

Fact Sheet: ERO - Detainee Health Care - FY2011

Background

The US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Office of Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) is responsible for ensuring safe and humane conditions of confinement for detained aliens in ICE custody, including the provision of reliable, consistent, appropriate health services.

ICE Health Service Corps (IHSC) provides and arranges for primary health care services to detained aliens under the custody of ICE. This unit consists of U.S. Public Health Service Officers, general service federal employees and contract medical professionals who work under their supervision. IHSC serves as the medical authority for ICE related to detainee medical issues. IHSC provides for the primary health care of detainees housed in IHSC-staffed detention centers, and oversees the financial authorization and payment for off-site specialty and emergency care for detainees in ICE custody.

Key Facts and Statistics

During FY11, the following number and types of health care services were provided:

- Intake Screenings: 231,367
- Physical Exams: 110,680
- Sick Calls: 160,663
- Urgent Care Visits: 14,957
- Emergency Room/Off-Site Referrals: 16,819
- Dental Visits: 34,523
- Mental Health Interventions: 57,982
- Chronic Disease Interventions: 129,549
- Prescriptions Filled: 337,293

Detainee Health Process

Each ICE detainee undergoes a health screening within the first 12 hours of admission to an ICE detention facility. This screening includes evaluation of the individual's medical, dental and mental health status. A health history is taken. ICE detainees also receive a more detailed physical examination within 14 days of admission to a facility. Individuals who have acute or chronic healthcare needs are referred to a primary care provider for medical treatment. Those found to have infectious diseases are placed in the appropriate healthcare setting and receive treatment for their conditions. Patients with diseases such as HIV/AIDS are treated in accordance with nationally recognized standards and guidelines. This care may be given on-site or off-site, as appropriate for the individual patient's clinical condition. Pregnant detainees are referred to community obstetrics specialists to assure that appropriate prenatal care is delivered.

Each facility housing ICE detainees has a written plan for delivery of 24-hour emergency health care and for provisions of care when immediate outside medical attention is required. All facilities have current arrangements with nearby medical facilities or health care providers for health care not provided within the facility. Each detainee receives appropriate health care teaching, instruction and is provided discharge planning to assure continuity of care as indicated. IHSC seeks to minimize threats to public health domestically and globally through control of tuberculosis and other infectious diseases of public health significance. The IHSC medical staff and the Epidemiology Branch monitor tuberculosis cases to facilitate continuity of care, whether the detainee is to be released from custody into the United States or returned to his or her country of origin. Coordination includes making arrangements with foreign nations' tuberculosis control programs for patients to continue anti-tuberculosis therapy without interruption until completion of treatment.

Quality Assurance and Oversight

IHSC staffed facilities utilize applicable health care standards drawn from the American Correctional Association (ACA), the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC), The Joint Commission (TJC), and the ICE National Detention Standards to ensure quality care is provided to detainees.