Vandal.	5	Destructive/Vandal.	5
Staff Injury	0	Staff Injury	0	Staff Injury	0
Total	3		14		17

The Grand Jury concluded their investigation with one finding and two recommendations in their report. Their responses are charted below:

Findings	Findings Agreed With	Findings Partially Agreed with	Findings Not Agreed With
County Health Agency	1		

Recommendations	Implemented	Partially Implemented	Not Implemented	Further Analysis Required
County Health Agency	2	1		

Link to County Health Agency response:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vvUJLjOgJYatwtO09xlsWEXjC0H8g1pc>

A summary of responses to the Grand Jury Finding and Recommendations follows:

F1 Not having the full complement of additional security guards has had an indeterminate effect on the reduction of reported behavior problems. The County Health Agency agreed with this finding.

R1 It is recommended that the PHF security staff be increased to 4.0 FTEs per the August 2019 authorization. The County Health Agency advises that the recommendation has been partially implemented. The County's contract with the security company does include 4 FTEs of security support. However, the contracted agency has not always had appropriate staffing to continuously fill those slots. Behavioral Health will continue to work with the company to increase staffing availability. If it is unable to maintain the level of contracted positions, Behavioral Health will consider other options, including a new request for proposals to elicit responses from other companies.

R2 It is recommended PHF staff continue to collect data and analyze the impact of additional security staff. The County Health Agency advises that the recommendation has been fully implemented.

Summary:

We commend the County Health Agency, the Behavioral Health Department and PHF management staff for taking action to maintain full security support staff. The data collected for the period of July 1 to December 31, 2020 reflects a 67% reduction in altercations and staff injuries.

Appendix 1

DEFINITIONS (Provided by PHF) FOR CHARTS REFLECTING ALTERCATIONS

- Assaulted: This would be categorized as an act by one person on another causing perceived injury. An example would be one person being struck on the left side of their head by another person with a right closed fist.
- Assaultive: This would be an act by one person on another of physical contact, attempted physical contact or threat when the ability is credible that would lead to injury. An example would be a person picking up a chair and swinging it like a club toward another person.
- Destructive/Vandalism: This would be any damage to property. An example would be a person breaking a fire sprinkler in the ceiling causing a flood leading to tens of thousands of dollars in damage to the building.
- Staff Injury: A staff member experiences pain during an event. An example would be staff members physically contain an aggressive person who is attempting to hit others. During the containment, the employee suffers neck pain.
- Penal Code (PC) §1370/Welfare and Institutions Code §4011 Clients: Clients who have been sent from the County Jail to PHF for stabilization.
- All Other Clients: Clients who may be involuntarily detained due to indications of a mental disorder, or indications they may be harmful to themselves or others.