



PERFORMANCE AUDIT

AUDIT REQUEST

This audit is the second in-depth follow-up of “A Performance Audit of Healthcare in State Prisons (Report No. 2021-17). In 2021, the audit made 16 recommendations intended to improve Clinical Services Bureau’s (CSB) operations. In 2023, we conducted “An In-Depth Follow-Up of Healthcare in State Prisons (Report No. 2023-01)” and found new and continuing deficiencies within the organization. In April 2023, the Legislative Audit Subcommittee prioritized this second-in-depth follow-up.

BACKGROUND

In July 2023, the responsibility of overseeing healthcare in Utah state prisons was transferred from the Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) to the Utah Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS or department). The name of the organization also changed from CSB to the Division of Correctional Health Services (CHS or division), becoming its own division in the department.

A SECOND IN-DEPTH FOLLOW-UP OF HEALTHCARE IN STATE PRISONS



KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ Continued Improvement in Oversight of Medical Operations Is Needed to Address Systemic Deficiencies
- ✓ CHS Has Made Efforts to Provide More Training; However, Ongoing Supervision Could Improve
- ✓ CHS Still Lacks Compliance with Statute, Essential NCCHC Standards, and Division Policy
- ✓ Management Has Improved Its Administrative Processes, but Communication with the Legislature Could Improve

Quality of Care Could Be Further Improved Through Additional Oversight

Although CHS has made some improvements, we found that significant delays and inadequate care are still occurring. This includes insufficient follow-up and ineffective treatment for diabetic inmates.

To address these concerns, the division should improve its internal controls and supervision practices to provide greater oversight. This will enable the division to fully address previously identified systemic deficiencies as well as improve the division’s overall operations.



RECOMMENDATION

- ✓ The Legislative Audit Subcommittee should consider prioritizing a third follow-up audit to be conducted in 24 months.

 **REPORT
SUMMARY**

Additional Effort to Evaluate Implementation Is Needed to Improve Compliance

In “An In-Depth Follow-Up of Healthcare in State Prisons (Report No. 2023-01)”, we identified a culture of noncompliance among prison medical staff. In response to the 2023 audit, Correctional Health Services (CHS or division) took steps to improve the culture and promote accountability.

Despite these efforts, we still found instances of noncompliance with statute, required standards, and division policy in this review. To address these concerns, division management should more effectively allocate its resources.

In addition, the division should also continue to evaluate and improve its system of accountability to address any lingering cultural issues.

New Administrative Processes Lay the Foundation for the Implementation of Audit Recommendations

The division has made significant improvements in its administrative processes; however, not all recommendations have been fully implemented. To fully implement the remaining recommendations, CHS should continue efforts to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) and systems of accountability while also improving communication with the Legislature.

Additional Effort Is Needed to Fully Implement Past Audit Recommendations

Overall, we are encouraged by the progress that has been made since the 2023 audit. However, despite efforts to address previous audit recommendations, we found that only two additional recommendations from the 2021 audit, and one recommendation from the 2023 audit have been fully implemented.

The graphic to the right shows the current recommendations statuses from both audits.

