

7th International Conference on

PUBLIC HEALTH AND NURSING

September 19-20, 2018 Singapore

Implementation of healthcare practices in Sultan Kudarat District Jail clinics: An assessment

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Health protection in prisons is a serious public health issue, which states ignore at their peril, as the vast majority of people in prison will return to the community at the end of their sentence. Prisons can be a breeding ground for HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and other infectious diseases. The incidence of TB, which thrives in cramped, overcrowded conditions, in European prisons for example can be up to 81 times higher in prisons than among the general population (WHO). Studies have shown that in most countries in Europe and in Central Asia, rates of HIV infection are much higher in prisons than outside, because of, for example, high rates of drug dependency and dangerous practices such as needle sharing (Penal Reform International, 2015). Health, mental health and substance abuse problems often are more apparent in jails and prisons than in the community. Incarcerated men and women are often diagnosed with health, mental health, and substance abuse problems after receiving care from a correctional health provider (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016). In the Philippines, the country's jails are already overpopulated by 511 percent as the number of inmates ballooned to 126,946 as of the end of 2016 while the total ideal jail capacity remains at 20,746 inmates, the Commission on Audit said. As of December 31, 2016 the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) has a total jail population of 126,946 which exceeded the total ideal capacity of 20,746 having a variance of 106,200 or has a total average of 511 percent of congestion or overcrowding or clogging," the Commission on Audit (COA) said in its annual audit report posted on its website Friday. The total number of inmates increased by 30,544 from 2015, the report noted (PhilStar Global, 2017). In Maguindanao particularly in Sultan Kudarat District Jail, a clinic was created to improve the well-being of the inmates with various illnesses. However, the clinic serving the inmates is just merely a payag or a small crude shelter used as a dwelling for sick inmates. The shelter is made up of very light materials, with poor ventilation, and houses very few beds for the patients with very limited medical support from the administration. The clinic lacks the basic amenities for treating various diseases as well as medicines and gadget for clinical chemistry and among others. With this scenario, the healthcare practitioners particularly the nurses somehow lost their clinical practices and proper implementation for the sick inmates.

The researcher is a Coordinator for Non-Communicable Diseases in Sultan Kudarat District Hospital for over a year. The researcher wants to assess the implementation of the jail's clinic of the Sultan Kudarat District Jail, Maguindanao in order to create not only better well-being as well as use proper clinical practices and implementation among its inmates. There were no studies done as to how clinics in Sultan Kudarat District Jail operates and implements various protocols and practices. With this, an action plan will be created to improve the clinic's implementation of its services as well as improve the practices of the jail nurses; hence, this study.

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