

Del Bell,

I wanted to pass on some more thoughts I had.

Heard a lot in regards to Mental Health. Some good ideas, but some information in my opinion was titled in a direction. Not much of the numbers which were offered by the 3 experts during Del. Bell's committee Hold Water in ways I have seen it in research.

Also, during those same people who gave a Report to Del. Bell's Committee seemed to use the term "Minimum Standards" to determine Mental Health of Arrested People in Virginia. My question is "Why is it Accepted to do the Minimal Standards Ever?"

We should always be treating people in a proper manner especially from the beginning of Intake. It is easier, and Cheaper, to Strive for the Best each day.

Here is Why:

1. The Inmate can be calmed down during intake by finding out what that person needs why processing. We can do this by having Sheriff Officers and Correction Officers, taking the advantage to see if there is something not right. Then they can escalate it to other Officers with higher training or to Mental Staff. This will eventually start seeing problems go away during intake. Savings: Lower Medical Costs for injuries to Staff and Inmates due to less physical threats.

2. Due to #1- the fact that there is a lack of needed staff by the Jails and Prisons. They can afford to run sufficiently with lower staff.

3. Every Single Jail and Prison should have Full Time Mental Health Staff. They are there to work with Inmates to help calm Inmates having Disciplinary Issues. Through studies and knowledge of working with my Mental Issues are taken care of a Professional, I feel this will allow the inmates to talk out their problem with a non Officer would calm inmates because they don't see the staff member to be in a position of Authority and it's safe talk. Pretty Soon after this starts happening, the Inmates will start to ask for a Mental Health Staff Member to talk to before they do something they know they shouldn't.

- 4: Continuation of 3 because the Financial Side of these initiatives can Save Millions of dollars.

Costs: hiring of Mental Health Staff, Training between Mental Health Staff and Officers, possible Increase in drugs (but my belief is Opposite),

Savings: Less number of other Medical Staff needed because number of injuries will occur, slowing of Turnover of Staff (Especially from Officers) this means saving of Hiring and Training, More People will Apply for Position needed because the Safety, happier Inmates because they feel important and humanized (Will cause less fights, inmate safety, Less conflict with staff and Officers, less Conflict between Inmates.

5. I am not saying to make the inmates feel comfortable and totally relaxed as if on Vacation. What I am saying is we can give strong direction to Inmates when they enter, continue that, use an Independent Mental Health Staff to be assigned to meeting with Inmates at least Once a week. Inmates will trust because once they realize the Mental Healthy Staff is not there to

punish or judge on their charges, but that is not the Importance of this Staff. There will be less need to transport Prisoners for Reason to separate them. I believe the war on Drugs and Weapons will decrease due to General Calmness by Inmates.

And this should all take place right from Intake, through the entirety of the inmates Stay, and with the Difficult Inmates in Prisons in order to build the trust of the Leader Inmates start talking to each other that it's cool to talk to the Mental Health Staff.

I have lots of ideas for Mental Health in General.

My One Big One is to start a Foundation dedicated to Mental Health in Virginia. This would be a way to find out what needs to be done at every level of every Virginian. Help for people suffering, suffering by Friends and Family Members to get help and educated. Education to the public, such as inside Schools and General Town Hall style meeting, and meeting with Mental Health Officials through the Commonwealth and surrounding States.

I am happy to lead the charge. I just need help if y'all see the Importance of this Foundation. Board should be made up of at least a State Senator and Delegate, experts in the field. Members of Health Services and Dept of Corrections, I would like at least one other person or Family member to be on the Board.

I am willing to come to Richmond to talk to whoever at whatever type of event. I don't not want to be solely responsible for use of funds..

I know this is a lot, but I feel so passionate about this,

Thank You Again,
Michael Gage