

**ALAMEDA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS'
PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE**

Thursday, March 27, 2025
10:00 a.m.

Supervisor Elisa Márquez, Chair
Supervisor Nate Miley

Location: Board of Supervisors Chambers
County Administration Building
1221 Oak Street, Suite 512
Oakland, CA 94612

Webinar: <https://zoom.us/j/99247500951>

SUMMARY/ACTION MINUTES

**I. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Update on Medical Consulting and Quality Assurance Alameda County Sheriff's Office – Santa Rita Jail
[Attachment](#)**

Lieutenant Joseph Atienza, Alameda County Sheriff's Office, Faith Saporsantos, MSN, MHA, RN, CRRN, CCHP, Forvis Mazars and Dr. Eric Lee, MD, Forvis Mazar, presented a PowerPoint presentation on Medical Consulting and Quality Assurance of the Alameda County Sheriff's Office at Santa Rita Jail.

Lieutenant Atienza reported that this update is focused on medical consulting and quality assurance practices at Santa Rita Jail, overseen by the Alameda County Sheriff's Office.

Santa Rita Jail's healthcare is contracted through Wellpath, effective from November 2022 to September 2027. Wellpath is responsible for providing comprehensive medical services to incarcerated individuals, including routine and advanced care. The Alameda County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) does not provide direct medical care but supervises the quality and compliance of Wellpath's services. Wellpath is contractually obligated to cooperate with county oversight, third-party reviews, and advisory boards focused on medical quality assurance.

The Sheriff's Office partners with Forvis Mazars, a third-party consultant firm contracted since July 2020, to perform monthly quality reviews of Wellpath's services. Reports by Mazars include evaluations of practices, recommendations, and corrective actions, if necessary. The Sheriff's Office, Wellpath, and Alameda County Health participate in quarterly multidisciplinary meetings to review these findings and strategize improvements. In 2024, The Sheriff's Office expanded the Mazars contract to include deeper reporting, corrective action planning, and staffing analyses, recognizing the critical need for robust oversight.

Faith Saporsantos, Registered Nurse, with certification in correctional healthcare, representative for Forvis Mazars, reported on the role of Forvis Mazars. Forvis Mazars provides independent, unbiased evaluations of healthcare delivery at Santa Rita Jail. Their mission is to promote transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

The audit and improvement process includes

- Quality Assurance (QA):
Monthly audits of 15 complex patient cases to identify quality issues.
- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI):
Deeper audits of 30+ additional cases, using a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model to drive sustainable improvements.
- Corrective Actions:
If recurring issues are found, corrective actions are issued, requiring Wellpath (the healthcare provider) to submit a 30-day plan to address problems.

Current Corrective Actions include

- Timely identification of medical alerts
- Completion of initial health assessments within 14 days
- Timely response to non-emergency healthcare requests

CQI Focus Areas:

- Immediate screening of incoming detainees
- Safe management of substance withdrawal
- Chronic disease management
- Thorough and timely initial health assessments

Improvements have been made however significant work remains to achieve full compliance and ensure sustained quality care for the Santa Rita jail population. The Sheriff's Office, Alameda County Health, and Forvis Mazars are committed to building a culture of safety, responsibility, and continuous improvement in correctional healthcare.

Dr. Eric Lee, Correctional Health Expert, reported on the challenges and key factors required for successful quality improvement at Santa Rita Jail, including the roles of people, process, and technology.

Three (3) critical components are needed for change: 1) People (80%): people naturally resist change and require consistent training and support to adopt new processes; 2) Process (15%): Clear, efficient workflows must be established; complicated processes make sustaining change harder and 3) Technology (5%): Outdated technology significantly hinders efficiency. Upgrades can greatly ease workload and support better care.

Providing healthcare in a correctional setting is particularly complex due to the need to coordinate clinical and custody staff, and address high behavioral health needs. Communication is often fragmented between teams, creating delays and inefficiencies in patient care.

The current electronic health record (EHR) system is outdated, requiring manual, time-consuming processes for tasks like verifying vaccines and medications. Lack of EHR integration with systems like the California Immunization Registry or pharmacy databases increases clinician burden. There is an estimated 15–20 years of "technology debt" that needs to be addressed to modernize healthcare delivery.

Dr. Lee urged the need for investment in modern technology to streamline workflows, reduce clinician burden, and improve patient outcomes.

Speakers

Myrna Schwartz, Renee Castle, Micky Duxbury, Bob Britton, Loni Hancock, Katie Dixon, Reverend Laurie Manning, Alison Monroe, Willem VandeKamp, Reverend BK Woodson, Rabbi, Allen Berkowitz, Darryl Ray, Meg Bowerman, Elvira Monk, Aladrian Hillman, Elizabeth Sollie, Richard Speigman, Taqwaa Bonner, Ben Oglivie, Genecia Williams, Elizabeth Katz, Robert Bowden, Susan Segal, Jean Moses Terri Owen, Lev Moses, Terry Dunn, John Lindsay-Poland, and Yolanda Huang all spoke in support of terminating the current Wellpath contract at Santa Rita jail.

Purpose:

- Report progress
- Advocacy or Education**
- Request Public Protection Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other:

Recommendation from the Public Protection Committee: A motion was made, seconded and carried to hold a joint Health Committee and Public Protection Committee meeting within 4–5 weeks to discuss the implementation and funding of the EPIC system, aiming to align with fiscal year 2026 budget discussions.

Additionally, the Committee requested:

- A three-month review of corrective actions currently underway.
- An earlier update than the usual "State of the Jails" address (normally held in November) to report on staffing analyses and ongoing reforms.
- A comprehensive understanding of options regarding the current healthcare provider (Wellpath), including whether a breach of contract exists and potential pathways for replacement without delaying care improvements.
- Involvement of County Counsel and the General Services Agency to understand legal and operational implications of the RFP.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.