

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS ANNOUNCES HEALTHCARE DIVISION REFORM INITIATIVE

News Release from **Oregon Dept. of Corrections**

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Agency announces leadership changes, embarks on comprehensive review of care and services adults in custody receive across Oregon.

UPDATED: The quote below is attributed to Director Michael Reese.

Salem, OR -- Today, the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) announced a significant reform initiative to overhaul the division that provides healthcare to adults in custody (AICs). The agency is addressing long-standing issues where AICs receive care at correctional facilities across Oregon. DOC will engage industry experts to improve its Health Services Division, and has taken steps to enhance staffing, enact operational changes, and innovate its pharmacy operations.

"The health and well-being of those in our care is a high priority. Too often the people coming into our prison system have complex medical conditions, high mental health needs, substance use disorders, and co-occurring disorders. It's also an aging population with approximately 1,400 adults in custody age 60 years or older. We recognize the challenges facing correctional healthcare in Oregon, and as an agency we are dedicated to addressing them with innovation and process improvement.

Patient-centered care must be central to what we do, and I am grateful for the dedication and hard work of our healthcare staff. As we move forward, I am committed to a transparent process of change in our Health Services Division to ensure we have the leadership, resources, and support needed to provide the highest standard of care," stated DOC Director Michael Reese.

The initiative includes the following actions:

- DOC took action today to separate Health Services Assistant Director Joe Bugher and Chief of Medicine Dr. Warren Roberts and begin a comprehensive review of DOC's healthcare delivery system. Deputy Director Heidi Steward will lead the Health Services Division until the review is complete. DOC named Dr. Michael Seale as Interim Chief of Medicine. Dr. Seale brings 28 years of leadership experience in correctional medicine with a track record of integrating medical, dental, and behavioral health services for acute and chronic conditions.
- DOC has hired [Falcon Correctional and Community Services, Inc.](#), a national consulting firm specializing in correctional healthcare. Falcon will conduct the comprehensive review of DOC's healthcare delivery system including policies, practices, and the overall quality of care provided.
- DOC will hire a dedicated Health Services Recruiter tasked with attracting qualified professionals such as physicians, nurses, mental health practitioners, and support staff. DOC will also implement an enhanced Electronic Health Records (EHR) system to improve documentation, data tracking, and communication across all DOC facilities.

"Nationwide and around the world, we have learned that people who experience incarceration are far more likely than others to have complex medical and behavioral health conditions. As a nation, we have a legal and moral obligation to meet those needs when people are in our care and custody, addressing clinical concerns, and returning better neighbors to our communities. Traditional models of healthcare delivery in correctional settings must be elevated in order to meet this need, and our teams specialize in this type of assessment and implementation of change," said Dr. Robin Timme, a forensic psychologist and vice president at Falcon Correctional and Community Services, Inc., an organization with a history of partnering with correctional agencies across the country.

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