



Memorandum

Date: January 12, 2021

Subject: DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVE ON SUSPENSION OF PATIENT ADMISSIONS TO DEPARTMENT OF STATE HOSPITALS-ATASCADERO

The Director of the Department State Hospitals (DSH) is issuing this directive pursuant to Governor Gavin Newsom's Proclamation of a State of Emergency dated March 4, 2020, and Executive Order N-35-20 issued March 21, 2020. To ensure that patients with mental health disorders currently in DSH's custody continue to receive the services and support that are threatened by disruptions caused by COVID-19, and to protect the health, safety and welfare of those patients, the Director is suspending the admission of patients committed pursuant to Penal Code section 1370, et seq; and Penal Code section 1026 to Department of State Hospitals-Atascadero (DSH-A) for the next 30 days.

With this suspension of patient admissions to DSH-A, DSH is ensuring the safety of its current patients by decreasing the risk of transmission or introduction of COVID-19 to its facilities.

DSH's decrease in the movement of patients throughout the state will also help to reduce the potential for widespread introduction or transmission of COVID-19, in collaboration with its criminal justice partners, by allowing patients to remain in place and allow the hospitals to keep any transmission of COVID-19 to a minimum, decreasing the burden on community hospital systems.

During the period of suspended admissions if there is a patient who is currently committed to DSH-A but out to court and ready to return, DSH will work with the sending jail on a case-by-case basis as to whether to re-admit these patients, if DSH can ensure re-admission will not threaten to introduce or transmit COVID-19. The DSH Director retains the sole discretion as to whether to re-admit such patients during this period of suspended admissions.



During the period of suspension of IST patient admissions, if an IST patient currently designated for placement at DSH is psychiatrically acute, the Director may exercise discretion to admit that patient on a case by case basis, in accordance with Title 9, section 4717. The committing clinician responsible for that individual's clinical assessment should contact the DSH Medical Director, or designee, about the individual's psychiatric acuity and provide medical information and documentation that supports such acuity.

The points of contacts for this process are as follows:

DSH-Atascadero Forensic Department - (805) 468-2084
DSH-Sacramento Patient Management Unit -
PC1370referrals@dsh.ca.gov

The Director, or her designee, is the final authority for determining psychiatric acuity of an IST patient for purposes of granting an exception to the suspension of IST patient admissions to a DSH facility.

This suspension of patient admissions will remain in effect for 30 days.

Please contact DSH's Office of Communications if you have questions, at (916) 654-2410 or at OfficeofCommunications@dsh.ca.gov.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'S Clendenin'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

STEPHANIE CLENDENIN
Director