

Telehealth use in california state correctional system essay examples

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The Assembly Bill 386 (Galgiani) requires the correction departments to ensure that the use of telehealth not to be used to replace civil service dentists and physicians. In California state more than twenty state correctional systems including (CDCR), the Californian Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Centre use telehealth to care for the inmates. The remote location of the prisons makes it difficult for the prisons department to contract or hire on-site physicians; consequently, sick inmates will have little access to health services (Johnston & Solomon, 2008).

The use of telehealth has the potential of improving health care of prisoners by bridging the distance and the time barriers and reducing the delivery costs (Johnston & Solomon, 2008). Ideally, the adoption of telehealth links the diverse facets of health care systems; increases the prisoners' access to all forms of care, including tertiary and specialty care; enable the service provision in the prisons, and ameliorate the scarcity of specialist and primary care doctors in the prisons.

Telehealth preserves the safety of the public since the prisoners who would have been taken to the community for medication will remain inside the prison. This approach also helps in cost reduction because the fuel and other related costs including escort costs. In the 2004/05 fiscal year, the CDCR savings resulting from the telehealth was about \$ 4 million. Additionally, telehealth reduces the time the prisoners wait for the care and allows them

get access to specialists who are not available at the remote places (Clark, 2010).

However, the lack of proper planning to coordinate the telehealth approach limits the return on investment at some prison facilities. This therefore calls for proper planning by the CDCR to help towards improving the coordination of efforts and thus improve cost controls, improve efficiency and access to the health services by the prison inmates.

References

Clark, C. (2010). A Captive Audience- and Providers- Benefit from Telemedicine. HealthLeaders media.

Johnston, B., & Solomon, N. (2008). Telemedicine in California: Progress, Challenges, and Opportunities. California Health Foundation