



CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES

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CCHCS announces leadership changes to address COVID-19 and medical care delegation

ELK GROVE, CA – In order to support both the response efforts of the COVID-19 pandemic and to continue to move forward in delegating medical care back to state control, California Correctional Health Care Services (CCHCS) is announcing leadership changes to ensure both crucial functions are maintained.

“We are in unprecedented times as we deal with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Receiver J. Clark Kelso. “In order to meet current response needs while also working toward further delegation of medical care back to state control, it has become evident that a reorganization is necessary for long-term sustainability.”

Effective immediately, the following organizational changes shall occur:

R. Steven Tharratt, MD, MPVM, FACP, will serve as Special Health Care Advisor to the Receiver. In this capacity, Dr. Tharratt will provide strategic guidance on all health care matters and directly assist the Receiver in evaluating institutions to achieve complete delegation to the State.

Dr. Tharratt has more than 30 years of varied clinical and management experience, including more than 10 years with CCHCS. Previously, Dr. Tharratt held a director position with the Emergency Medical Services Authority in the Health and Human Services Agency and was also a Professor of Medicine and Anesthesiology at the University of California, Davis School of Medicine where he served as Division Chief of Pulmonary/Critical Care and Sleep Medicine.

Joseph Bick M.D., CCHP, will serve as Director, Health Care Services, (formerly titled Health Care Operations). Dr. Bick will oversee all health care services including Medical, Nursing, Quality Management, Mental Health, and Dental. This change supports the Complete Care Model, which establishes a standardized, integrated patient care model to organize and deliver core primary care functions encompassing all aspects of the health care organization. Additionally, Dr. Bick will serve as the COVID-19 response lead for health care.

Dr Bick has nearly 30 years of experience working for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), which includes his previous position as the Director of Health Care Services for the mental health and dental programs. Before holding this position, Dr. Bick served in various leadership roles at California Medical Facility (CMF) in Vacaville as the Chief Medical Executive (CME), Chief Deputy for Clinical Services and Chief Medical Officer.



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Dr. Bick received a Medical Doctorate from the University of Michigan Medical School in 1987, and is a board-certified internist and infectious diseases specialist.

Vince Cullen will serve as Director, Health Care Operations and Corrections Services (formerly titled Corrections Services). This position will oversee the Regional Health Care Executives (RHCE), who provide primary day-to-day oversight of the institution Chief Executive Officers (CEO) to deliver health care operations in the institutional setting. By incorporating the RHCEs in this structure, Mr. Cullen will oversee a cadre of staff spanning multiple disciplines experienced in institution operations, both health care and custodial.

Cullen has more than 30 years of experience with CCHCS and CDCR. He has held a variety of supervisor and managerial positions including acting Warden for San Quentin State Prison (SQ), and as Assistant Deputy Director, Facility Support, Division of Adult Institutions (DAI).

“As health care professionals, we remain committed to providing quality care to our patients as we navigate the complex and ever-evolving response to COVID-19 while remaining focused on our continued transition of the medical care program from the Receivership to state control,” said Diana Toche, Undersecretary, Health Care Services. “We look forward to a continued, collaborative partnership that puts the health and well-being of our population at the forefront of these efforts.”

These leadership changes will allow the Receivership to continue to support delegation efforts while also providing crucial attention to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[View revised organization chart.](#)

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