



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Michael Hill, *Health Agency Director*

Anne Robin, LMFT *Behavioral Health Director*

TO: Wade Horton, Administrative Office

FROM: Michael Hill, Health Agency Director
Anne Robin, LMFT, Behavioral Health Administrator

DATE: May 22, 2018

SUBJECT: Department Response to the 2017-2018 Grand Jury Report "Our County Can Do Better: The Crisis Inside the Walls of the Psychiatric Health Facility"

On May 8, 2018 the Health Agency received a report from the 2017-2018 County Grand Jury addressing issues associated with the condition of the Psychiatric Health Facility building.

The Grand Jury requires the Health Agency/Behavioral Health to respond to Findings F2-F7; and Recommendations 1-6. The following are the required responses.

FINDINGS

Finding 2: The PHF facility is woefully inadequate for a psychiatric hospital.

Response: The respondent disagrees partially with the finding. The Psychiatric Health Facility has consistently passed all licensing reviews for both condition and safety.

Finding 3: There is not enough room for the programs and therapies required towards a goal of recovery; a separate and dedicated area is lacking for both treatment rooms and physical exercise.

Response: The respondent partially disagrees with this finding. The Psychiatric Health Facility has consistently passed all licensing reviews for both condition and safety.

Finding 4: The facility lacks adequate natural lighting and is excessively dreary when compared to a modern psychiatric hospital.

Response: The respondent partially disagrees with this finding. The Psychiatric Health Facility has consistently passed all licensing reviews for both condition and safety. The interior was painted with a light color in 2018, and the Department will work with the Public Works Department to evaluate lighting options in FY 2018-19.

Finding 5: In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation during the night or evening, the required staffing is insufficient for the safety of the patients, staff, and community. In an area-wide emergency, law enforcement may not be able to respond.

Response: The respondent disagrees with this finding. The Psychiatric Health Facility has consistently passed all licensing reviews for both condition and safety.

Finding 6: Inmates in the patient population impact other patients and may require full time supervision within the facility.

Response: The respondent agrees with this finding.

Finding 7: The outdoor area is inadequate for the number of patients served and doesn't provide space for exercise.

Response: The respondent partially disagrees with this finding. The Psychiatric Health Facility has consistently passed all licensing reviews for both condition and safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Even though the PHF second and third shifts meet minimum State standards, staffing levels should be increased for staff, patient, and community safety reasons.

Response: This recommendation has been partially implemented through the addition of permanent resources to the PHF in each of the last five years. The Department will continue to evaluate staffing needs at the PHF.

Recommendation 2: The San Luis Obispo County Jail should have its own dedicated psychiatric hospital facility, serving only inmates. This would limit the number of inmates admitted as patients in the PHF. When inmates are admitted to the new PHF, a correctional deputy should be assigned.

Response: This recommendation has been partially implemented. The Sheriff's Office is in process of establishing a behavioral health unit at the Jail for inmates.

Recommendation 3: The County should find or build a new psychiatric hospital facility, with sufficient room for patient treatment and recovery. Funding could come from reserves sources (County and/or MHSA) or pursuing a state grant.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented at this time as it is not feasible. If new grants, State, or Federal funds become available this option will be evaluated.

Recommendation 4: The current lighting should be replaced with natural spectrum lights (preferable LEDs). The facility interior should be painted and the ceiling tiles replaced/repared to provide an improved therapeutic environment.

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The facility interior was painted with a light color in 2018. Ceiling tiles have been replaced. The Department will work with the Public Works Department to evaluate lighting options in FY 2018-19.

Recommendation 5: Upgrade video surveillance capabilities.

Response: This recommendation is being implemented. The County is in the process of replacing the existing camera recording hardware with the current model. This replacement is scheduled to be completed in August 2018. Shortly after the recording hardware is replaced, the County will conduct a review of existing cameras and make recommendations for replacements.

Recommendation 6: The facility should annex additional area from the adjacent County facilities, adding the treatment and therapy environments to improve effectiveness and safety.

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented as it is not feasible. If new grants, State, or Federal funds become available this option will be evaluated.