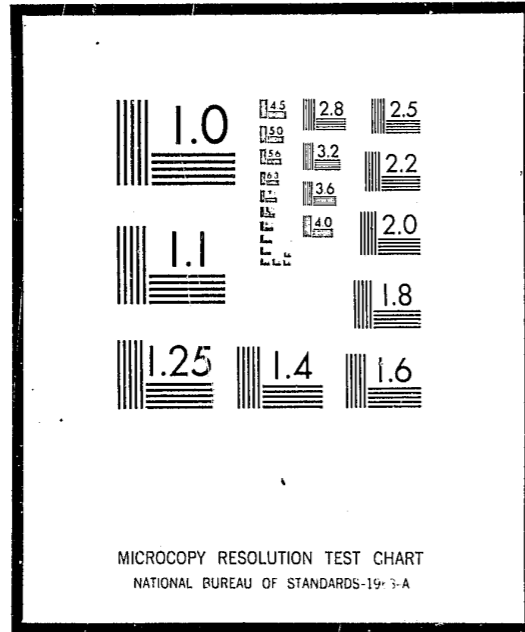


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## REPORT ON 1972 AMA SURVEY OF U.S. JAIL SYSTEM

The following data profiles are extracted from a 1972 American Medical Association survey entitled, Medical Care in U.S. Jails, prepared by the AMA Center for Health Services Research and Development, and published in February, 1973.

### Background

The Commission on Correctional Facilities of the American Bar Association and the American Medical Association have entered into a cooperative effort to "institute and improve the medical and health services in the nation's jails and prisons." As part of this effort, the American Medical Association has developed and implemented a survey to determine the medical resources and care available in the nation's jails as well as to assess the potential role of medical societies and the medical profession in improving health care of inmate populations.

An initial indication of the status of health manpower and facilities in jails was provided by the 1970 National Jail Census conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. Results from this study indicated that only half of the jails in the U.S. which are either county level or located in municipalities of 25,000 or greater population provided medical facilities for their inmate population. The percentage of jails without medical facilities varied considerably between the four regions in the country. Based on the findings of this study, the AMA decided to more precisely identify the primary areas, in terms of manpower and resources, where inmate care can be improved.

### SUMMARY OF RESULTS

This report presents the findings of the 1972 American Medical Association Survey of the nation's jails. Although findings are based on responses from only 39.6 percent of the U.S. jails, some trends in the availability of medical facilities and manpower in the country's jails can be identified. These are summarized below.

### Facilities in Jails

According to respondents, there are limited facilities within jails for the provision of medical care to inmate populations: 65.5 percent of the responding jails had only first aid facilities, while 16.7 percent had no internal medical facilities. Only 17.4 percent of responding jails had facilities for alcoholics, 13.1 percent for the mentally ill and 9.1 percent for drug addicts.

Jails for the most part rely on community medical facilities to provide care for their inmate populations. The most frequently used institutional sources of care are government hospitals, indicated by 47.5 percent of responding jails, and private hospitals, indicated by 41.8 percent of respondents. Physicians' offices reportedly serve as sources of medical care for 62.6 percent of responding jails.

Medical Personnel Available to Jails

Respondents indicated that medical personnel in jails were available on an extremely limited basis: in only 440 (38.0 percent) of the responding jails were physicians available on a regularly scheduled basis, and only in 586 (50.6 percent) responding jails were physicians available on an on call basis. In 360 jails (31.1 percent), no physicians were available to provide medical care to inmates.

Most jails have no formal arrangements with physicians to provide medical care; physicians are just called as needed, as indicated by 902 jails (77.8 percent). Physicians are primarily reimbursed on a fee-for-service basis, indicated by 844 jails (72.8 percent) of respondents, while in only 222 jails (23.5 percent) are they reimbursed on a salary basis.

Of the responding jails, only 438 (37.8 percent) claimed availability of a dentist, 215 (18.6 percent) availability of nurses, 244 (21.1 percent) availability of social workers, and 176 (15.2 percent) availability of psychologists.

Health Services Provided to Inmates in Jails

Although prescription drugs are dispensed to inmates in 97.8 percent of responding jails, in 81.6 percent of responding jails medications are dispensed by non-medical personnel, although often on physicians' orders.

Sanitary inspections are made in jails on a regular basis in 87.3 percent of responding jails. However in only 49.0 percent are inspections provided on a monthly basis or more frequently.

**END**

Table 1 -- NUMBER OF JAILS WITH MEDICAL FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN THE INSTITUTION BY CENSUS REGION

CENSUS REGION	Type of Facility					
	FIRST AID ONLY	INFIRMARY	EXAMINING ROOM	CLINICAL/ DISPENSARY	OTHER	NONE
Total	759	78	161	91	72	194
New Eng.	7	5	9	7	0	4
Mid. Atlant.	35	15	27	13	8	7
E.N. Cent.	172	16	36	17	12	33
W.N. Cent.	168	8	13	6	15	39
S. Atlant.	126	10	25	12	15	34
E.S. Cent.	42	3	6	4	4	22
W.S. Cent.	72	2	11	9	6	27
Mount.	91	5	12	7	3	26
Pacific	44	14	22	16	8	2
Poss.	2	0	0	0	1	0

Table 2 -- NUMBER OF JAILS WITH MEDICAL FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN THE INSTITUTION BY JAIL SIZE

JAIL SIZE	Type of Facility					
	FIRST AID ONLY	INFIRMARY	EXAMINING ROOM	CLINICAL/ DISPENSARY	OTHER	NONE
Total	759	78	161	91	72	194
Under 23	291	3	7	5	21	89
23-32	129	2	7	5	6	39
33-49	117	5	10	5	9	27
50-79	111	7	31	12	11	22
80+	111	61	106	64	25	17