



Joint Justice Oversight Committee

August 8, 2023



Healthcare in Correctional Facilities



Current Healthcare Landscape

- Decrease in total incarcerated population by **30% since 2015**
 - **47% increase** in chronic health conditions
- **90%** of in-state population on medication
 - Average number of medications: **5.5**
 - **70%** receive psychotropic medication
- **1,000 individuals** w/ chronic illness
 - 90% of the average daily incarcerated population (ADP)
- **354 ER visits** in FY22



Challenges

- Hospital coverage impact and burden on DOC field staff
 - E.g., out of state hospital coverage (NH, NY, MA, CT)
- Individuals requiring hospice and nursing home beds
- Availability of acute care beds
- Availability of healthcare providers (all disciplines)
- Supporting complex populations (SFI/SMI, MAT/SUD, DS, etc.)



Health System Improvements

- Post-COVID transition to update standards and services, including increased emphasis on mental health, substance use treatment, and telemedicine.
- Developed with Dept. of Veterans Affairs framework of integrated, holistic system of care that includes medical, mental health, substance use, dental, vision, onsite and off-site specialty, pharmacy, care coordination, and emergency services (up to hospital-level).
- Integration of services, and ability of the Contractor to link patients across all points of transition, are core contract requirements.
- Designed in compliance with state law and National Commission for Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) standards for ongoing accreditation, as well as Vermont-specific standard of care and requirements.
- Contractor acknowledges the contract reflects the [Vision, Mission, Values](#), and Key Practices of AHS and Vermont DOC, as well as the goals of Vermont Act 48 of 2011.
- Costs:
 - SFY2023 (VitalCore): \$23,461,377
 - SFY2024 (Wellpath): \$33,799,902

System Alternatives



- State-run healthcare system
 - Estimated cost: \$80,000,000 to \$100,000,000
- Vermont/regional hospital system collaboration
- Other contracted entity

Staffing Updates



- Recruitment and retention efforts
 - 174th Vermont Correctional Academy class
- Hospital Coverage Team
- Staff Experience Supervisors
- Field staff doing field work
- Staff wellness and culture initiatives

Facility Staff Vacancy Rate



1 Year Ago: **30.3%**

Staff Vacancy in Facility Over the Past 12 Months



Current: **16.5%**