

ACJ Health Care Staff Job Satisfaction Survey

Results and Analysis

Introduction: 2 Minutes 10 seconds

The following is a summary and analysis of the “ACJ Health Care Staff Job Satisfaction Survey” that was provided to our health care staff from June 20th- June 29th of this year.

Structure of the Survey The survey includes 16 close-ended multiple choice statements related to morale, pay and benefits, safety, licensing, workload, relationship with administration and training. The survey also includes four open ended questions regarding staff retention and turnover, communication with administration and licensing in which the staff could express in their own words their insights and feelings about these very important matters.

Participation Rate Thirty one healthcare staff participated in the survey out of a possible thirty nine staff which is a 79 % participation rate. Health care staff on contract(agency) did not participate in the survey because a different kind of survey will be designed and offered to them.

Confidentiality is Protected Google Forms program was used which protects the identity of the person participating in the survey. The person’s name who is completing the survey is not revealed to the person administering the survey.

Health Care Staff’s Serious Dilemma The health care staff have a serious dilemma. The vacancy number of health care staff at our jail has reached ninety-four. In this survey you will hear health care staff talk about the tremendous challenge they have in attempting to provide a quality service to individuals in need with a very burdensome workload and yet they are obligated to follow the mandates of their licensure. The acute staffing crisis has complicated administration’s responsibility to provide quality care to all residents who are in need.

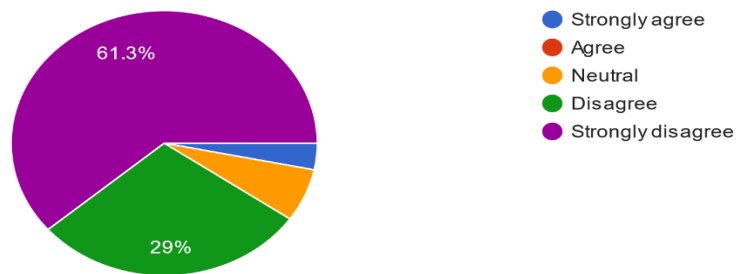
Goal of the Survey The goal in providing this survey is to give a voice to the staff on the frontlines, hear their story and give them a platform to articulate their needs and ideas about change. Our goal is to facilitate their responses.

Project Administration and Processing Results This survey project was administered by myself with consultation of the results and presentation to the Jail Oversight Board by the Pennsylvania Impact Interfaith Network(PIIN).

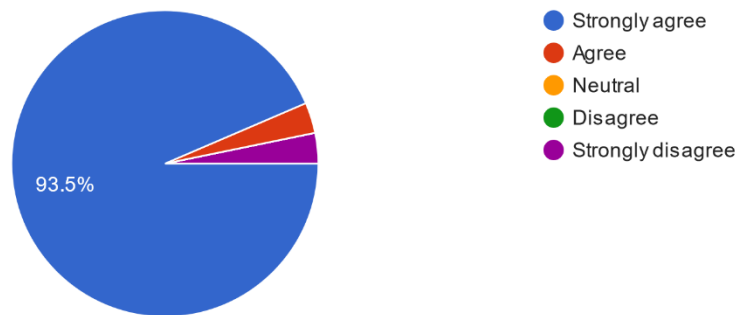
Section I: Results of Close Ended Statements in Pie Chart Form (3 Minutes 50 Seconds)

The first part of our survey is the presentation of the results of our sixteen statements which have been made into colorful pie charts.

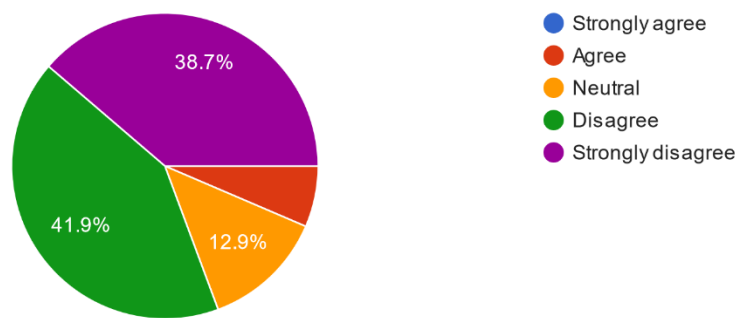
I feel valued and respected as a health care employee at the Allegheny County Jail.
31 responses



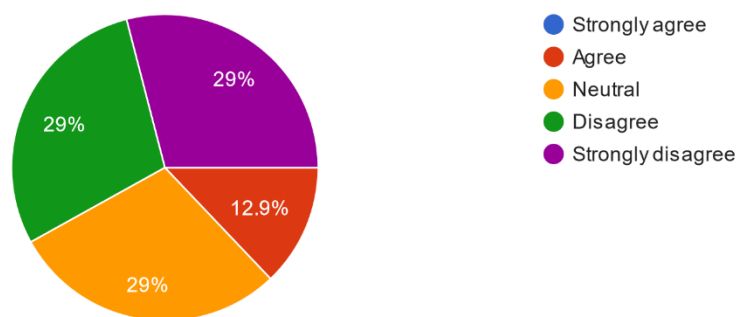
Staff morale is a major problem at the Allegheny County Jail.
31 responses



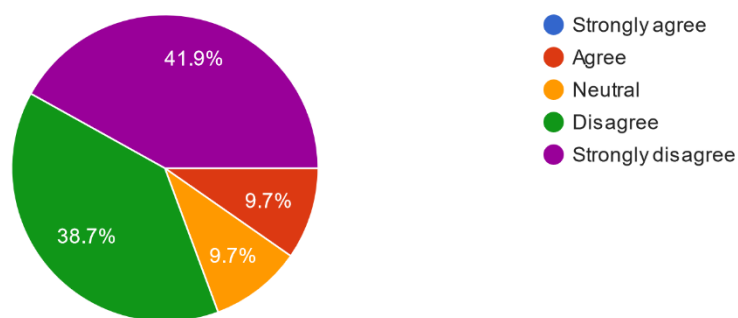
I am paid fairly for what I am asked to do.
31 responses



I am safe working at the Allegheny County Jail.
31 responses

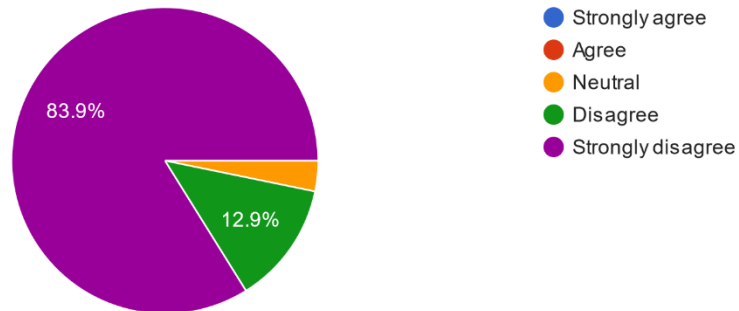


I am able to complete all of my responsibilities throughout the day while providing quality health care to my patients.
31 responses



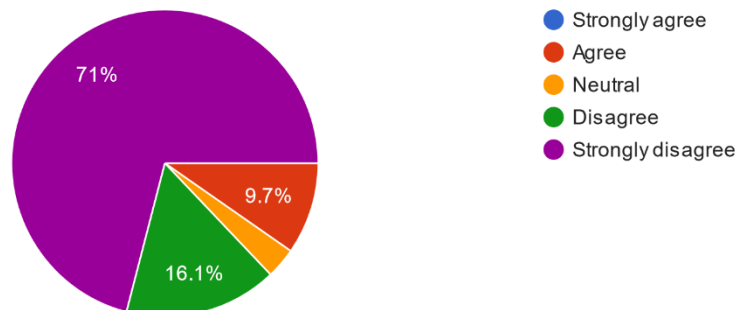
The Health Care Administrator at the jail is qualified to make medical decisions regarding patient health care.

31 responses



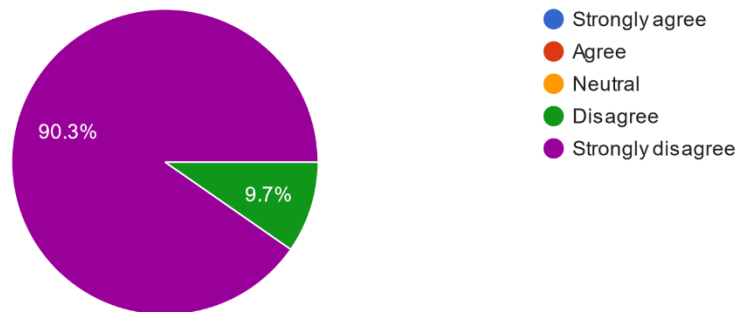
Health Care management communicates effectively with me and answers questions and concerns about job duties.

31 responses



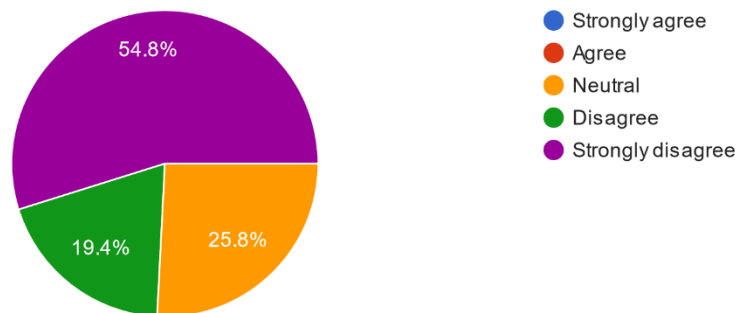
There are enough healthcare staff to fill all shifts.

31 responses



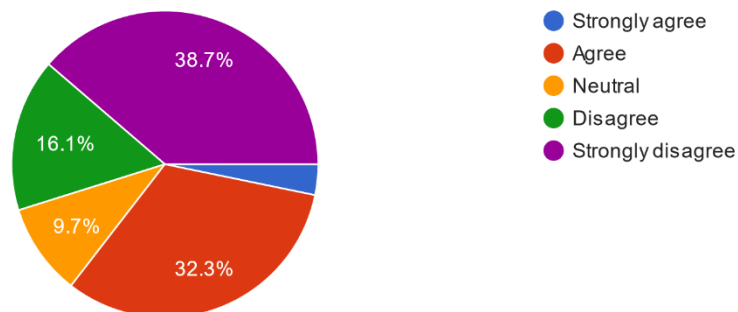
Administration's expectation of time management on my job is realistic.

31 responses



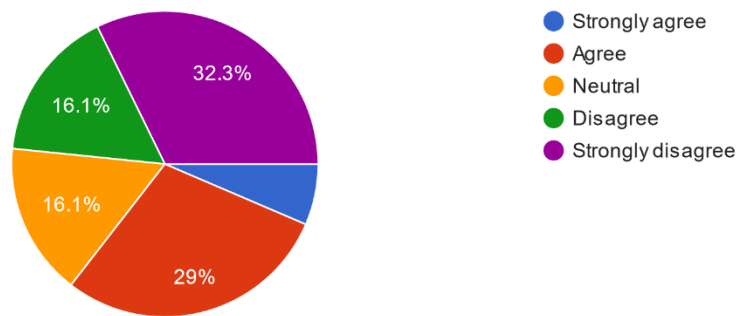
Upon starting employment, I received an adequate orientation regarding the policies and procedures of our jail.

31 responses



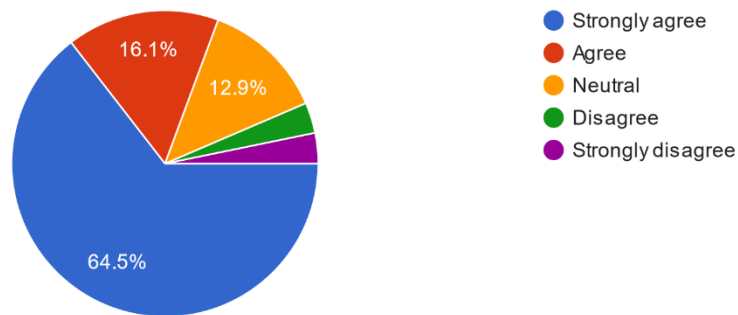
I have been properly trained to perform all of my work duties.

31 responses



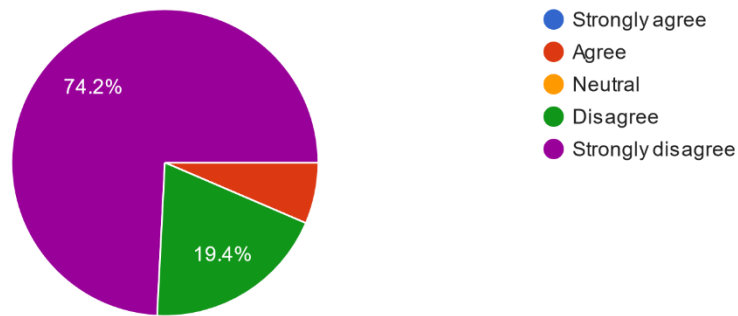
The demands of my job have negatively affected my physical and/or mental health.

31 responses



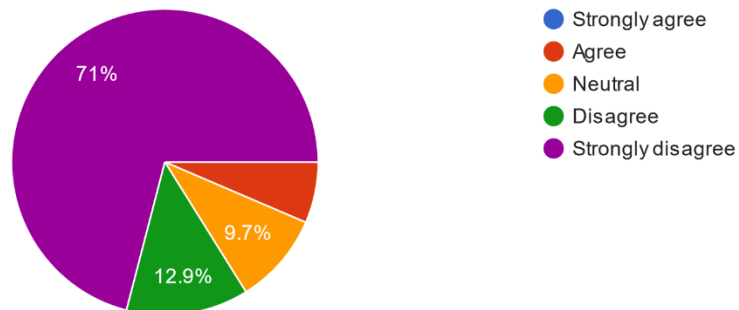
Management understands the challenges I experience while on the job.

31 responses



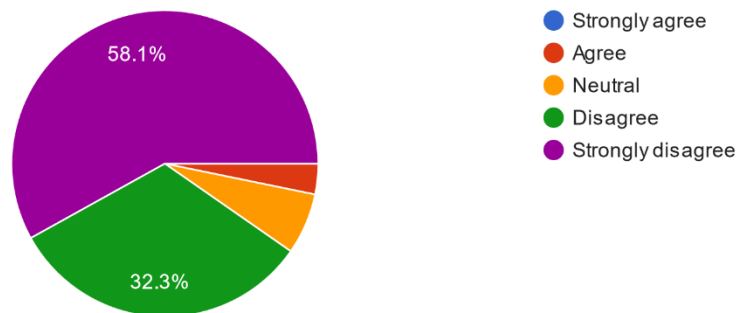
Management is receptive to my feedback and suggestions.

31 responses



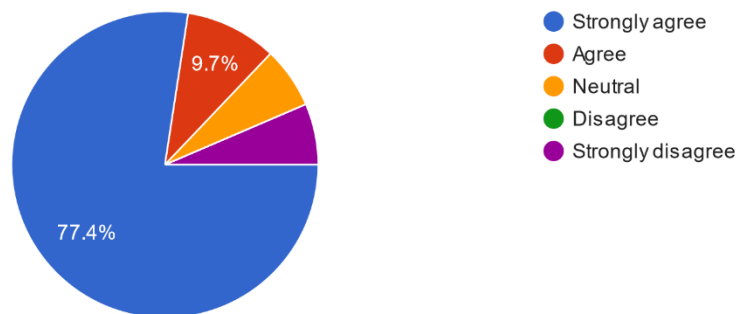
I am informed of corrective information regarding critical incidents such as deaths or suicides.

31 responses



Circumstances exist at the Allegheny County Jail that threaten the licenses of health care staff.

31 responses



Section II: Summary of the 16 Close Ended Multiple Choice Statements (3 Minutes 50 Seconds)

Staff Morale Health Care staff recognize a serious problem of morale working at the Allegheny County Jail. 93.5% of respondents strongly agree with the statement, “Staff morale is a major problem at the Allegheny County Jail.” Related to this statement is that 91.3% strongly disagree with the statement “I feel valued and respected as a health care employee at the Allegheny County Jail.” Morale and being valued in the workplace profoundly affect a staff’s sense of purpose and why am I working here?

Excessive Workloads The lack of staffing and the large workloads that are assigned is a major problem identified. 100% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, “There are enough healthcare staff to fill all shifts”. Over 78% of respondents disagreed with the statement “I am able to complete all of my responsibilities throughout the day while providing quality care to my patients.” Feeling rushed through their shifts and not being able to spend quality time with their patients affects their sense of duty and responsibility to their patients,

Related to this work overload problem, over 78% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “Administration’s expectation of time management on my job is realistic”. No one agreed with that statement. The serious staff shortage significantly contributes to this high response.

Communication with Health Care Administration Communication with Health Care Administration is also cited as a major problem, 95% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that “Health care management communicates effectively with me and answers questions and concerns about my job duties”. Eighty-seven percent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that “Management is receptive to my feedback and suggestions.” No one agreed with that statement. All of the respondents disagreed with the statement that “Management understands the challenges I experience on my job.”

What respondents are saying is that communication occurs in a top down relationship, highly directive with healthcare staff not having the opportunity to contribute their expertise in how operations can improve or how they are coping with the many challenges on their job. This kind of relationship can seriously affect morale and staff’s tolerance to manage the many challenges of their job.

91.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, “I am informed of corrective information regarding critical incidents such as deaths or suicides” No one agreed. This answer correlates with what NCCHC found in its mortality investigation of our jail.

HSA Qualifications The relationship is also affected by the health care staff's belief that the Health Care Administrator is not qualified to make health care decisions regarding patient care with no one agreeing with the statement, "The Health Care Administrator at the jail is qualified to make medical decisions at the jail."

Health Care Licensure Related to this response is the belief that staff's licenses are threatened working at our jail, with over 90% agreeing with the statement that "Circumstances exist at the Allegheny County Jail that threaten the licenses of health care staff".

Health care licensure seriously affects staff's livelihood. Having a violation on their record can affect their pay, a promotion, and opportunities to find other work. Being confronted with an order to perform a duty that violates licensure protocol significantly raises staff's stress and vulnerability to negative consequences. This licensure problem can become a significant communication barrier between staff and administration. The licensure problem can also have a serious effect on staff turnover.

Staff's Physical and Mental Health 80% of staff agreed with the statement, "The demands of my job have negatively affected my physical and mental health." Balancing the major stressors at work with the stresses and responsibilities in staff's personal life will affect their decision to continue to work at ACJ.

Section III: Open Ended Questions and Answers

"What are your recommendations that would reinforce your decision to continue to work at the ACJ?" 2 Minutes 35 Seconds

"Adequate staffing and increase in wages comparable to what agency staff get paid."

"2 consecutive days off, instead of being split days-Friday-Monday could be considered weekend days to help with this."

"Adequate staffing is utmost importance. Proper training of new staff is nonexistent. New employees are overwhelmed by the lack of communication and training. Existing employees are continuously training new staff that either quit or are fired which is incredibly draining"

"The feeling of being valued as front-line workers, acknowledgement of the difficulties we endure as front line workers, significant considerations of how the job impacts our lives, respect

and acknowledgement of non-work related commitments, alignment between what is said and what is done, perspectives of front line workers must be taken seriously.”

“Management needs to change. Having people who have absolutely no medical experience or licensure overseeing and overruling Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, and Nurses decisions in patient care is completely out of line, unethical, and unsafe. Management only communicates with each other, not the staff beneath them who are their front line.”

“Having medical management and frontline staff working together instead of medical management hiding on the 5-mezzanine level in their offices. Frontline staff cannot do their jobs properly when a non-medical manager is instructing them on what they MUST do. Training is provided on the computer. The training online does not provide an opportunity to ask questions or raise concerns.”

“Increase staffing, pay, shift differential, education, knowledgeable medical management. Obtainable goals: Availability of equipment needed. Availability of providers medical and mental health when needed. Safety, Methadone/ Suboxone administration by outside agencies that are familiar with administration.”

“Staff the building. Employees are hired, they just aren’t able to keep them because of the way they are treated. Management does not care about quality of work, all they care about are numbers and how many inmates can be seen in a shift. Inmates are not getting proper care. Management is too punitive and constantly writing employees up for petty things.”

For your peers that terminated employment at ACJ, why do you think they left?

2 minutes 35 seconds

“Low morale, inadequate staffing, poor/unqualified management, hostile work environment, sexual harassment, management that gossips and repeats personal information to other front line staff, forced to falsify documentation, fear of discipline, fear of targeting if they didn’t agree with an illegal and unethical decision.”

“Mental and physical exhaustion, safety concerns, poor wages, fear of losing their licenses.”

"Hostile work environment, severe sexual harassment resulting in false rumors about employees affecting relationships outside of work, underpaid and highly overworked."

"They were overwhelmed and inadequate training was key. The work burden was too much."

"Toxic work environment and unethical practices."

"Because of poor attitudes from management. Being required to complete tasks that put their licenses at risk, low staff morale, poor working environment."

"Lack of training. Licenses are being put in jeopardy. Overwhelming assignments because management can't staff the building. Harassment and bullying by upper management."

"Non-medical leadership. Poor management. Micromanaging. Lack of training. Inconsistent schedules. Lack of respect. Not feeling safe. Toxic environment. Lack of staff causing multiple, unsafe duties of another employee. Poor pay. Working overtime and not receiving it. Scared to lose their license. Lack of communication from management."

"Communication is difficult because we just can't handle all of the inmate's needs, many are actually legitimate, and they wait and wait with no end in sight for even a necessary prescription to be filled. The nurses are all burned out because the clinic and medical housing unit cannot operate efficiently due to the cramped size of the medical department and the fact that there are not enough providers and nurses ever. The Pharmacy is too small to meet the jail needs. Oftentimes the nurses can't give meds because the pharmacy hasn't gotten them in yet. This creates frustration and resentment for employees who have to try to explain to inmates over and over again that they are waiting for meds to come in."

Do you have any recommendations on how to improve communication between management and staff? 2 minutes 15 seconds

"Management needs to be competent in their position and not gaslight staff or be unresponsive when questions or crisis occurs."

"I would suggest that they should ask the nurses opinions before they just make changes by having multiple meeting so we could all attend."

"Not possible with current management who are focused on maximizing their own power and control"

"They need to come out of their offices and show their faces in the medical departments."

"They are not willing to communicate. They refuse to respond to emails and walk away when they are approached by an employee asking a question they can't answer. With the staffing issues at the jail every member of management should be in there every shift helping out. That never happens!!!"

"How about they listen since they are not the one doing the work. Include staff. Not having monthly meetings out as WE have done this or that."

"Monthly meetings, they need to be around more often instead of hiding in their offices."

"Management who actually answer emails rather than leave them unanswered for weeks and sometimes months at a time, if at all. Listen to the front line staff who work on a job on a day to day basis. Respond with care to the needs of employees and inmates."

"Management should do rounds with the employees at least once and actually see what goes on day by day. It's easy to dictate when you're not actually doing the job but when you are physically there maybe they will have a better perception of your daily routine. You can't tell someone to do their job if they don't even know what their job entails."

"For starters, aside from the ADON, management no longer shows their face anywhere other than on 5M, the employee lounge and the town hall meetings. Maybe they could be present in order to communicate? Is there a reason that medical can't get the daily operations report?"

Many times, we aren't told when the jail is on lock down and are expected to prepour meds after we've attempted to start our pass."

If you agree or strongly agree with the question above, "Circumstances exist at the Allegheny County Jail that threatens the licenses of health care staff," please elaborate on these circumstances. 4 minutes 20 seconds

"The jail tries to force health care staff to complete tasks that are outside of their scope of practice due to the staffing crisis, which is unethical. Any person who is licensed and completes a task out of their scope of practice is liable to lose their license and face legal scrutiny. Also, when a staff is qualified in a practice, management will not listen to them or acknowledge them when they discuss an unethical practice. They believe their "policies overrule state and federal laws."

"MH staff with no medical background education or training are forced to triage inmate medical complaints. This is unsafe. This is putting inmate's health in jeopardy."

"Absolutely! Without proper staffing our licenses are threatened. Staff are forced to pre pour medications. This is illegal."

"Insisting that a non-RN individual perform RN-required components of TechCare notes, failure of a supervisor to provide adequate supervision and guidance for limited permit licenses, having

mental health and medical personnel perform duties that fall outside of the realm of their education/experience(e.g. segregated rounds) restraint policy and procedure.”

“Nurses have been asked to do certain things with picclines that they should be sent to the hospital to have done. Just one example that if a nurse refuses, they can be retaliated against by management, there is discord and mistrust also frustration that management without medical backgrounds are in charge of the whole medical department.”

“There is typically 1 RN working in the medical housing unit. Most days that is the only healthcare employee working in there. No MA, no LPN, and no other RN. At times, this nurse may also have to complete a med pass leaving the unit unattended. The RN is responsible to go to all the medical emergencies again leaving the unit unattended.”

“The HSA put out a policy that states an RN and an unlicensed personnel can count narcotics which is against the American Nurse’s Association guidelines not to mention against the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing policy. It must be two licensed nurses. The DHSA Amy Shaw RN also stated it is ok for a nurse to pour meds for another nurse to pass. This is illegal and you can lose your nursing license.”

“Supervisors have forced staff to falsify documentation. Doctors are no longer employed have had their signatures used without consent. TechCare staff have removed notes from charts.”

“Multiple days a week on multiple shifts, 1 RN is responsible for all 5 MH units(3 of them acute). This is dangerous and nurses are not able to abide to complete all of their tasks. This is putting their license in jeopardy and impacting inmate care. This is how mistakes are made by being forced to do work that is not able to be completed.”

“Management does not care about the licenses of the employees. They make policies that directly go against nursing licenses, and they knowingly attempt to force people to do things that go against licenses. The strong willed employees push back and will refuse but the weaker employees will often times go along. The strong-willed will inevitably get targeted by the administration.”

“Intake is chronically understaffed. If there is a RN there is typically only one in the entire intake area. A medical assistant, captain or sergeant frequently medically clears the inmates for incarceration. By the time inmates get back to processing to see the RN it could be 2-3 days they have been in intake without medication and without seeing medical at all. Mental health is also lacking in the intake area. They are supposed to be there 24 hours a day. A plethora of shifts go unattended without MH in intake every week.”

Section IV: Analysis of the Data and Concluding Comments Concerning the ACJ

Health Care Staff Survey (4 Minutes 45 Seconds)

Higher Pay-Several of the responses mentioned the need for higher pay and that their pay is not competitive with other workplaces. Considering the market demand for healthcare staff is high and we have ninety-four healthcare staff vacancies at ACJ, it appears these statements need to be taken very seriously.

Training Several responses in the survey talked about the ineffective training mediums of checking the box computer training. Relevant in person training is asked for with special emphasis on training new staff who have a significant risk of terminating without needed orientation and training.

Concern for Physical Safety-Several of the responses concerned the problem of health care staff not being safe. A couple of responses mentioned cases of sexual harassment. The staffing crisis of the correctional officers can seriously affect the health care staff's concerns for safety. If staff believe they are not working in a safe environment, it can affect their performance and their relationship with their patients.

Burdensome Workload and Administration' Expectations-This problem of having too much to do on a work schedule and not being able to provide quality care to patients is an overriding concern. Healthcare staff can experience added custodial and patient concerns which extend their work schedule Respondents claim that administration's expectations are not in line with

the demands of their job. They are asking for some of administration's time to listen to their experiences and their expertise of how best to perform on their job.

Authoritarian Structure of Communication Between Administration and Staff-throughout the survey a top down structure of communication was cited with staff having very limited opportunity to provide feedback with a very directive mode of communication being used by administration.

The suggestions of administration spending time in the blocks supporting front line staff and seeing the many challenges of health care staff will start to change this authoritarian relationship. Administration actually performing work duties would be even more symbolic of changing the relationship. During Laura Williams' tenure, administration assisted with performing some work duties. When she terminated employment at ACJ in February, 22, the vacancy for health care staff was at 52.

Lack of Medical Expertise of the Health Services Administrator-the Health Services Administrator does not have a medical background. She has a doctorate in philosophy. Therefore, a collaborate model of communication between administration and front line staff of professionals sharing each other's expertise is even more important to be used.

Health Care Staff's Licensure is Being Threatened- The survey provided many examples of administrative orders violating licensing protocols. From the survey responses, a list of twenty-one situations of duties that are assigned which staff recognize as violating licensure protocol was completed. This list was provided yesterday to all Jail Oversight Board members. The JOB needs to be very mindful of the health staff's dilemma in trying to comply with licensure mandates in an environment of excessive workloads. The survey in different places cited this factor as a major reason for the high staff turnover. Forcing staff to violate licensure regulations is a major reason staff are saying the vacancy rate is so high at 94.

Research into licensing infractions have shown that when there is a death, the risk to one's licensure markedly increases. Since the Allegheny County Jail is exceeding the national average in deaths, this can become a significant stressor for many health care staff at ACJ.

Conclusion In conclusion, health care staff at our jail are in a perilous situation filled with highly burdensome workloads, safety concerns, conflict with administration, licensure fears and a high staff turnover. The Jail Oversight Board, the administration and the public need to rally to give the health care staff the support they need to continue their dedication to the work many of them love, providing quality health care to those in need.

The Board needs to initiate a staff retention committee in which they open up lines of communication with frontline staff, healthcare staff and correctional officers. If the Board is truly concerned about preventing the high number of deaths and the high staff turnover at our jail, then they need to get serious about working on the staffing problems of our jail. The survey reveals that many residents are not being served.

We also need to start preparing for the future of our jail with the need to educate and elicit support from the new administration and warden. This survey will be provided to the search committee for a new warden.

John Kenstowicz, MSW, LSW

Pennsylvania Impact Interfaith Network(PIIN)