

Subject: Sheriff Inmate Medical Care Expenditures
Related Department: SRF

FY 2025 Proposed Budget
Budget Work Session Follow-up

4/10/2024

The following information is provided in response to a request made by Ms. Cunningham at the work session on March 21, 2024, regarding the following question:

What's the total cost of inmate medical care in the jail? How much has it changed over the past five years? What's driving that? the number of residents?

The total cost of medical care in the County’s detention facility consists of medical services provided to residents (“medical care”) and medications administered to residents (“pharmacy expenses”). As table below illustrates, at the conclusion of FY 2023, the total cost of inmate medical care exceeded \$5.8 million. Over the past five years, the total cost initially trended downwards between FYs 2019-2021 due to a decrease in inmate population but substantially increased beginning in FY 2022. Since then, the total cost has increased and is projected to continue to increase, due to factors including inmate population increases, changing nature of inmate medical care, a change in the County’s medical vendor, and evolving protocols in inmate medical care.

Fiscal Year	Medical Care	Pharmacy Expenses	Total	Average Daily Population	Medical Vendor
FY 2019	\$3,500,602	\$1,070,187	\$4,570,789	414	Corizon
FY 2020	\$3,244,914	\$887,940	\$4,132,854	308	Corizon
FY 2021	\$3,719,668	\$658,431	\$4,378,099	247	Corizon/Mediko*
FY 2022	\$4,202,530	\$873,127	\$5,075,657	268	Mediko
FY 2023	\$4,828,618	\$1,022,140	\$5,850,758	292	Mediko
FY 2024 Budget	\$5,056,608	\$1,085,000	\$6,141,608	357**	Mediko
FY 2025 Proposed Budget	\$5,190,917	\$1,262,000	\$6,452,917	-	Mediko

*Mediko started in November 2021

**Average Daily Population as of February 2024

Medical Care

As shown in the chart above, the Detention Center's medical vendor was changed from Corizon to Mediko in the middle of FY 2022, which led to a higher cost during the transition period. The County's current new contract with Mediko includes a built-in 2.75% increase for each renewal year.

Additionally, in FY 2023, an addendum was executed to the Mediko contract, which upgraded three positions in response to the current needs of the population and based on the recommendations from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). These upgraded positions, a Psychiatric Registered Nurse, Pharmacy Lead, and a Medication Assistance Treatment (MAT) Nurse Practitioner, led to an increased cost.

In addition to standard contract increases, there has been a steady increase in the population and a rise in associated medical and mental health services, medication, and outside medical care needs.

Once a resident has been committed to the Sheriff's Office, any outside medical expenses and outside medication costs come from a cost pool. The annual cost pool is set at \$350K which covers all outside expenses, specialists, surgeries, hospital transports, emergency room visits, and hospital admissions. In FY 2023, a credit of \$94K was applied back to the Sheriff's Office, as the full cost pool from the prior year was not fully spent. Recently, there has been an uptick in additional medical treatments that cannot be provided in the detention facility (i.e., cancer treatments, surgeries, etc.). Due to these increased specialized medical needs, staff do not anticipate receiving any shared cost pool credits for in FY 2024.

Pharmacy Expenses

The Sheriff's department has also seen an increase in pharmacy expenses over time as a result of medication cost increases and an increase in the number of residents requiring medication, including an increase in the number of inmates requiring psychotropic medications for ongoing mental health treatments. In FY 2023, the average monthly number of inmates on psychotropic medications was 203. In FY 2024, the monthly average through February increased to 259.

The opioid epidemic has also contributed to rising costs, and several procedures have been updated since the establishment of the MAT program. Beginning in FY 2023, urine drug screenings (UDS) conducted by medical staff were implemented as a best practice upon commitment to the detention facility. The jail currently averages between forty to fifty residents in the MAT program at any given time. The medication costs for forty-five residents in MAT program ranges from \$1,300 - \$2,100 a month depending on the doses prescribed, or approximately \$15K - \$25K annually.

Beginning this year, using \$85K of one-time FY 2023 closeout funds, an enhancement to the MAT program in the form of an injectable medication will be available. This

enhancement should vastly reduce staff time spent administering opioid withdrawal medication while simultaneously improving the inmate outcomes in treating opioid withdrawal. The FY 2025 proposed budget includes \$222K in one-time funding to continue the use of this injectable medication.