



Legislation Text

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Clerk 12/7/2006

A MOTION requesting that the county auditor complete an audit of the jail health services's medication administration and pharmacy operations.

WHEREAS, the department of adult and juvenile detention is responsible for the operation of two adult detention facilities (jails) that book about fifty-five thousand arrestees each year and houses about two thousand five hundred inmates in secure detention on a average daily basis, and

WHEREAS, jail facilities are constitutionally required to provide adequate medical, dental, and mental health services for those detained, and

WHEREAS, jail health services is operated by the department of public health through an agreement with the department of adult and juvenile detention, and

WHEREAS, jail health services, to meet constitutionally mandated requirements, provides a variety of clinical medical, health assessment, medications, dental and mental health care services for incarcerated adults in King County, and

WHEREAS, jail health services is responsible for tens of thousands of health assessments and clinic visits, including pharmacy services that fill over one hundred fifty thousand prescriptions a year, and

WHEREAS, jail health services has recently re-accredited by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care ("NCCHC") for compliance with NCCHC Standards for health care services in jails. This accreditation means that jail health services has met national operational standards, including for pharmacy operations, as determined by a panel of independent nurse and physician auditors. As of 2005, out of more than one thousand six hundred jails nationwide, only two hundred forty-two had received NCCHC accreditation, and

WHEREAS, recent state Board of Pharmacy inspections have disclosed possible problems in the pharmacy operations at the jail, although the department of public health disputes the inspection report findings, and

WHEREAS, the office of citizen complaints/ombudsman has issued a memorandum that details concerns about identified deficiencies within jail health services pharmacy and medication administration services that put patient health and safety at risk. The memorandum notes that the ombudsman identified these problems through a review of Board of Pharmacy inspection reports and patterns in one hundred ninety-two allegations reviewed since January 2004, and

WHEREAS, the department of public health notes that it shares the office of citizen complaints/ombudsman's commitment and concern for the welfare of the people who are in the jail's custody, but takes exception to several of its findings, and

WHEREAS, the department of public health affirms that it is committed to openly working with the office of citizen complaints/ombudsman, the executive and council to answer their questions and provide a fuller understanding of its operations, the quality of its work on behalf of patients and the significant progress it feels it has made;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

That the King County auditor's work program be amended to immediately initiate

an audit of the pharmacy and medication administration practices of jail health services to provide an independent evaluation of the quality and accuracy of pharmacy practices.