



Inspection of a prison medical service by a CPT doctor

Checklist

This list is not exhaustive, but rather a tool to be used during CPT visits, and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

I. Initial interview with the doctor in charge

Questions to raise (keep in mind the following general areas of concern): 1. Access to a doctor, 2. Equivalence of care (with special attention to the higher morbidity and the greater health-care needs of prisoners), 3. Patient's consent and confidentiality, 4. Preventive health care (vaccination, addiction, opiate substitution, condoms, needle and syringe exchange, etc.), 5. Vulnerable inmates: elderly, women, disabled, LGBT, juveniles, ethnic minorities, undocumented foreign nationals, 6. Professional independence, 7. Professional competence

A. Medical/nursing team

- Number of doctors (GPs, psychiatrists, dentists), other specialists, psychologists, nurses, auxiliaries (full-time/part-time; other employment) in relation to the number of inmates
- Presence of staff in prison (times of arrival and departure)
- Training, qualifications, remuneration terms
- Involvement of third parties in care: guards, prisoners?

B. Outside medical support

- Back-up hospitals for emergencies/serious conditions?
- Specialist outside consultations (what, who, when, number?)
- Method and conditions of medical transfer of sick prisoners (in particular, emergency cases)

C. Medical care work

1) Volume

- Transmission of health care information / continuity of care
- New prisoners: number per month, content/moment of medical examination upon admission
- Consultations during imprisonment: availability, number and duration of consultations by type of health-care staff, access arrangements respecting confidentiality (oral/written requests, giving reasons for requests to non-medical staff, filtering of requests - by whom?)
- Waiting times by type of health-care service
- Emergencies: procedure during/outside working hours; medical staff on call in prison: who?
- Care provided free of charge / copayment by prisoners? health insurance?
- Medical service also responsible for prison staff/families?

2) Ailments encountered

- Type / specific ailments encountered by the service
- Gender sensitive health care and prevention (pregnant women / mothers and infants / screening for sexual abuse and other forms of violence / screening for breast and gynaecological cancer)
- Groups with special needs: e.g. disabled / LGBT / elderly
- Mental disorders (psychotic disorders, consent to treatment, use of seclusion and restraint)
- List of deaths: causes, autopsies conducted?

3) Prevention, addiction and harm reduction

- Suicide prevention, self-harming
- Transmissible diseases (e.g. Hepatitis, HIV, TB, syphilis, skin infections): screening, counselling, prevention, follow up and treatment
- Condom distribution in a confidential manner?
- Prevention of transmission of diseases through tattooing, piercing and other forms of skin penetration
- Systematic screening for drug, alcohol and tobacco use/abuse upon entry?
- Drug testing (type of tests used, reference lab for supervision?)
- Is opiate substitution treatment offered to prisoners and under what conditions (free of charge / exclusion of undocumented foreign nationals / confidentiality)?
- Are needles and/or syringes found during cell searches? Frequency of needle- and syringe-related problems? Needle and syringe exchange programs (NSP) in the community/in prison?

4) **Medicines**

- Sufficient quantity and range / free of charge / expiry dates?
- Inappropriate use of prescription drugs, e.g. benzodiazepines?
- Proportion of inmates who receive medicines (percentage of psychoactive drugs, percentage of benzodiazepines) (e.g. in general 30-50 percent of inmates receive prescription drugs)
- Distribution of medicines (how? who? confidentiality, supervision of intake)

D. Non-care work / expertise

1) **Ill-treatment**

- Number / type of cases (police, prison guards, fellow prisoners)
- Medical certificates concerning traumatic injuries:
 - procedures for drafting: who may request/consult them?
 - allegations / objective findings / conclusions
 - reporting system (when? to whom?)
 - specific register / involvement of forensic doctor

2) **Disciplinary sanctions / security measures**

- Involvement of health-care staff in decision-making / fit-for-punishment/restraint certificates?
- Medical supervision of disciplinary isolation measures? Frequency?

3) **Miscellaneous**

- Certificates indicating prisoners unfit for detention
- Hunger strikes (administrative instructions? written procedures?)
- Biomedical research: staff/prisoners involved; board of ethics; type of consent
- Monitoring of kitchens / checks on food / protection from pathogens / hygiene and temperature of storage rooms, refrigerators / presentation, quality and quantity of meals / variation of menus / inspection reports
- External inspection of health-care provision, by whom (reports, recommendations)?

E. Files / records

- Number and types (electronic file?)
- Confidentiality (access by detained person, lawyer, judicial organs, other medical authorities? what procedure?)
- Quality of medical files (check files of interviewed patients)

F. General atmosphere

- Relations between members of the medical service and prisoners/prison officers
- Confidentiality of consultations
- Relations with doctors/nurses outside the prison system
- Independence of the medical staff (from penitentiary/judicial authorities)? Issues of conflicting loyalties / conflicts of interests

II. Inspection of medical service premises

- Number of rooms / type (e.g. pharmacy, x-ray, laboratory) / general hygiene
- Checking of apparatus/equipment (defibrillator, ECG, sphygmomanometer, steriliser, etc.)
- If infirmary: number of rooms/beds / distribution of patients

III. Final talk with the doctor in charge

- Flag up any contradictions between the statements made by the medical team and:
 - the findings made during the visit to the premises
 - prisoners' complaints (supported by files)
 - the observations of the other members of the delegation